

**“Greening The Commons”  
Commons Seminar**

**Vanderbilt University  
Spring 2016**

**Anthropology 1001.1 [ANTH 1001.01]**

**Wednesdays 3:10-5:00pm**

**(1 50-min. session: 1/13; 6 110-min. sessions 1/20, 2/3, 2/17, 3/2, 3/16, 3/30)**

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**SYLLABUS**

**Course Description**

“Greening the Commons” will highlight the variety of environmental outreach efforts currently engaged in The Commons as well as uncover environmental concerns not currently addressed to any significant degree. Key players who have planted interventions in the first-year experience will be drawn in to the seminar as local experts. The central mission of the seminar is to facilitate an early, collective immersion experience for first-year students that will provide opportunities for seminar participants to comment on and provide guidance for future greening efforts and initiatives. In addition, the Commons Seminar participants will form a core think tank for imagining how early immersion experiences can (and do) function in the first-year experience at Vanderbilt. The learning outcome of the Seminar will focus in two ways on creative individual student projects. First, all students will produce an individual final project that will propose a variety of ways in which the Commons could further engage greening efforts. All projects will be uploaded on to the [greeningthecommons.com](http://greeningthecommons.com) website as a concrete deliverable. Second, each student will present the final project within the context of a public Greening Conference held at the end of the Spring semester. The intent of the conference is to allow the work and ideas of the individual seminar participants to be both public and visible.

**Course Goals**

Broad understanding of how environmental issues and concern impact everyday life on The Commons at Vanderbilt University.

**Course Description**

Willingness to work independently to produce meaningful interventions.

**Projects**

No prior experience with video or media production is required for final projects.

**Texts**

Bartlett, Peggy F. and Geoffrey W. Chase, eds. 2004. *Sustainability on Campus: Stories and Strategies for Change*. The MIT Press.

Bartlett, Peggy F. and Geoffrey W. Chase, eds. 2014. *Sustainability in Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Transformation*. The MIT Press.

Carlson, Scott. 2015. “What Happened to the Drive for Campus Sustainability?” *Chronicle for Higher Education*. (Nov.8).

Thomashow, Mitchell and Anthony Cortese. 2014. *Nine Elements of a Sustainable Campus*. The MIT Press.

**Evaluation**

Attendance and class participation: 30%

Writing Prompts: 30%

Final Media Projects: 30%

Final Conference Presentation: 10%

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**SEMINAR SCHEDULE**

- January 13      Introduction to Seminar  
Group Exercise: Defining Environmentalism, Sustainability, and Greening  
**Read:** “What Happened to the Drive for Campus Sustainability?” (Chronicle for Higher Education)  
<<http://chronicle.com/article/Whatever-Happened-to-the-Drive/234095>>  
Assignment of initial (2) exercises
- January 20      Student-led session on environment efforts at VU and on The Commons  
**Read:** Bartlett and Chase 2003—“Laying the Cornerstones” and “Process and Practice: Creating the Sustainable University” (pages 1-40)
- February 3      1. Assignment and discussion of final projects  
2. Open session with student leaders from VU environmental organizations  
**Read:** Whiteman—“Building a Decentralized, Grassroots, Campus Sustainability Organization and Community: The Transformational Impact of Green Values.” In Bartlett and Chase 2013.
- February 17     1. Discussion of readings  
2. Meeting with EOS Board (VU Faculty)  
3. Discussion of Final Project (individual contributions to a collective “Action Plan” to be submitted to the Dean of The Commons)  
**Read:** Thomashow and Cortese (2014)—“Energy” and “Food” in *Nine Elements of a Sustainable Campus*.
- March 2        Topic: To Be Determined  
**Read:** Thomashow and Cortese (2014)—“Materials” and “Governance” in *Nine Elements of a Sustainable Campus*.
- March 16      Field Trip (To Be Determined)
- March 30      1. Final wrap up  
2. Final Hour: Open session (poster presentation of final projects)

**Final Project Submissions Due:** April 13<sup>th</sup> by 12 noon.