Eighty-one percent of Americans live in cities; in California, the figure is 95%. At present, the U.S. national government is deadlocked and environmental policies are in the hands of officials who are hostile to regulation. If we are to be saved from the worse consequences of climate change and pollution, and provide healthy human habitats to increasingly vulnerable populations, then local governments and citizens must cooperate to find, publicize, and implement best ecological practices. This course will focus on efforts by U.S. urban governments and social groups to achieve those goals, and to understand the conditions under which they are successful. The variety of readings, discussion in class, and individual research on topics of your choice will all contribute to an enlightening semester in urban environmental politics.

There will be two-page weekly essays (with one late paper week, your choice) on the syllabus readings, with individual or group presentations and debates around the week’s themes. There will also be a final research paper on a topic of your choice, in consultation with me, and drawing on course themes and concepts. You can choose a city to investigate, or more than one city to compare, or look at a local or regional problem (say, superfund sites, air or water issues, technology issues, networks of trails, effects on marginalized groups, etc.). The weekly essays will count for 30% of the grade, the final research paper (12-15pp) for 50%, and class preparation/participation will count for 20%. Aside from the book sections, other readings will be on Blackboard in the weekly folders. There will also be interesting, optional items at the Blackboard site indicated with “Opt” that may useful for your paper. The two books used, in order of use (available for purchase at the Campus Store, and will be on reserve at Uris) are:

(2) Lisa Benton-Short and John Rennie Short, *Cities and Nature*, 2nd ed. 2013

Any class handouts or Blackboard items NOT on the syllabus are strictly optional reading, fyi. You are not required to read or use them. Optional readings on BB are so labeled. Readings in the two assigned books are designated with an asterisk.

**Week 1** Introduction to Broad Themes and Concepts: Biophilic Cities.
Jared Green, “To Connect with Nature, Live in the City” *Huffington Post, THE BLOG* 07/01/2016 04:44 pm ET. Read the article on BB; watch the Video on Singapore at the HuffPost site: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jared-green/biophilic-cities-lead-the_b_10632830.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jared-green/biophilic-cities-lead-the_b_10632830.html)

The question that arises is whether this kind of ultimate biophilia is only possible in a wealthy non-democracy, or a Platonic city-state? (In a democratic nation, are ambitious green policies more possible with a strong mayor--for example, a Michael Bloomberg?) For the other side, Read:


Go from Jared Green and the Singapore video and article to Prof. Timothy Beatley’s biophilic cities blog at UVA and click on the six American cities with their much more limited agendas: [http://biophilicCities.org/partner-cities/](http://biophilicCities.org/partner-cities/) (Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Austin, Milwaukee, Portland, San Francisco). Read the overviews and click on spotlight projects.
*Short and Short, “Urban Sustainability,” in *Cities and Nature*, 436-81
(Opt) Thomas Beatley *Handbook of Biophilic City Planning & Design*, 1-32

**Week 2**

**Introduction to Urban Ecology**

*Short and Short, *Cities & Nature*, 1-17, 57-93, 111-41, 229-60
World Bank, “Cities and Climate Change,” 1-43
And you might take a look at
http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/population_and_sustainability/ re population growth (The elephant in the living room)


**Week 3**

**The Economics of Greener Cities**

*Myron A. Levine, *Urban Politics*, 1-54, 63-73, 75-77, 93, 96-104, 221-230
Mike Alberti, “But everybody does it,” Cities and states soliciting for corporate location
Roger Keil, Mark Whitehead, “Cities and the Politics of Sustainability,” *OHUP*, 520-41
Richard Florida, “The Roots of the New Urban Crisis” [and the election of Trump?]
City growth via domestic and international migration (2 articles)
The deep city economy and looming crises (3 articles)

(Opt) “The Technopolis and the Urban Growth Coalition” [in the Richard Florida vein]
(Opt) Jacobson, Howarth, Ingraffea et al, *Examining the Feasibility of Converting New York State’s All-Purpose Energy Infrastructure to One Using Wind, Water, and Sunlight*

(Opt) Cornell Faculty Senate Divestment Resolution, passed Dec. 9, 2013

**Week 4**

**The Governmental Context I: Local and National Structures and Policies That Affect Environmental Outcomes**

*Levine, *Urban Politics*, 105-36, 152-68
Emily Badger, “Blue Cities Want to Make Their Own Rules. Red States Won’t Let Them,”*NYT* July 6, 2017
Relationship of ideology to environmental policy (2 articles by Tausanovich, McCarty et al )
Jon Frandsen, *Stateline*, “Beyond Rooftops: States Move to Encourage Community Solar”
Pamela Wood, “Maryland joins 8 other states in carbon emission cuts,” Balt. Sun, Aug. 23, 2017
Felicity Barringer, “A Grand Experiment to Rein in Climate Change” NYT 10-13-12

**Week 5** Governmental Context II: National Laws and Agencies

Norman J. Vig and Michael E. Kraft, eds., Environmental Policy, ch. 1, pp 1-29
Walter A. Rosenbaum, “Improving Environmental Regulation…Balancing Politics, Policy, & Science,” ch 8 in Vig and Kraft, ibid, 169-89
Mary C. Wood, Susan O’Toole, “How to Sue for Climate Change: The Public Trust Doctrine,” 1-3; Patrick Rowe, Sussman Shank, 14-17. All in Outlook, Oregon State Bar
John Schwartz, “Cities and Sts Take the Global Warm. Fight to Court,” NYT Aug. 11, ‘17
Oliver Gutfriend, 20th Century Urban Sprawl, 1-23, 54-59
Eric Toder, “Eliminating Tax Expenditures with Adverse Environmental Consequences”
Diane Cardwell, “Tax Credit in Doubt, Wind Power is Withering,” NYT

(Opt) Collaborative Environmental Governance (Science, August 18, 2017)
(Opt) Theda Skocpol, “Naming the Problem: What it will take to Counter Extremism and Engage Americans in the Fight against Global Warming” Harvard, January, 2013
(Opt) Coral Davenport, “The Scary Truth About How Much Climate Change is Costing You: While policymakers fiddle, the threat of economic harm posed by rising sea levels, devastating storms, and drought is growing every day,” National Journal, Feb. 8, 2013.

**Week 6-7** City Air and Transportation

*Short and Short, Cities and Nature, “Air,” 317-50
EPA, “History of the Clean Air Act”
Congressional Research Service (CRS), Clean Air Issues in the 112th Congress, 1-20
Frank Kelly and Julia Fussell, “Air Pollution and Public Health,” NIH

Andre Tvinnereim & Nives Dolsak, “Urban Climate Change Policies in Transportation” (APSR)
C.C. Reynolds et al, The impact of Transportation Infrastructure on Bicycling Injuries & crashes.
Sally McGrane, “Commuters Pedal to Work on Their Very Own Superhighway” (Copenhagen) “How the Dutch Got Their Cycle Paths” (and watch video)

(Opt) EPA soot rules, Dec. 2012-Jan 2013 (two articles from The Hill, and Reuters)
(Opt) “Pollution Rapidly Changing Childhood in China’s Cities,” NYT 4-22-13
(Opt) Jeffrey Seyler, “Lung Assn. Expresses Concern Over Air Pollution from Fracking”
(Opt) “America’s Best Bike City: Portland, OR”
Week 8  Water, and Danger

*Short and Short, Cities and Nature, “Water,” 281-315
Noah S. Diffenbaugh, “Climate Lessons from California,” NYT August 17, 2017
CRS, Water Quality Issues in the 112th Congress, 1-23
Lead in City Water (3 arts: EPA Rules; Andrew Highsmith, “Revisiting the Flint, MI, lead-in-water crisis a year after…;” University of CA, Irvine, Jan. 5, 2017; and the Ithaca story)

Jim Dwyer, “In a Flood-Troubled City, a Refreshing Argument About Climate Change,” NYT “Cities Under Water” NYT Sunday Review
“Can Cities be Both “Resilient” and “Sustainable?” David Biello, Slate

Rosenberg, “Green Roofs in Big Cities”
Seattle Rain Garden saga (powerpoint)

Diane Rehm interview, “The Aftermath of Oil Spills in Michigan and Arkansas,” NPR, 8-19-13

(Opt) Jamie Swinnerton, “…Blue Green Algae,” Ithaca Times, Aug. 10, 2017
(Opt) Ian Lovett, “Slaking a Region’s Thirst While Cleaning its Beaches,” NYT April 7, 2013

Week 9  Urban Agriculture: How Much Food Can Be Produced Locally?

History: “Victory Gardens in WWII” (two articles)
Tara Duggan, “Urban Farms in California,” Times Union, March 1, 2017
Jennifer Cockrall-King, Food and the City, 283-314
Giles Billen, J. Garnier et al, “Localizing the Nitrogen Imprint of the Paris Food Supply”
Kate Murphy, “For Urban Gardeners, Lead is a Concern,” NYT May 13, 2009
Mark Hertsgaard, “Harvesting a Climate Disaster,” NYT Sept. 12, 2012 (The Farm Bill)

(Opt) Biosphere Harvesting (Science, March 15, 2013)
(Opt) Jonathan Latham, How Millions of Farmers Are Advancing Agriculture For Themselves Bioscienceresource.org, December 3, 2012 (describing Norman Uphoff’s work on SRI)
To hear Uphoff describe it on video, see http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/audioslideshow/2013/feb/15/india-rice-revolution-audio-slideshow
(Opt) Mark Bittman, two articles about food quality and production systems.
(Opt) Mark Tortorello, “Growing Everything but Gardeners”

Week 10  Urban Ecology and Health

Wilson, Constructed Climates, 148-85 (on BB)
Ryan Jaslow. “Pesticides in Tap Water Linked to Food Allergy Risk,” *CBS News*, 12-3-12

The next big thing? Electromagnetic Fields, pulsed radio-frequency radiation, human effects
(3 articles on EMFs, Smart Meter requirements, and our omni-present self-radiation)

(Opt) The Military, Toxic Pollution, and Climate Change (there is also an ES powerpoint)

**Week 11**  Plants and (Wild) Animals in Cities

Coyotes and now “Coywolves” in Cities (4 articles)

(Opt) “American Forests Names the 10 Best U.S. Cities for Urban Forests,” BB, and:
http://www.americanforests.org/newsroom/american-forests-names-the-10-best-u-s-cities-for-urban-forests/

**Week 12** Ecosystem Services

*Short and Short, *Cities and Nature*, “Urban Political Ecology,” 229-60”
Johan Colding, “The Role of Ecosystem Services in Contemporary Urban Planning,” 228-37 in Niemela, ed
William Wilson, *Constructed Climates*, ch. 2, 28-43 (on BB) (Opt: read on to 65)
Richard Harris, “As Temperatures Rise, Cities Combat ‘Heat Island’ Effect,” *NPR GA*
April Reese, “Forests: Ecosystem Services at Risk from Suburban Development,” *EENewsnet*, August 19, 2010 (6pp)
Jim Robbins, “With Funding Tight, Cities are Turning to Green Infrastructure,” *Yale Environment* 360, August 23, 2012
Lisa Foderaro, “To Tackle an Invasive Weed, Bringing In the Hooved Pros,” *NYT* 9-21-12

**Week 13** Building Green (City Architecture)

Michael C. Houck, “Respecting Nature’s Design in Portland, OR,” 75-86
Mireya Navarro, [Energy Use in Buildings], *NYT* August 2, 2012
Seth Bensel and Elizabeth Sanders, “In the Dark About Light,” *In These Times*, 2013
Boulder, NYC, and Dallas: Three examples of city codes encouraging green buildings

(Opt) Energy Infrastructure (Todd Miller, interview w. Jeremy Rivkin in *SFGate*)
(Opt) Bird-Friendly Building

Note: Class attendance is required in seminars. If you are ill and cannot come to class, get a record of your Gannett visit to confirm that. You must do all the weekly essays on time in order not to have a final exam (with the exception that you get one “late paper” week. Tell me when you are taking your late week, and get the paper to me within a week). Naturally, you should write your papers before reading those of your classmates.
If there is any situation that is interfering with your attendance or effort in the course, come and talk to me in confidence. If I don’t answer your email in 24 hours, feel free to call me at home for any urgent situation. I want you to do well in the course. Let me know if there is a problem.