

Sustainable Communities Major

Foundations (2 courses)

ENV DEISIGN 592 B Applied Sustainable Ecovillage Living

COMM 352 Group Dynamics

Social Sciences (2 out of three courses)

SOCI 300 The Urban Community

POLI 260 Political Economy

SOCI 375 Environmental Sociology

World Views (2 out of three courses)

RELI 270 Ecotheology: Religions, Animals and the Earth

INT'L ED 292 E: World Views and Consciousness

RELI 310 State of the World

Life Sciences (1 out of two courses)

BIO 104 Environmental Biology

CHEM 101 Chemistry of the Environment

Economics (2 courses)

ECON 210 Macroeconomics

ECON 200 Microeconomics

Research Methods (2 courses)

MATH 215 Statistical Analysis

ANTH 3500 Field Study Seminar

Capstone Experience (1 course)

Independent Study Project based upon ENV DEISIGN 592 B Applied Sustainable Ecovillage Living and my experience living in the Findhorn Ecovillage.

Course Descriptions

ENV. DESIGN 592 B *Applied Sustainable Ecovillage Living* This course explores the core nature of our species and focuses specifically on our relationship with the land, food and farming in the context of the Findhorn Ecovillage. The various ways in which we provide for our other needs –shelter, energy, clothing, transportation and waste management –are also covered. Students explore the theory and practice of living more lightly and joyfully through ecological footprint analysis, a tool which helps gauge the impact of our current activities on the environment (4 credits)

COMM 352 *Group Dynamics* This course looks at the psychology of groups, both small and large. Students will learn observation, communication and facilitation skills as practical, effective tools and to reinforce theoretical learnings. Utilizing students' own experience and that of the Findhorn Ecovillage as examples, the course will cover stages of group development based on the Scott Peck model.

SOCI 300 *The Urban Community* Emphasis on a sociological understanding of urban and community processes. Topics of special interest the political economy of cities, growth, housing, urban revitalization, architecture and use of space, design for sustainability, and cross cultural comparisons.

POLI 260 *Political Economy* Combining the history of the development of political economy globally with an in-depth analysis of contemporary developments and future prognostications, this course aims to arm students of politics with an understanding of how economics intersects with the political world, broadly defined. While the course focuses on politics and economics, it necessarily branches out to touch many other disciplines, from history and religion to sociology and business. The course is relevant for students of both American and global politics.

SOCI 375 *Environmental Sociology* A sociological approach to human-nature relationships, with a focus on social constructions of nature, major social groups that have a stake in defining environmental issues, environmental policy (local and global), the role of technology and of the scientific community in shaping environmental outcomes, the environmental movement and counter-movement, the evolving concept of "environmental justice" and designs for sustainability.

RELI 270 *Ecotheology: Religion, Animals and the Earth* In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, an important form of religious thinking is emerging called ecotheology. It involves exploring how spirituality is connected with an appreciation of the earth and its many forms of life and how the earth needs to be protected from excessive exploitation. There are Christian versions of ecotheology, Jewish versions, Buddhist versions, and many others, including feminist versions called ecofeminism. In this course we look at a wide variety of forms of ecotheology. A special component of the course focuses on human relations to animals, with attention to the animal rights movement and constructive religious responses to it. (Note: a large component of this course covers applied ecotheology in the sustainable development model of Heifer International. This course involves a weekend retreat at Heifer Project International and the opportunity for six students in the class to take a Heifer International Study tour in China. On the China trip, we will visit villages where Heifer has helped to facilitate sustainable

development, tour Global Village Beijing, and meet with leading advocates in the movement for sustainable development.)

RELI 310 *State of the World* This course is an introduction to some of the basic social, spiritual and ecological problems faced by the world today. These include poverty, violence, racial tension, and environment degradation. The course then focuses on faith-based and spiritually-sensitive responses to those problems. Special emphases are on “constructive postmodern movement” in China, the emergence of “progressive Islam” in Islamic nations, “socially engaged” Buddhism, and various types of “liberation theologies” in Christianity. The course involves a weekend retreat at Heifer Project International.

INT’L ED 292 E *Worldviews and Consciousness* This course empowers students to learn how individuals and groups perceive and shape their mindsets. Particular attention is placed on the study of world cultural traditions and the search for meaning and fulfillment. Through the creation of theoretical and experiential understandings of worldviews and consciousness, students examine culturally-narrated truths, social constructs, and the process that facilitates the evolution of an individual’s belief system.

BIO 104 *Environmental Biology* An introduction to principles of ecology as they relate to the human concerns of overpopulation, resource management, pollution, and environmental ethics

CHEM 101 *Chemistry of the Environment* Environmental issues are used as a basis to introduce the theories, models, structures, and reactions of modern chemistry to the non-science major. The states of matter are studied in contexts of air pollution, ozone depletion, global warming, acid rain, and energy sources and consumption. Mathematical problem solving in a chemical context is included.

ECON 200 *Principles of Microeconomics* Introduction to concepts and methods of microeconomics. Emphasis is placed on resource allocation, effects of market structures, and the manner in which these market structures affect the economics decisions of a business entity.

ECON 210 *Principles of Macroeconomics* Introduction to concepts and methods of macroeconomics. Topics such as inflation, unemployment, and economic growth are examined. The role of monetary and fiscal policy in achieving macroeconomic objectives is emphasized.

POLI 400 *Research Methods* This course examines the methods by which political scientists attempt to better understand political phenomena, with a focus on quantitative methodologies.

MATH 215 *Statistical Analysis* An introduction to some of the mathematical and statistical methods used in the analysis of social and natural scientific phenomena with an emphasis on the interpretation of experimental and survey data. Topics include elementary and combinatorial designs, basic statistical methods, correlation and inference, and regression analysis. Applications to the students’ major disciplines will be included throughout the course as well as in a culminating project.

ANTH 3500 *Field Study Seminar* A course in the concepts of learning across cultures and from field experience. Introduction to the Independent Study Project. Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project section and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and

the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing, and communicating data; maintaining a work journal.

Helpful Links

The School of International Training's Ireland: Transformation of Social and Political Conflict Program syllabus: http://www.sit.edu/SSA_Program_documents/ier.pdf

Living Routes Study Abroad: <http://www.livingroutes.org/>

Scotland: Human Challenge of Sustainability at Findhorn:
http://www.livingroutes.org/programs/p_findhorn.htm

Scotland: Human Challenge of Sustainability at Findhorn College Academic Handbook:
<http://www.livingroutes.org/downloads/Adademic.Handbook.SCO10Sp.pdf>

Scotland: Human Challenge of Sustainability at Findhorn College Student Handbook:
<http://www.livingroutes.org/students/scotland/Student.Handbook.SCO10Sp.pdf>

Justification of Sustainable Communities Major

Sustainable communities fulfill the needs of their inhabitants without compromising the ability of future generations to fulfill their own needs. The broad topic of “sustainability” has three major components: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and social sustainability. While my major will focus mainly on social sustainability, this field is interrelated with the other two; therefore my major will explore all three categories with an emphasis on the social aspect

The core component of my major will consist of my time abroad learning about applied sustainable living in an Ecovillage through Living Route’s “Human Challenge of Sustainability at Findhorn” program. I will pursue course work and field experience in areas such as organic farming, creative expression for sustainable living, and consensus facilitation. I will “learn about the integration of human ecology and natural systems” through being a member of one of the first intentional communities in the world. Findhorn has been awarded Best Practices designation by the UN Centre for Human Settlements and is home to the Global Ecovillage Network. Three of my courses, INT’L ED 292 E: World Views and Consciousness, ENV DEISIGN 592 B Applied Sustainable Ecovillage Living and COMM 352 Group Dynamics will be taken at Findhorn.

While it is valuable to understand how sustainability functions in an intentional Ecovillage community, it is also important to grasp how sustainability can be applied to larger community models, such as a city or a nation’s economy. In this way, my social science courses such as *POLI 260 Political Economy* and *SOCI 300 The Urban Community* will be helpful in providing a broader understanding of how to create large scale sustainable communities. Humanity’s role in relation to the natural environment is also an integral component of sustainability studies and my natural science credit in *BIO 104 Environmental Science* or *CHEM 101 Chemistry of the Environment* will fulfill this requirement

A study of mainstream and alternative worldviews regarding the earth, society and the state of the world reveals what people value, why they maintain these particular values and what values motivate them to participate in social change. This knowledge is relevant to building sustainable communities. *RELI 270 Ecotheology: Religions, Animals and the Earth* INT’L ED 292 E: *World Views and Consciousness* and *RELI 310 State of the World* will help me to better understand these diverse worldviews and apply them to sustainable development.

Because our economic system plays such an influential and dynamic role in the shape of our world, it is imperative that a student of sustainability have a firm grasp on how our economic system works. *ECON 210 Macroeconomics* or *ECON 200 Microeconomics* will help to satisfy this requirement. *POLI 260 Political Economy* also will lead to greater understanding of how our economy shapes our political systems.

While theoretical knowledge is significant, it is equally important that I know how to apply theories to real life situations, how to analyze data and how to do appropriate and thorough research. These technical skills can be gathered through taking the courses *MATH 215 Statistical Analysis* and *ANTH*

3500 Field Study Seminar. I can apply the skills I glean from my field study course will to my ENV. DESIGN 592 B *Applied Sustainable Ecovillage Living* course. For ENV. DESIGN 592 B, I will conduct an independent study project through which I will explore a topic related to the Findhorn Ecovillage and sustainable communities. This project will "deepen [my] conceptual understanding of sustainability design principles and explore how these apply to specific contexts" (see Scotland: Human Challenge of Sustainability at Findhorn College Academic Handbook). I will write a research paper that is a minimum of 3,500 words and create a presentation to present to my advisory committee upon returning to Hendrix. Both the paper and the presentation will be graded as the capstone project of my Sustainable Communities major.

Dr. Ian King, Chair of Sustainable Communities Major Committee

 2-4-2010

Dr. Chris Campolo, member of Sustainable Communities Major Committee

 2/5/2010

Jayce Hafner

