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School of
Social & Environmental Impact - SEI
Vineyard College of Mission

Informational Meeting:

Sunday Jan 11th // 6:30 pm // Chapel, Vineyard Boise

Location Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 4950 Bradley, Garden City, Idaho
Dates: February 17th – May 26th (15 weeks)
Times: Lecture: Tue. 6:30 – 9:30 pm // Lab: Sat. 9:00 – 3:00 pm (varies, see schedule)
Coordinator Katie Hergenrather 541-490-1586 k.hergenrather@gmail.com

Introduction to the course

Limited education and tools combined with a lack of stewardship and acute desperation have driven many of the world's poor to deforest their land, pollute their water resources and rely on other short-sighted "fixes". Now more than ever, holistic and Christ-based "transformational development" is needed in order to address the complex issues that drive this poverty. As Americans, we have much to offer in this regard and much to learn as well.

In this overview course we will explore how environmental decline among the world's poorest people perpetrates poverty, hunger, disease and other human suffering. Conversely, we will also examine how excessive consumption in developed countries, such as the United States, is linked to much environmental decline and, therefore, much suffering around the world.

How we consume, and for what purposes, drives how we extract resources, create products and produce pollution and waste... Today's consumption is undermining the environmental resource base. It is exacerbating inequalities. And the dynamics of the consumption-poverty-inequality-environment nexus are accelerating. Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures — the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%.

- *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1998)*

For those wishing to immerse themselves in the developing world, sustenance-based living and a "Peace Corps" type experience, this course will offer a preliminary introduction to the complexities of international development and make students aware of a variety of current organizations with which to pursue international work. While this course is not designed to prepare students for international work, it will offer a solid background on broader global issues. In the light of pressing global issues, students will be trained how to live more simply, justly and sustainably – right here in America. During this course we will not only ask ourselves "What can I do to help?" but, also simply "What can I stop doing?" In other words, "How can I consume less?" since consumption drives much of the resource degradation and social exploitation in the world.

- Americans eat 815 billion calories of food each day - that's roughly 200 billion more than needed - enough to feed 80 million people daily.
- Each year 25 million people are poisoned by pesticides in less developed countries, and over 20,000 die.
- 1.7 billion people lack access to clean drinking water

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- It takes an average of 25 gallons of water to produce a pound of wheat in modern Western farming systems. It takes 5,214 gallons of water to produce a pound of beef.
- "...roughly 70 percent of the world's discarded computers and electronic equipment ends up in China, where it is scavenged for usable parts and then abandoned, polluting soil and groundwater with toxic metals. If unchecked, such devastation will not just put an abrupt end to China's economic growth, but, in concert with other environmentally heedless nations (in particular, the US, India, and Brazil), will cause mortal havoc in societies and ecosystems throughout the world." Source: Christian Science Monitor, March 19, 2008

As Christians with a heart for the poor, how could we expect the rest of the world to live simply and sustainably within their means while we ourselves refuse? At what point does consumption become greed? When does ignorance become sin?

Recognizing that world crises are incredibly complex and interrelated, this course singles out two: Environmental Decline and World Hunger. We will consider how we, as Christian individuals, can seek the renewal of healthy ecosystems which sustain the world with abundant sources of food, water and shelter. Our goal is to accomplish this by learning how to be better stewards of the environmental systems that God has created, voicing respect for God's creation and people around the world, and by promoting practical technologies that work with Creation's systems, instead of against them.

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Course Description

The school of Social & Environmental Impact is an introductory study and hands-on training course in sustainable living with biblical roots and fruits. The purpose of this course is to equip students to not only live sustainably, but to share techniques with other people, whether around the world or down the street.

In the spirit of “think global, act local,” this first season of SEI the course curriculum focuses on technologies and principles for living sustainably in our home country, the United States. However, future semesters will aim to be more applicable to international missions by focusing on technologies and teaching principles for developing countries. By developing working partnerships with a variety of international development and parachurch organizations, we will be able to customize the curriculum for particular locations and cultures.

Course Objectives

Lecture:

- Explain the biblical rationale for sustainable living
- Instruction in the design, use and funding available for sustainable systems and appropriate technologies
- Explore the relationship between environmental degradation and poverty on a local and global scale
- Explain lessons learned in the field of international development - difficulties and opportunities
- Address the biblical perspectives on globalization, social/eco-justice, transformational development, the “American Lifestyle”, sustainability (as environment, economy, equity), and other key concepts
- Offer students opportunities to voice God’s call on our hearts and establish a supportive network of individuals with similar passions and convictions
- Explore the Church’s history in sustainable living
- Investigate current leaders in the movement – current efforts, organizations
- Offer opportunities to connect with international organizations for further research, internships and professional connections
- Challenge students to specialize in and present on a particular area of interest: Water Resources, Small-scale agriculture, Sustainable construction, or Alternative energy











Lab:

- Learn simple methods for improving vital resources such as soil fertility, water quality and livestock production – see schedule for full list of activities
- Provide opportunities to participate in real projects with lasting impacts
- Offer practical, hands-on experience to design and build sustainable systems and appropriate technologies that apply to a variety of living conditions
- Train students to grow and harvest food and livestock
- Connect with local and international professionals
- Share our new knowledge with people who can use it and learn from other’s experiences as well
- Connect our hearts with our heads and hands to produce actions that make an impact locally and globally
- Experience God’s heart for the poor and God’s glory through his Creation

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Weekly Schedule

Weeks 1-2 <i>Orientation</i> Introduction to social & environmental issues and their interrelationship.	 Lecture –Tuesdays Feb 17 th , Intro to sustainability and biblical rationale: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Environment▪ Economy▪ Equity	 Lab – Saturdays Feb 21 st ,  Alt. energy  Watershed center  Construction  Plant seedlings <i>(These topics serve as introductions to an area of specialization)</i>
Weeks 3-6 Intro to alternative energy	 Feb. 24 th Mar 3 rd , 10 th , Basic production & use Design of circuits, wiring, installation. AC/DC. 110, 220	Feb 28 th , March 7 th <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Solar energy systems▪ Wind power systems▪ Batteries & storage systems▪ Stoves for heating and cooking
Week 7-10 Intro to Water Resources	 Mar 17 th , 24 th , 31 st , Apr 7 th Develop safe water supplies - through well drilling, rain water catchment, and various low tech water purification techniques. The importance of hygiene and sanitation, water conservation and protecting water quality	Mar 21 st , Apr 4 th Tour Boise water treatment plant. Improve Boise River water quality by participating in storm drain marking activity. Construct a concrete latrine slab.
Week 11-12 Intro to Sustainable Construction	 Apr 14 th , 21 st Plans, materials, estimated cost analysis. Passive solar. Structures to discuss: composting toilets, church assembly halls, housing.	Apr 18 th Tour a Habitat for Humanity “green” residence and recycled tire cellar. Learn about green bldg techqs. Build basic latrine. Compressed earth blocks.
Week 13-16 Intro to Small-scale Agriculture	 Apr 28 th May 5 th , 12 th , 19 th Greenhouses - veggie starts (Feb). Solar greenhouses? BMPs/ erosion control. Soil analysis & enhancement. Closed cycle loops & recycle reuse. Composting. Fertilization. Integrated pest control. Crop selection. Chicken coops & runs vs. "free range", feeds & water, disease & health issues	May 2 nd , 16 th Soil prep, seed starting, harvesting. Intensive methods. Urban agriculture, site selection, examples. CSA field trip? Pigs, goats, and sheep. Bee & worm keeping. Talapia fish farming & production. Chickens - egg production. Meat production
Week 17 FINAL WEEK	May 26 th Final essay due	May 30 th Prep for domestic or International outreach

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Texts & Reading Schedule

TBD

Grading

Grading scale TBD.

Area of Specialization/Internship Presentation

Upon completing course orientation, students will select an Area of Specialization. The purpose is to gain more in-depth knowledge of an aspect of sustainable living. Presentations will provide an opportunity for the student to teach and express material learned and any outside research they have done.

Final Essay

Students will be asked to reflect on the course in a 4-6 page paper.

Academic Calendar

Informational meeting	January 11
Deadline for registration	January 25
Deadline for late registration & full tuition due	February 17
First day of class	February 17
Orientation.....	February 17, 21, 24, 28

Participation Requirements

Faith

All people in an established relationship with Christ as their Lord and Savior are encouraged to apply.

Partial Participation

Students wishing to participate in only a portion of the course should contact the organizer for more information.

Cost

The following rate is for full participation in the course [including orientation, lectures and labs]. There is a \$200 discount available for an additional family member and \$50 discount if you register by Jan.25th. Some scholarships may be available. Contact the organizer for more information. k.hergenrather@gmail.com

School of Social and Environmental Impact \$495