**CAPSTONE COURSE**

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 615--SPRING 2016

Dr. Kelly Kindscher, 4:00—5:15 PM., TR, in 156 Robinson

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Teaching Assistants:

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**Date Topic**

January 19 Introduction, Class Mechanics & Objectives, The Prairie Acre Restoration Project

January 21 Read Prairie Acre plan; South Lawrence Trafficway case study; Discuss Prairie Acre Groups and Group Topics.

**Blog Entry #1 Due**

January 24 Greenhouse work on West campus—Optional; we will plant seeds in trays in the West Campus greenhouse from 2-4 pm

January 26 Prairie Acre Class Projects—discuss and set up groups to work in class. What is Environmental Assessment? Prairie Ecology 101

January 28 Panel Discussion on Prairie Restoration: Elliott Duemler; Leanne Martin; Frank Norman;

Febr. 2 The Environmental Impact Statement and its Process. Read the KU Sustainability Plan in the Assignments (On Blackboard). **Blog Entry #2 Due**

Febr. 4 KU Sustainability Plan, Elements of Environmental Assessment and Methodologies . Mark Jakubauskas speaking to us about the new EVRN Professional Master’s degree program at the KU Edwards Campus

Febr. 9 Potential Impacts to Land; Case Study: Flint Hills and Wind Energy; also Prairie Restoration 101;groups meet; **Assignment Due: Cover Letter**

Febr. 11 Prairie Acre Groups present their work to class, then brief tour of Prairie Acre; **Assignment Due: Information Sources (previously Annotated Bibliography)**

Febr. 16 Endangered Species Act and Species Protection; work on Sustainability projects; **Blog Entry #3 Due**

Febr. 18 Environmental Issues related to food; updates by Groups; groups meet

Febr. 23 Guest: Bob Eye: Environmental Issues and Opportunities in Kansas

**Assignment Due: Group Outline**

Febr. 25 Potential Impacts to Water and Air; Case Study: Holcomb, KS Coal-fired Plant;

updates by Groups Prairie Acre groups meet.

**Blog Entry #4 Due**

March 1 Public Participation & Environmental Issues; Groups meet

March 3 Douglas County, KS Natural Areas Survey and Open Space Plan; updates by Groups

March 8 Energy and Environmental Assessment; work on Prairie Acre projects; **Assignment Due: Group Outline + 10 sources**

March 10 The Dynamic Duo (Laurel and Vicky) Speaks: Lessons and ideas from Grad School Pros**!**; updates by Groups; **Blog Entry #5 Due**

March 15, 17 **Spring Break**

March 22 Legal Aspects of Environmental Impact Assessment; groups meet;

March 24 Prairie Acre Group update the class on their progress; Wetland Assessment and Delineation; also Groups meet

March 29 Wetland Restoration: Cheyenne Bottoms; SLT Santa Fe site. Groups meet.

March 31 Conservation of Resources--Case Study: Wild Harvest of Medicinal Plants such

as Echinacea; updates by Groups, Prairie Acre groups meet. **Assignment Due: Data Management**

April 5 Conservation Initiatives to find rare species; Case Study of County Inventory

Projects; Prairie Acre groups meet. **Blog Entry #6 Due**

April 7 The Role of Restoration of Plant Communities to Enhance Biodiversity; Prairie

Acre groups report and meet.

April 12 The Role of Conservation Easement to Protect Lands; Groups meet**; Assignment Due: Rough Draft of Prairie Acre Group Project**

April 14 Future opportunities for work in Environmental Assessment

April 19 **Assignment Due: Peer-Review of Draft** (you will give feedback on the other group project rough draft that you have read).

April 21 New location, to be announced; Guest Earth Day Speaker on Prairie Restoration: Bill Whitney, Executive Director, Prairie Plains Resource Institute, Aurora, Nebraska.

**Sunday, April 24 is our Prairie Acre planting, with work starting at 1:00pm**

April 26 **Prairie Acre Projects Presentations:** (25 minutes each); **Blog Entry #7 Due**

April 28 **Prairie Acre Projects Presentations: Blog Entry #8 Due**

May 3 **Prairie Acre Projects Presentations: Blog Entry #9 Due**

May 5 **Prairie Acre Projects Presentations: Blog Entry #10 Due**

**Final Report Due from All Groups**

**Text: None**

**Blackboard:** Notes will be posted on Blackboard for lecture materials.

**Attendance:** Attendance will be taken and is a part of your grade. Since we meet only twice a week, your attendance is very important.

**Blog:** Each week a short blog assignment which will be due on Thursday before the start of class. Blog topics/assignments will vary from week to week, based on class and group work. (Blog prompts will be posted on Blackboard each Monday.)

**Prairie Acre Project:** See handouts on this; dates for meetings and due dates are on the syllabus above. Your group will present during one of the last classes of the semester.

**Grading:**

Attendance 50 points

Assignments 200 points (40 pts. Each)

Blogs 100 points

Prairie Acre Project (due May 8) 150 points (50 draft, 100 final)

Total 500 points

**Philosophy of this course, and expected academic conduct:** This course presents a Capstone to the Environmental Studies Program. This will be accomplished through the context of looking at Environmental Impact Assessment process mandated from both the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and in looking at many case studies. The class is focused on Prairie Acre and is a Service Learning Course, <http://www.servicelearning.ku.edu/resources.shtml>. For these reasons there will be a group class project on a topic related to Prairie Acre. It is the intent of the instructors to help you to learn (in contrast to just having you memorize and regurgitate information) and we believe that hands on work and discussion of real-life experiences can provide a capstone to your studies at KU.

**Student help:** Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitation of the educational process.