

**OSU: AREc/PS/SOC 505 UO: 505 PPPM 605**  
**Reading and Conference:**  
**Community Indicators and Rural Sustainability [3 Credits]**  
(OSU: AREC CRN 19140; PS CRN 19153; SOC CRN 16934) (UO CRN 18209)

## **INSTRUCTORS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Many communities are attempting to assess their community assets and vitality, and to track their progress in attaining community goals. This class will review the history of community indicators, examine conceptual foundations and operationalization of indicators of economic, social, institutional and environmental health and vitality, critique the community indicators that have been developed and used by urban and rural communities in the U.S. and elsewhere, and develop a set of draft community indicators for an Oregon community.

Readings: The readings will be from sources accessible on-line or posted on Blackboard for the class. For those interested in perusing community indicators in greater depth a good starting place is M. J. Sirgy, Don Rahtz and Dong-Jin Lee, eds., *Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases*, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004. Some paperback copies are available used on the internet.

The class will be offered for 3 credits and will meet from 4-7 pm on Mondays, alternating between Eugene and Corvallis. Student communication, information and logistics will be located on the OSU Blackboard site at: <http://my.oregonstate.edu/>

## **COURSE POLICIES**

- Late assignments will not be accepted.
- Extra credit will not be allowed in this course.

- All UO/OSU academic regulations will be followed in this course. Academic regulations are available at OSU are at: <http://www.orst.edu/dept/clasked/acareg.htm> and UO at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~uopubs/bulletin/> This includes the university policies concerning incompletes: The **I** is only granted at the discretion of the instructor.
- *Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Engaging in such behaviors will result in a failing course grade. You are to do ALL of your own work. Plagiarism is defined as representing (and using) another person's ideas, writings, and work as one's own. Appropriate citation must be used for all materials incorporated into your work.*
- Proper spelling, grammar, and citation should be used in all assignments. We prefer APA citation format: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> or <http://www.liu.edu/CWIS/CWP/library/workshop/citapa.htm>

## ASSIGNMENTS

Sustainability is one of, if not the main, main issue facing rural communities today. In Oregon, as everywhere, the future of rural communities rests on the vitality of economic, social, ecological, and institutional factors. While there has been much discussion about the concept of community sustainability, there have been few comprehensive approaches to the monitoring of movement toward sustainable communities. Therefore as Pepperdine has argued (<http://www.regional.org.au/au/countrytowns/strategies/pepperdine.htm>):

“Monitoring can play an important role in providing feedback to aid decision-making and inform planning. A monitoring system can facilitate the settings of priorities and assist in evaluating performance. Since the notion of sustainability embraces ecological, economic and social issues and the complex interdependence between these dimensions, a broad approach needs to be adopted at the planning and management level to shed light on this multi-dimensional picture.”

Therefore, the class will attempt to develop a comprehensive set of interdisciplinary indicators of sustainability in order to measure progress toward (or regression away from) community sustainability. Students will be organized into four separate research groups concerning the following topics:

- Economic Indicators:** Examples could include employment rates, household income, local business vitality, levels of investment capital, etc.
- Social Indicators:** Examples could include social capital, family well-being, leadership, health and safety, education levels, demographic patterns, etc.
- Environmental Indicators:** Examples could include biophysical factors (availability of land, water, natural resources such as, timber, fishing, etc.), amenity factors (proximity of passive recreation opportunities such as hiking/wildlife photography and intensive recreation such as downhill skiing, water skiing), etc.
- Institutional Indicators:** Examples would include both informal institutions (presence of nonprofit/nongovernmental/voluntary organizations) and formal

institutions (government, economic development department, etc.). Indicators could include public involvement in decision-making, access and availability of infrastructure and key services including education (K-12), information (wide-ban/internet access) infrastructure, etc.

Each group will be responsible for: **(1)** conducting a detailed review of the literature in each area; **(2)** presenting their research to the class and answering questions associated with their research; **(3)** writing a final research paper making recommendations for the appropriate indicators to be utilized for monitoring rural community sustainability; **(4)** a professional Powerpoint preliminary presentation to the class (November 13); **(5)** a final professional Powerpoint presentation to the Ford Family Foundation and other rural community leaders (November 27). All assignments and presentations will be evaluated by the faculty and by your fellow classmates/group members (however final grades are the prerogative of the faculty).

## **EVALUATION**

- Literature review and first presentation/discussion with the class (1 & 2 above) [Economic indicators on October 16; Social indicators on October 23; Institutional indicators on October 30; and Environmental indicators on November 6] **100 points**
- Final indicators research paper (3 above) **200 points**
- Preliminary Powerpoint presentation to class (4 above) [November 13] **50 points**
- Final Powerpoint presentation to class (5 above) [November 13] **100 points**
- General class participation throughout quarter. **50 points**

## **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- **COMMITMENT**-did you cover all relevant materials/questions?
- **AMBITION**-did you take each issue to task?
- **ENGAGEMENT**-did you make connections between issues?
- **CLARITY**-was the work readable and well organized?
- **LITERATURE/READING MATERIALS**-did you use appropriate reading and other research materials in your work?
- **COMPARISON**-in general, how did your work compare to the rest of the class?

## ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **COVERAGE**-highlights of whole project? Addressed assigned points? Clarity of development of points? No jargon or unexplained acronyms? Pitched well to audience?
- **ORGANIZATION**-Well prepared, well organized? Is the level of treatment appropriate, not overly detailed nor too general? Is the presentation easy to follow, smooth continuity?
- **DELIVERY**-Engaging presentation style, energetic, enthusiastic? Smooth transition, if use more than one presenter? Well practiced, rehearsed? No reading from notes (just speak to points on overheads? Clear, good volume and enunciation, no mumbling? Did not go over time (or significantly under)? Efficient, avoided stumbling, confusion, blank spots?
- **FORMAT**-Overheads/Powerpoint presentation not too busy, font large enough to read? Visuals (e.g., key screen shots) used supportively? Good use of graphics (e.g., diagrams), if appropriate? No misspellings, poor grammar, misuse of words?

## FINAL GRADE DISTRIBUTION

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percent of points possible</i>
<b>A+ (UO only)</b>	[98-100%]
<b>A</b>	[OSU: 95-100%; UO: 95-97]
<b>A-</b>	[90-94%]
<b>B+</b>	[87-89%]
<b>B</b>	[83-86%]
<b>B-</b>	[80-82%]
<b>C+</b>	[77-79%]
<b>C</b>	[73-76%]
<b>C-</b>	[70-72%]
<b>D+</b>	[67-69%]
<b>D</b>	[63-66%]
<b>D-</b>	[60-62%]
<b>F</b>	[0-59%]

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**September 25 -Introduction [Eugene; Room: 119 Hendricks]**

- History of the Social Indicator Movement from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century (Hibbard)
- An Overview of *Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases*  
(Nick Beleiciks)

**October 2-The Oregon Progress Board and Oregon Benchmarks [Corvallis; 304 Fairbanks Hall]**

- Guest speaker, *Rita Conrad, Oregon Progress Board Executive Director*  
READING: familiarize yourself with the work of the Progress Board by reviewing their website [http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OPB/about\\_us.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OPB/about_us.shtml); See also: <http://www.oregon150.org/index.html>.
- *Invited Rural Community Leader*, to provide the community perspective on the development and use of community indicators.
- We will also introduce the case study and organize the faculty/student project teams.

**October 9-Community Indicator Projects at Oregon State University and University of Oregon [Eugene; Room: 119 Hendricks]**

- Tom Stave, Head, Document Center, UO Libraries (resources for indicator data)
- Mike Hibbard (UO Community Watershed Indicators project)
- Flaxen Conway and Christina Package (OSU project “Long Profiling” of Oregon’s Fishing Communities)
- Bruce Weber and Nick Beleiciks (OSU/Ford Family Foundation Rural Community Indicators project)
- Others? (Invited library resource person on internet-based sources for indicator data?)

**October 16-Economic indicators: Conceptual and operational issues and critique [Corvallis; 304 Fairbanks Hall]**

- The economic indicators project team will be responsible for organizing this session – selecting the reading and preparing/leading the lecture-discussion

**October 23-Social indicators: Conceptual and operational issues and critique [Eugene; Room: 119 Hendricks]**

- The social indicators project team will be responsible for organizing this session – selecting the reading and preparing/leading the lecture-discussion

**October 30-Institutional indicators: Conceptual and operational issues and critique [Corvallis; 304 Fairbanks Hall]**

- The institutional indicators project team will be responsible for organizing this

session – selecting the reading and preparing/leading the lecture-discussion.

**November 6-Environmental indicators: Conceptual and operational issues and critique [Eugene; Room: 119 Hendricks]**

- The environmental indicators project team will be responsible for organizing this session – selecting the reading and preparing/leading the lecture-discussion.

**November 13-Case study: Class presentation of preliminary indicators [Corvallis; 304 Fairbanks Hall]**

- The groups will present their preliminary indicators to the class. An invited panel of faculty and community government, business and workforce leaders will provide feedback on preliminary indicators.

**November 20 -Work session with the project teams and possible guest presentation by nationally known sociologist [Corvallis; 304 Fairbanks Hall]**

**November 27-Case study; presentation of final indicators [Eugene; Room: 119 Hendricks]**

- The groups will present their final indicators to the class. Invited respondents will include people such as Tom Gallagher, Flaxen Conway, Juan Hernandez, Kris Latimer, and community leaders from Coquille.

**Note:** Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible (use email for this class), no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities (OSU) or Disability Services at the UO-[http://ds.uoregon.edu/fac\\_guide/dis\\_ser.htm](http://ds.uoregon.edu/fac_guide/dis_ser.htm).