

## **INT231 BE Interdisciplinary Special Topic 7** **-Community and Environment (PBL)-**

**Course Code:** INT231   **Credit:** 3   **Course Offered:** Spring & Fall 2013   **Student Capacity:** 12

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### **Course Description:**

This course is designed to examine practical issues of local natural environment such as forest and farm land management, and discuss local potentials and future possible solutions through PBL. Depopulation and aging are serious social problems especially for rural areas in developed countries such as Japan. It has caused new problems at local level “Who manages abandoned forest and farms?” Local environmental problems are linked in a number of ways, with global and national levels, and with social institutions both causing environmental degradation and offering potential solutions to environmental problems.

Groups consisted of both Japanese and international students tackle on Group Projects “Environmental Changes -Past, Present, and Future of Arawa community” with experiential learning such as field survey and farm work with residents in Arawa, Akita city. The course includes two parts to understand 1) theoretical perspectives on community and environmental sociology and 2) realities of community and natural environment through field research in Arawa community. Finally, students make poster presentation and discuss about it with local people, and submit group and individual reports on their findings to both the instructor and the community. That student centered learning leads them to understand local environmental problems as dynamic interactions with global, national and local, and social, cultural and historical.

\* Students need to prepare the expense for field works

### **Objectives:**

The overall aim of this course is that students will 1) understand the linkages of national and global environmental practices with the local environmental issues, 2) understand the mechanism of environmental problems as the interaction between human activities and natural environment, 3) enhance critical and comparative analytical views of consider environmental problems from the point of the interaction between nature and human activity, and 4) make solutions for the sustainable local environmental management.

**Reading Materials:**

Jared Diamond, 2005. *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, Viking Press  
World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 *Our Common Future*, Oxford University Press  
Langdon Winner, 1986. *The Whale and the Reactor*, The University of Chicago Press  
Garret Hardin 1968 *Tragedy of the Commons*, *Science* 162: 1243-1248  
Elimor Ostrom et al. (eds.) 2002 *The Drama of the Commons*. National Academy Press  
Margaret McKean 1992 “The Management of Traditional Commons land (Iriaichi) in Japan” D.W. Bromley (eds.) *Making the Commons Work: Theory, Practice, and Policy*. ICS Press  
Donald Wood 2012 *Ogata-Mura: Sowing Dissent and Reclaiming Identity in a Japanese Farming Village*, Berghahn Books

**Grading Components:**

Class Participation and Contribution – submission of weekly work sheet (20%)

1 Presentation on reading materials with a handout (20%)

Group Presentation (20%)

Group paper (20%)

Individual final paper (20%)

\* This course has a strict attendance policy: Students who have more than 5 classes of unexcused absences in a semester may fail to make the grade.

**Schedule:****Week 1: Introduction**

- Syllabus Review
- What is community and environmental sociology?
- Field experience of the instructor
- Arawa community overview

**Week 2: Environmental Ideology I Civilization**

*Reading assignment: Jared Diamond, 2005. “Why do some societies make disastrous decisions?” In Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, Viking Press, p. 419-440*

- Why environmental problem does happen?

### **Week 3: Field Work 1 Workshop (Sep 21)**

Place: Arawa community center

Self-introduction, Making research goals

Special lecture by Arawa residents, Community mapping

### **Week 4: Environmental Ideology II Sustainable Development**

*Reading assignment: World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 "Toward sustainable development" In Our Common Future, Chapter 2*

- Definitions of sustainability
- How can we achieve sustainable development?

PBL teamwork

### **Week 5: Field Work 2 Farm Work & Community Mapping (Oct 5 & 6)**

Harvesting rice, Hot spring

Data gathering ,Interview

### **Week 6: Technology as Social Structure**

*Reading assignment: Langdon Winner, 1986. "A Philosophy of Technology" In The Whale and the Reactor, The University of Chicago Press*

- Technologies as forms of life
- So artifacts have politics?
- Techne and Politeia

PBL teamwork

### **Week 7: Population and Environmental Issues**

*Reading assignment: Garret Hardin 1968 Tragedy of the Commons, Science 162: 1243-1248*

- Why do people lead resource exploitation?
- What solution for tragedy of the Commons does Hardin suggest in his article?
- What does Hardin use the grazing commons as a metaphor for?

PBL teamwork

### **Week 8: Institutions of the Commons**

*Reading assignment: Elinor Ostrom et al. (eds.) 2002 The Drama of the Commons. National Academy Press, Chapter 2 & 3*

- What are the conditions for sustainable community resource management?
- When does the heterogeneity within the users result effective and harm for communal irrigation

management?

PBL teamwork

**Week 9: Field Work 3 Farm Work & Interview (Nov 9 & 10)**

Cooking local dishes, Homestay, Hot spring

Data gathering, Interview

**Week 10: Local Co-Management Practices in Japan**

*Reading Assignment: Margaret McKean 1992 "The Management of Traditional Commons land (Iriaichi) in Japan" D.W. Bromley (eds.) Making the Commons Work: Theory, Practice, and Policy. ICS Press*

- Why did the common lands emerge in Japan between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries?
- How can the Japanese villagers achieve equity among co-owners of the commons?

PBL teamwork

**Week 11: Changing of rural community – a case from Ogata village, Akita-**

*Reading Assignment: Donald Wood 2012 Ogata-Mura: Sowing Dissent and Reclaiming Identity in a Japanese Farming Village, Berghahn Books, Chapter 2*

PBL team work

**Week 12 & 13: Preparation for final presentation**

Data analysis, Discussion, Preparation for presentation

**Week 14: Final presentation (Dec 7)**

Final presentation will be hold at the class, and it will open for everyone including invited local people, non registered students, and faculties and staffs of AIU. Students will have an opportunity to deepen their learning by synthesizing three group projects into an "Arawa Community Environmental History" after the group presentations.

**Week 15: Synthesis**

\* Group and individual paper due is on Dec 20th.