

## **Human Ecology of the Southern Appalachians and Sustainable Community Development in the Southern Appalachians**

Department of Anthropology  
Wake Forest University

Dr. Eric Bowne  
Dr. Joshua Lockyer

### **Course Description and Learning Objectives**

These two courses combine to provide students with the knowledge and skills to understand changing human-environment relationships in the southern Appalachian region and to apply these understandings to the assessment of and potential solutions to contemporary socio-environmental issues in the area. **Human Ecology of the Southern Appalachians** uses archaeological, ethnohistorical, historical and political ecology literature and field trips to archaeological and historical sites to generate an understanding of how human-environment relationships have changed in the southern Appalachians from prehistory to the present day. Moving chronologically, we will explore the emergence of Mississippian societies, their transformation during prehistoric and early historic eras, the impacts of early European settlements and the regions' incorporation into the global marketplace, development and the growth of tourism and industry in the area, and current social and environmental issues in southern Appalachia including mountain top removal mining, hog farming, and the interconnections between environmental change and community vitality. **Sustainable Community Development** builds on the knowledge gained in the first course to consider ways in which socio-environmental issues in the southern Appalachians are being addressed. This course employs an experiential, service learning approach and builds on the work of community development scholars and Lockyer's research on sustainable communities to consider how scholars, in partnership with local communities and social movement organizations, are creating more just and sustainable human-environmental relationships in the southern Appalachians. It employs an array of literature, experiential and service learning approaches, and field trips to introduce students to a variety of sustainable community development initiatives from cohousing and ecovillages to farmers markets and craft cooperatives, to landscape and community remediation endeavors.

By the end of the course students should:

- Understand the dynamic human ecology of the southern Appalachians through time
- Understand how the human ecology of the southern Appalachians is connected to larger, regional, national and global socio-cultural and political economic forces
- Be able to apply knowledge of the prehistoric and historic human ecology of the southern Appalachians to an assessment of current socio-environmental issues in the area
- Understand what communities are doing to create a more sustainable human ecology in the Southern Appalachians
- Be able to situate themselves and their economic choices within the dynamics of southern Appalachian human ecology

- Understand how they can contribute to just and sustainable solutions through service learning, practice oriented approaches and their own economic choices

### **Readings and Activities for Human Ecology of the Southern Appalachians:**

Davis, Donald Edward. 2000. *Where There Are Mountains: An Environmental History of the Southern Appalachians*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

#### *Selections from:*

Ayers, Harvard. 1998. *An Appalachian Tragedy: Air Pollution and Tree Death in the Eastern Forests of North America*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.

Biggers, Jeff. 2006. *The United States of Appalachia: How Southern Mountaineers Brought Independence, Culture, and Enlightenment to America*. Shoemaker & Hoard.

Eller, Ronald D. 1982. *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880 – 1930*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Hill, Sarah H. 1997. *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Orr, Douglas M. and Alfred W. Stuart (eds.). 2000. *The North Carolina Atlas*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Reece, Erik 2006 *Lost Mountain: Radical Strip Mining and the Devastation Of Appalachia*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Sheppard, Muriel Early. 1935(1991). *Cabins in the Laurel*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Silver, Timothy. 2003. *Mount Mitchell & the Black Mountains: An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern America*.

#### *Visits to:*

Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail

Grandfather Mountain World Bio-Preserve

Mount Mitchell (guest lecture on mountain ecosystem changes)

Centro de Enlace (immigrant community services center, Burnsville, NC)

Coweeta Long-term Ecological Research Station

## **Readings and Activities for Sustainable Community Development in the Southern Appalachians**

### *Readings:*

McKibben, Bill. 2007. *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

### *Selections from:*

Beaver, Patricia D. 1986. *Rural Community in the Appalachian South*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Dawson, Jonathan. 2006. *Ecovillages: New Frontiers of Sustainability*. Dartington: Green Books.

Dunn, Durwood. 1988. *Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Estill, Lyle. 2008. *Small is Possible: Life in a Local Economy*. New Society Publishers.

Fisher, Stephen L. (ed.). 1993. *Fighting Back in Appalachia: Traditions of Resistance and Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Gilbert, Elizabeth. 2002. *The Last American Man*. New York: Penguin.

Kaufman, Wallace. 2000. *Coming Out of the Woods: The Solitary Life of a Maverick Naturalist*. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing.

Lockyer, Joshua. 2007. *Sustainability and Utopianism: An Ethnography of Cultural Critique in Contemporary Intentional Communities*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Georgia.

Snyder, Gary. 1990. *The Practice of the Wild*. New York: North Point Press.

Communities Magazine.

Permaculture Activist Magazine.

### *Activities:*

Ecological Footprinting: Comparing the Footprints of Students and Ecovillagers (potential publication or conference paper)

Food Commodity Chain Analysis: From Global to Local

Energy Commodity Chain Analysis: On Grid to Off Grid

*Visits To:*

Earthaven Ecovillage (service learning and ecological footprinting activities; guest lectures on ecovillage design, permaculture, green building, and integrated sustainable agricultural systems)

Celo Community (guest lecture on biodiversity and seed saving; guest lecture on salvage building)

Westwind Cohousing

Arpin House urban permaculture community

Asheville Farmer's Market

Methane recovery/business incubator site

Pittsboro area (bio-diesel plant, farmers market, CCCC)

Turtle Island