Introductory Paragraph
At first glance, the syllabus below appears to have little or nothing to do with sustainability, as there is little more than a mention of students addressing the environmental/sustainability aspect of their projects. While there is little on paper in practice I will push students to make connections between the social, cultural, historical, political and environmental aspects of their projects. In a nutshell the syllabus is a skeleton waiting to "fleshed out" by students. The first four areas (political, social, cultural, historical) are an explicit focus of the major, while the final one is the influence of the Piedmont Seminar. Basically I want students to come to see the environmental/sustainability aspects of issues that at first glance might appear to be only political, social, or cultural.

So how will the course work? We will start with student interests/ideas and build doable projects meant to further their learning and do something positive in the world. Students will work collaboratively on framing the various dimensions of their projects, one of which will be environmental/sustainability. As I am not sure what projects students will undertake, I have not assigned any readings. I will explain up front that the course is student-centered and problem-based and that I expect them to do the work of learning. I will see what connections they come up with on their own and then work to create a learning community that will help its members create even more. I am sure I will have a great deal more to share once the projects are complete, as each student will be expected to puzzle out the sustainability slant of their particular piece- and teach us all a great deal in the process.

My long-term goal is to build an "environmental/sustainability" thread into the educational studies major, most likely by creating a course that specifically addresses education and sustainability and possibly co-taught by someone from Environmental Studies.

EDS 471
Educational Studies Capstone Course
Fall 2010

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Course Overview
This course invites seniors to create and carry out studies or projects that build on their interests, experiences and learning in the Department of

Educational Studies. The Capstone Experience will allow students to:
1. *Apply, integrate, synthesize, affirm and extend their learning.*
2. *Link their learning to real world educational problems and situations with the aim of understanding and improving them.*
3. *Explore possible next steps for life after Educational Studies.*

Structure of Course
Concretely, the course will involve students identifying a question or problem of particular interest to them and then developing a means or method for better understanding and/or addressing it. While students may engage in projects as individuals or in small groups, they will be expected to contribute to the projects and learning of all of the students. The assignments will produce the pieces of the project, the specific focus of which will dictate much of the reading.

Evaluation
Assessment will be based on the quality of the intermediate assignments and the completion and presentation of the larger project.

Students will also be evaluated on their participation and contributions to the learning community. This means working with a research team, participating in classroom discussions and providing fellow students with feedback on their writing and project. As I firmly believe students learn as much if not more from each other than they do from the "instructor," I ask students to be active as both students and teachers. I will strive to do the same. Finally, I take attendance because one must be present to participate.

Students will be evaluated and grades based on the following:
Participation and Attendance	*20%*
Project Proposal	*15%*
Annotated Bibliography	*15%*
Memos	*15%*
Project Presentation	*15%*
Final Research Report	*20%*

How to Do Well in this Course
Successful completion of this course hinges on consistent work throughout the entire semester. If you are familiar with the fable about the tortoise and the hare, this course is designed for tortoises, by which I mean students who put in a steady amount of work throughout the course, rather than hares, or students who take metaphorical naps over the course of the semester and then try to make up for these lapses with an intensive flurry of work at the very end. I am most looking for students to make a dedicated attempt to engage their question or problem wholeheartedly and to contribute to the learning community.

A Note on Uncertainty and Learning
This course is designed to elicit and build on student interests and expertise. While this can make for a great deal of uncertainty, it can also make for a great deal of learning. In a very real sense we will be making the road by walking, by which I mean building the course around projects meant to forward our understanding and learning. Consider the course to be, much like the projects, a work in progress that is in a very real sense my project.

Reading List
Students will develop their own reading list over the course of the semester by drawing on previous coursework and conducting their own literature review. Students will create an annotated bibliography of at least 20 readings, 10 of which should be from previous coursework.

The "Project"
Projects will emerge from an interest, question, idea or problem that students wish to pursue further. As a class we will work to create doable projects meant to forward our thinking and understanding on a particular issue, always keeping in mind that the best projects raise as many questions than they answer. Projects can be community-based, activist or academic. They can be carried out individually or in groups. Students will join a research group in which to share and elicit ideas.

Projects will address the cultural, social, educational, political, historical and environmental/sustainability aspects of a particular issue/problem, and pay particular attention to the interconnectedness of these domains.

Course Schedule
Week 1 (8/30)   *What is your Project? What is my project? What is our project?*

Week 2 (9/6) –   *No class- Labor Day*

Week 3 (9/13)   *Designing a Doable Project*
                          Finding the Cultural, Political, Historical, Social and Environmental Strands

Week 4 (9/20)   *Project Proposals Due*

Week 5 (9/27)   *Getting Our Feet Wet*

Week 6 (10/4)   *Learning to Swim*

Week 7 (10/11)   *No class- Fall Break*

Week 8 (10/18)   *Project Sharing- Peer Review and Feedback*

Week 9 (10/25)   *Annotated Bibliography Due*

Week 10 (11/1)   *Project Sharing- Peer Review and Feedback*

Week 11 (11/8)   *TBA*

Week 12 (11/15)   *Git-R-Done*

Week 13 (11/22)   *Reflections*

Week 14 (11/29)   *Final Presentations I*

Week 15 (12/6)   *Final Presentations II*
Capstone Projects Due
Evaluation/Celebration/Next Steps