



Cornell University



Environmental Education in Urban Communities

Online Professional Development Course • September 12 – December 4, 2011

Version: December 4, 2011

Description

This online course will increase your capacity to use educational programs for social and environmental change within urban settings. Geared for professional development of educators, it will provide a survey of different approaches to environmental education (EE) in urban communities, and cover conceptual frameworks and outcomes of urban EE. Participants will review and share diverse educational practices related to civic ecology education, outdoor adventure, field ecology, environmental and social justice, citizen science, and restoring degraded green spaces. These practices will be connected to recent research in EE, environmental psychology, youth development, community sociology, social-ecological resilience, and other interdisciplinary studies. By the end of this course you will: (1) Learn about a variety of approaches and outcomes of EE in cities, (2) Understand how EE research can improve EE practices, (3) Develop and exchange activity plans that are research-based and can be used in your job with diverse audiences, (4) Contribute to the development of the national Guidelines for Excellence in Community EE, (5) Build a network of peers working on EE in urban settings.

Format

The course will facilitate collaboration and sharing expertise among environmental educators through developing and exchanging activity plans, and will learn from videos and curricula featuring novel practices developed by urban environmental educators. Participants will be selected based on geographical diversity and their potential to contribute to a discussion of a diversity of approaches to urban EE. The course will be delivered through the Blackboard online course system. Participation will be assigned outstanding, satisfactory or unsatisfactory as a grade for the effort. Cornell University certificates of successful completion of the course will be issued to participants receiving an outstanding or satisfactory grade by submitting 85% of assignments by the dates due. This asynchronous course will require about four hours of work per week at a time convenient to you, and broadband connection. Course fee: \$50.

EECapacity

This course is offered by the Cornell University Civic Ecology Lab, North American Association for Environmental Education, and Environmental Education Exchange through EECapacity, the EPA-funded national environmental education training program. This new course is offered for the first time and is based on the EPA Professional Development Needs Study, NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence, and the wealth of innovative EE practice emerging in cities across the US.

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“Environmental Education in Urban Communities” Online Course Syllabus

Alex Kudryavtsev, Marianne Krasny, Akiima Price • Cornell University, EECapacity • Fall 2011

Due dates each week is Saturdays; please try to complete assignments in the beginning of each week in order to engage in discussions. Assignments will be reviewed or graded usually on Sundays. This syllabus is a living document, and the latest version will always be available in the Course Info folder on the course website.

| Theme | To Do |
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| 1. Introduction (9/12-9/18) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch two introduction videos • Introduce yourself and welcome other participants (discussion board) • Post your definition of “urban environmental education” (to be shared next week) |
| 2. EE Practice: the Bronx case study (9/19-9/25) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch case study videos from the Bronx, New York City (choose any three) • Read educator and student narratives (choose any two) • Contribute to discussion board: goals/outcomes of EE in the Bronx |
| 3. Urban EE practical theory (9/26-10/2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read definitions of urban EE developed by your peers • Build a concept map reflecting practical theory of your own urban EE programs • Submit and describe your concept map, and comment on other concept maps |
| 4. EE research: EE outcomes (10/3-10/9) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read summaries of EE research articles (http://eelinked.naaee.net/n/eeersearch) • Contribute to the discussion board: How can EE research contribute to EE practice? How do these publications challenge the traditional view of EE? |
| 5. Diversity of audiences & env. justice (10/10-10/16) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read articles related to diverse audiences and environmental justice; review websites; watch videos • Contribute to the discussion board: reflections and comments |
| 6. EE practice: diversity of approaches (10/17-10/23) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch videos representing some types of urban EE • Learn about different urban EE programs such as What’s Good in My Hood, Outward Bound, citizen science, outdoor adventure, environmental advocacy by reviewing several websites and YouTube videos • Discuss what you learned and what curricula you are using |
| 7. Guidelines for Excellence (10/24-10/30) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence from Bora Simmons’s video and reading the Guidelines • In small groups develop outlines of the new “EE in Urban Communities: Guidelines for Excellence.” You may use CourseSites tools or Skype |
| 8. Lesson plans (10/31-11/6) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore an example of lesson/activity plans that are based on novel practices and EE research • Develop, share and discuss your own lesson/activity plan |
| 9. EE research: behavior (11/7-11/13) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read one of several original research papers related to EE in cities and behavioral change model • Discussion Board: How can research help us foster pro-environmental behavior? |
| 10. Guidelines for excellence 2 (11/14-11/20) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share outlines of Guidelines for Excellence • Discussion Board: Discuss outlines developed by other course participants |
| 11. Revisit practical theory (11/21-11/27) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post an updated definition of “urban environmental education” based on your past experiences and curriculum/research materials shared in this course. • Revise, post and discuss your concept map reflecting your practical theory – how you think your education activities lead to your education goals |
| 12. Wrap-up (11/28-12/4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare pre/post-course definitions of urban environmental education • Complete a post-course survey • Participate in an optional conference call to debrief the course and discuss next steps |