

M.E. Rinker Sr. School of Building Construction  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida 32611-5703 USA

## BCN6586/ICM6682 Construction Ecology SYLLABUS



Musée du Quai Branly in Paris

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has the objective of determining how to apply ecological theory and developments in industrial ecology to create what has often been described as Ecological Design for the built environment. Although Ecological Design or Ecologically Sustainable Design has been one of the key aspects of sustainable construction or green building, upon closer examination, contemporary approaches lack any true understanding of or incorporation of ecological principles, research, approaches, or key ideas. This course examines the major schools of thought in present day ecology to determine what can be applied either as model or metaphor for green buildings. The new discipline of Industrial Ecology, which applies ecology to industrial operations such as manufacturing, is examined for approaches that can be applied to Ecological Design. The work of architects attempting to apply ecology in their work will be examined to determine the state of environmentally friendly buildings being created using current approaches. Throughout the course subsidiary issues of materials, energy, water,

land use, and the integration of the natural and built environments will be examined. Specific directions will be provided during the course several weeks prior to the Due Date.

### GENERAL DIRECTIONS

The reading assignments in are keyed to books, papers, the textbook, or Environmental Building News (EBN). When the assignment is to **Read** the reference, it is intended that you gain a thorough understanding of the book, paper, or other material. **Scan** means to obtain a cursory understanding or familiarity with the subject matter of the assignment. **View** means that the student is to view the Powerpoint lecture or video.

### COURSE MATERIALS

This course has one required textbook and the online monthly journal, *Environmental Building News*, is also used.

#### Textbook

*Construction Ecology: Nature as the Basis for Green Building*, C. Kibert, J. Sendzimir, and G. Guy, Eds., London: Spon Press, 2002. Available from amazon.com in hard copy or Kindle E-book.

#### Environmental Building News

There are two ways of accessing Environmental Building News:

(1) Through the UF Library e-journal system. Log to [www.uflib.ufl.edu](http://www.uflib.ufl.edu) and log into the library system. Click on Online Journals in the catalog and search for Environmental Building News. When the [www.buildinggreen.com](http://www.buildinggreen.com) website you will

have access to current and past issues of the journal.

(2) Log into the UF network using VPN and then go to [www.buildinggreen.com](http://www.buildinggreen.com) and click on News to get to the current and previous issues.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

You will have four major requirements for this course that are designed to integrate in the course readings and other materials as follows:

**1. Quizzes:** Each week you will have a quiz on the assigned Activities, focused on the readings but including other assigned activities such as viewing videos. There will be 10 questions and you will have 20 minutes to answer them. Recommend you take notes during your Activities so you will have them at hand. Each quiz is worth 20 points and there will be 12 weekly quizzes. Quizzes will be open on Sunday at 7:00 pm EST for 20 minutes for you to complete. (240 points)

**2. Assignments:** Each week, except for the two Group Projects, you will have an assignment which may be either an essay, Powerpoint, or an oral response to the questions posed. You will turn these in each week by midnight EST on Sunday at Sakai. Assignments are 50 points each and there will be 10 of these. The specific requirements are posted in the weekly modules. (500 points)

**3. Group Projects:** You will be assigned two Group Projects on a topic you will

select with instructor approval. Each project is worth 100 points.

**Grading:** The final student grade will be a letter grade based on the percentage of the Total Points Achievable. The grades based on the percentage are as follows:

94-100	A
90-93.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
84-86.9	B
80-83.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
74-76.9	C
70-73.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
64-66.9	D
60-63.9	D-
< 60	E

### **Points Available:**

1. Quizzes: 12 x 20 points: 240 points
2. Assignments: 10 x 50 points: 500 points
3. Group Projects: 2x 100 points: 420 points

**TOTAL POINTS:** 1160 points

**Attendance:** There are no mandatory attendance requirements for this course.

**Grading Method:** Grading will be based foremost on the quality of the written and oral submissions and presentations by the students, to include organization, graphics/models, grammar, spelling, punctuation, originality, and attention to detail.

### **Instructor:**

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## **COURSE MODULES**

Module 1 – Introduction

Module 2 - Defining an Ecology of Construction

Module 3 – Material Circulation, Energy Hierarchy and Building Construction

Module 4 – On Complexity Theory, Exergy, and Industrial Ecology

Module 5 – Applying Ecological Emergence to Design and Construction

Module 6 – Ecological Dynamics and Adaptive Architecture

Summer - Break

Module 7 – Minimizing Waste Emissions From the Built Environment

Module 8 – Industrial Ecology and The Built Environment

Module 9 – Construction Ecology and Metabolism I

Module 10 – Construction Ecology and Metabolism II

Module 11 – Ecologic Analogues and Architecture

Module 12 – ‘Intelligent’ Architecture and Underground Architecture