SL- HCOL 185  Trees and Culture

Fall 2014
Monday 12:50-3:50, University Heights North

Instructor:
Kit Anderson, Environmental Program
The Bittersweet, 153 South Prospect
kxanders@uvm.edu
Office hours: Wednesday, 10-12, by appointment
Contact Jaclyn Devino jdevino1@uvm.edu or 656-4055

Overview
This course examines human-tree interactions from a number of perspectives—botany, geography and anthropology among them. People have influenced the distribution, abundance and even genetic make-up of many species. The trees in turn affect the quality of life by shaping landscapes, creating microclimates and habitats, providing essential resources and embodying spiritual values.

Much of the course is centered on three service learning projects. Class activities, readings and assignments focus on preparing you to complete those projects. Much of our time will be spent outdoors, engaged with trees (at least as long as the weather cooperates). We will also focus on storytelling as a way of grasping different cultural perspectives. As is usual with sophomore seminars, you will do a fair amount of writing.

The partner for our Service Learning projects is the UVM Tree Advisory Committee. (see separate handout for more details). There are three parts.
1. Tours of campus trees for UVM’s Homecoming Weekend, Oct 11-13. You will be the official guides for returning alumni and visiting families.
2. Tree profile. Each of you will contribute an original description of a tree to the UVM Trees website. For examples, see http://badger.uvm.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/uvmtrees/
3. Campus as arboretum. You will conduct research on how trees fit into UVM’s teaching, research and outreach mission, and present that to UVM Trees Committee and in a form usable on website. Check out the site here http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmtrees/

Textbooks
Please be sure you get these books immediately as there are assigned readings for the second week of class and they are essential for the work we will be doing within the first few weeks. They should both be available at the Bookstore and on reserve at the library.


Other readings will be on Blackboard or handed out in class.

**Course Objectives**
By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Name and distinguish among major categories of human-tree interactions, giving specific examples from different cultural settings
- Describe the function of leaves, bark, roots and wood in trees, and show how human activities can help or hinder those functions
- Identify and give scientific names for at least 20 species on the UVM campus using leaves, growth form, bark and twigs for identification
- Integrate the Service-Learning experience with course content in reflective essays and class discussions
- Demonstrate awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences in writing assignments and class discussions
- Use high-level research skills (choosing and evaluating reliable, relevant sources; synthesizing information accurately; using correct citation protocols) in preparing a tree species profile
- Complete a piece of engaging and informative writing appropriate to a specific audience that requires multiple drafts and editing in response to peer review
- Apply what you have learned in class to analyze the role of trees on the UVM campus.
- Optional: Tell a tree story through research, multiple tellings and an oral public performance

**Assignments and Grading**
Here’s a quick overview of assignments and how they will count toward your grade. Each of the first three will be broken into a number of stages. The tree quiz will take place September 29. You’ll note there are no exams. You’ll demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of class material in the projects and writing you do.

Tree tours 20
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree profile</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arboretum research</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly blog (10 total)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tree quiz</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final essay and reflection</td>
<td>10</td>
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Participation
To participate includes being in class on time and prepared. It means taking part in class activities, whatever they may be. It can be verbal or written or a combination of the two. It means listening carefully, offering suggestions, responding to others, and moving discussions along with thoughtful questions rather than speaking to hear yourself talk. It can also include disagreeing with and challenging each other, as long as it is done respectfully. Fundamentally, it means actively engaging with both the subject matter and your fellow students in a positive way.

Helpful people
Laurie Kutner, Reference Librarian lkutner@uvm.edu
Hope Greenberg, Omeka webpages Hope.Greenberg@uvm.edu

Daily schedule (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, location</th>
<th>Readings due</th>
<th>Assignments due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/25</td>
<td>Introductions, overview Service learning project Tree ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/1</td>
<td>LABOR DAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>Meet on UVM Green Tree ID Herbarium visit</td>
<td>Trees 13-55, 220-261, 285 Ira’s acres NE Natives</td>
<td>Essay #1 (see instructions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>Tree ID Fruits, seeds, reproduction, dispersal Trees and climate</td>
<td>Trees 56-87 American canopy Coconut</td>
<td>Choice for tree profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>Tree ID Tree diversity/design Greenhouse</td>
<td>Trees 88-125 NCBOT 1, 2,3</td>
<td>Tree profile description with initial 3-5 sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>Discussion: ceiba and live oaks, role of trees in landscapes Tree quiz Groups plan tree tours</td>
<td>NCBOT 4,5 2nd life of trees</td>
<td>Plan for tree tours due Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>Practice for tree tours Arboretum discussion</td>
<td>Arboretum packet</td>
<td>1st draft of tree profile for peer review</td>
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<td>HOMECOMING WEEKEND TREE TOURS 10/10 and 10/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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| 10/13 | Discussion of SL experience  
Guest speaker: Elise Schadler on community forestry  
Arboretum research brainstorm, choose teams/individual project |
| 10/20 | Sacred trees, pilgrimage, role in landscapes  
Guest Hope Greenberg, Library Room 303, How to find tree photos |
| Oct 27 | Trees and art: Bonsai, topiary, poetry, music, drawing, painting  
Visit to Fleming Museum? |
| Nov 3  | Library room 303 w. Hope G.  
Omeka upload of profiles  
Trees and landscapes on UVM campus |
| Nov 10 | Arboretum/UVM trees research discussion, preparation for addition to website |
| Nov 17 | Presentation of SL results to Tree Committee members |
| Nov 24-28 | Thanksgiving break |
| Dec. 1 | Alternate day for final presentation  
Course Evaluations |

Trees 266-280  
Forest Bathing  
Edited tree profile due  
Essay #2: Reflection on tree tours  
Proposal for final project due  
Upload profiles to OMEKA site  
Preliminary results of arboretum research  
Final results of Arboretum research  
Essay #3 Final SL reflection
Service Learning Projects

Trees and Culture has been designated as a Service Learning course. That means we will engage in a project that is meant to enhance your learning while also benefitting others.

At UVM, a course is designated SL when it meets all of the following criteria:

1. It is a credit-bearing course (graduate or undergraduate).
2. It integrates service/experiential components with a community partner and academic course content so that each significantly informs and enhances the other.
3. There are planned benefits for both the community partner AND the students. The service addresses a need and follows processes that are mutually agreed upon by the partner and the instructor.
4. Student assessment and academic credit are based upon the demonstration of student learning, not on the service hours. Critical reflection (see below) is part of the assessment process.
5. Course assignments and activities support students to integrate the service/experiential component with the academic course content; this is called "critical reflection" in the field of service-learning.

Grants for service learning projects!

Funds of up to $300 are available to fund student SL projects in designated courses. Faculty and students may apply. SL courses must have been designated by the start of the semester. Currently, this grant is available for 3 times total for each SL course.

(Above from: http://www.uvm.edu/partnerships/?Page=faculty/faculty.html&SM=facultymenu.html)

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNER

Our partner is the UVM Tree Advisory Committee. This group was formed when UVM applied to become a Tree Campus, an official designation by the Arbor Day Foundation. For more on this, see

Members of the committee at present are
- Rose Leland, UVM Grounds Manager
- Mark Starrett, Professor of Horticulture in Plant and Soil Science
- Warren Spinner, Burlington City Arborist
- Peter Roach, student representative, was in Trees and Culture in 2012
- Elise Schadler, Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program
- Kit Anderson, Environmental Program, Trees and Culture class
- Justin Waskiewicz, Professor of Forestry, RSEN

The committee is in charge of continuing to promote tree care and awareness on campus, plan each year’s Arbor Day celebration (late spring), and keep up certification requirements each year. This year there is a work-study position with the group to help with the work and expand the UVM Trees website.
THE SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS

The class is focused on three specific projects:

1. Campus tree tours to be conducted by you during Homecoming weekend
2. Completion of a set of tree profiles to be added to UVM Trees website
3. Research exploring the idea of a campus arboretum

The first will begin right away. The second will start in a few weeks. The last will be something we talk about throughout the semester, but the real work will be mostly in the last month of classes.

Campus tree tours
One of the best ways to learn is to teach others. On the weekend of October 10-12, alumni, parents and families will arrive at UVM for Homecoming weekend. We’re signed up to lead tours of campus trees on Friday and Saturday. You’ll be working in teams of four to prepare tours, decide on content, and then conduct the tours and document your experiences. We will spend much of our class time before that weekend learning the trees and preparing for this.

Learning outcomes: Integrating knowledge about identification, botany and cultural significance of trees; planning and oral communication skills; critical reflection and writing.
Contribution to partner organization: outreach and education about campus trees; engaging alumni with UVM grounds

Tree profiles
Each time this class has been taught, students have completed individual tree profiles of a species found on campus. These are entered online on the UVM Trees webpage. You can see the current collection here http://badger.uvm.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/uvmtrees/. (See separate handout for more on this.)

Learning outcomes: information literacy skills; in-depth knowledge of specific tree species and its significance to different cultures; ability to explain botanical characteristics in accessible language; writing that is accurate and engaging, with correct citations and understanding of copyright issues;
Contributions: outreach and education; enhancing significance of UVM tree collection by showing cultural significance;

Campus arboretum
An arboretum is a collection of living trees, planted and maintained for some purpose (the theme can vary) and intended for a particular combination of education, research and enjoyment. UVM has quite a varied collection of trees, and some people have thought we should designate the campus as an arboretum. The UVM Trees website has links to a few campus arboreta and there are many more. The main question to be considered is how do the trees on UVM’s campus contribute to the university’s mission? If the campus were to become an arboretum,
what would guide policies and activities? In the process of investigating this, we will seek to provide information that can be added to the UVM Trees website.

Learning outcomes and contributions will vary depending on what you decide to do. Could be research skills (interviews), analysis (examining tree collection), communication (learning a tree story)

**ASSESSMENT**

Each of the SL projects will be broken into several parts. These will include an initial plan, the activity or written results, your own evaluation and, most important, critical reflection on the experience that ties it into course content. Assessment will focus on effort, accuracy, creativity (where relevant), timeliness, group engagement, and understanding of concepts presented in class and in readings.