

Humanities 001D:
Sustainable Development with American Indian Communities:
A DemTex Service-Learning Course
(unique number: 40151) course website: www.sdwaic.org

PRE-SURVEY

A large number of university-level courses fail to assess or engage the training, resources, skills, experiences and perspectives that students bring to a particular course. Often there is the assumption of *tabula rasa* – that students of a course are, literally, “blank slates” or “empty vessels” to be filled with knowledge by the professor.

Democratic education challenges “banking models” of education – where the teacher simply deposits knowledge in the student. This **pre-survey** will help me – the instructor – gain a greater sense for the knowledge you already have and hope to achieve from the course. I’ll share similar information about me with you.

You will also have the chance to share more about yourself with other students so that we can help each other achieve our learning objectives!

- Mark

1. In your own words, define or describe what you think comprises “sustainability” or sustainable development:

In my mind, sustainable development is the balancing of environmental, equity, economic, and aesthetic concerns and interests. I think a major part of sustainability is learning how to think about resources (who or what is a resource?) and their uses in more creative ways.

I think scale is an important consideration of sustainable development, as well – what may be considered sustainable locally might not be considered sustainable globally.

I think sustainable development is highly subjective – and/or dependent on who is included in determining it.

I think sustainable development is a process – but that it is a process shaped and/or limited by past decisions and perspectives.

I don’t think the fact that sustainable development is a process should free it from critique.

2. How did you find out about this particular course?

I created it. I’m hoping that people discover the course through the website, flier, email

announcements, and word-of-mouth.

3. What drew you to enroll in this particular course?

I created it – I felt like there is a gap in what UT offers, in terms of “sustainable development” education – especially, in terms of stressing the equity concerns that define sustainability and linking sustainable development education with the idea of public scholarship.

I feel strongly that **how** we are educated is a critical concern. I feel like the process of education (how decisions are made in a school or university, who is included in decisions, the “hidden curriculum” of classroom or organizational practice or physical structure) is as important as the content of education.

I am not aware of any other course focused to American Indian issues at UT (I could be extremely wrong about this).

I am concerned about the ethical orientation of some of the experiential learning projects that UT offers, including at a graduate level. Specifically, in terms of how these projects regard students and community partners, handle funds, and/or navigate UT policies governing experiential learning

4. What experience, if any, have you already had with service-learning or democratic education?

I researched my program’s use of academic service-learning as an approach to teaching community and regional planning at UT.

As an employee of National 4-H Council, I was a member of a learning organization dedicated to working with youth as partners in development. Approx. 14 youth served as full members of the organizational board.

I studied educational foundations of a student of Social Information and Learning at Hiram College.

5. What experience, if any, have you already had working with or learning about American Indian communities?

I served the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation as an AmeriCorps VISTA in 2000-2001. I have volunteered with the Club on various projects since.

I participated in the 2005 Native Tourism Alliance Conference.

I have visited with community development organizations based on the Wind River Reservation and the Navajo Nation.	
6. Do you already have in mind an American Indian community or community partner organization that you are interested in learning more about and attempting to complete a service project with, via this course?	
No. I'm anxious to see what direction students want to take the course.	
7. Have you ever completed a distance learning course before? If so, what was the course? How was it?	
No. I've done online training for Human Subjects Research and study abroad, but that's it.	
8. Technology Skills: Please check all that you have experience with.	
X	Making digital audio recordings
X	Editing digital audio recordings (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) I have used the sound recorder tool in Windows (under accessories) to do basic audio editing.
X	Building websites (if yes, please describe the processes you have used – and list site addresses I can visit) I've used AOLpress (free web editor from the 90s – still a great tool!) and Dreamweaver to build sites, as well as blogger.com. I've hosted sites in my webspace and through doteasy.com www.crpshare.org www.sdwaic.org
X	Chatting online (if yes, please list preferred chat platforms – messenger, etc.) I've only used SKYPE for chatting
X	Using SKYPE to call people (if yes, what is your SKYPE ID? We will be using SKYPE for this class) mark.tirpak

X	Using UT's webspace to store files
X	Creating basic PowerPoint presentations
X	Creating advanced PowerPoint presentations (with soundtrack, audio commentary, etc.)
X	Making digital video recordings
X	Editing digital video recordings (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) Yes, I've edited short videos using Windows Movie Maker (an XP accessory)
X	Sharing digital video recordings via the internet (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) I've used YouTube.
X	Taking digital images (digital camera)
X	Editing digital images (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) I've used Paint and Paint.net – as well as Photoshop (to a limited degree) and the tools built into iPhoto. I've also used the picture tools built into MS Word. I love using the print screen command!
X	Making pdfs
X	Making tables in Word
X	Making spreadsheets in Excel
X	Making a database (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) It has been a while, but I've built basic databases in MS Access – mainly by copying and changing slightly other people's databases.
X	Making a digital map (if yes, please describe the processes you have used)

	I've used ArcGIS and www.communitywalk.com
X	Buying something online
X	Selling something online (if yes, please describe the processes you have used) via eBay.
X	Listening to audiocasts (If yes, please list some of your favorite) Democracy Now, Grist, Champions of Sustainability, Design & Architecture
X	Maintaining a blog
9. What technology skills, if any, would you like to learn as a student of this course?	
<p>I'd like to learn a little more about community wifi – and possibly establish a wireless hub in a community in Montana. I'd like to get into computer recycling – and getting more internet-ready computers to American Indian communities that might want them. I'm interested in organizational use of SKYPE.</p> <p>I'd like to learn more from students – what skills they consider necessary / cutting edge. I'm comfortable with technology not really being central to students' distance service work.</p>	
10. Please describe your project management skill or experience	
As a professional, I've managed some major events and large numbers of volunteers. I love trip planning. I organized a service trip to New Orleans last summer.	
11. Have you ever planned or coordinated a road trip or other trip? If so, please describe one of your favorites. Did you use any technology to manage or enhance your trip?	
Recent favorites would probably be the service trip to New Orleans. I often use mapquest and expedia, the greyhound website to plan trips. www.nativeenergy.com to calculate some of the environmental costs of these trips.	
12. For this class, would you prefer to work individually or in a small group for the primary assignment of the course – developing a distance service-	

learning project with a community partner?
No preference.
13. Are you interested in being part of an optional Spring Break site visit / service trip to an American Indian community? If yes, do you have a trip in mind?
I am – depending on what happens for me professionally in the next few weeks.
14. Finally what books or authors have greatly influenced you as of recent?
Don Mitchell – <u>The Right to the City</u> Fergus M. Bordewch – <u>Killing the White Man’s Indian</u> Bill Bryson – <u>Made in America</u>
Thank you for sharing this information with me!