



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Open Pedagogy Fellowship

Ethnographic Mapping & Exhibit Curation

This assignment is designed to work with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 11 is to “make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable”. Read more about this UN Goal [here](#) and [here](#). The following assignment is scaffolded to include three sections: 1) ethnographic mapping 2) a paper on sustainability 3) a class curated, virtual exhibit and individual reflection on visitor feedback.

Introduction

Through the three parts of this assignment, the goal is to explore what makes “cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Currently, more than half the world’s population lives in urban environments. Yet, while cities may generate economic growth and innovation, they also can generate pollution and other kinds of imbalances.

Often, environmental, health and social issues intersect with one another, provoking the recognition of our shared humanity and our shared interests. You will probably want to begin your work on this assignment by observing what kind of social cohesion is actually happening in our own communities and what everyday people are doing to demonstrate resilience and inclusivity. Some examples may include art, murals, posturing and performative activities like skateboarding, busking, singing, parkour, dancing, protesting, etc.

Through these observations, what do you think needs to happen in order to create urban spaces that benefit the people who live in them? What variables would we need to change in order for more people to experience economic prosperity? What kinds of physical and social landscapes would we need to create in order to sustain an environment that nurtures everyone who lives there? For example, what kinds of public space, architecture, and cultural/artistic representations and performances can be recognized for their diversity and marginalized voices? What still needs to be built, repaired and imagined?

Preparation

In order to answer these questions, we are going to explore how humans think and act in groups by creating an ethnographic map of our shared communities. We are going to think of this shared communal space as an edge city because we live in close proximity to a major city but still interact with political, economic and cultural factors that may operate differently than when in the city-center proper. Joel Garreau first popularized the idea of edge cities in his study *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* (1991). Garreau observed that in the late 20th century urbanization was experiencing focused growth on the perimeter of traditional city centers. As such, these perimeters or edges become important places to explore how people there are thinking about issues of sustainability.

In addition to investigating our shared communal space here as an edge city, please also watch the documentary *Tomorrow* (2015) where filmmakers travelled around the world to meet local communities and people who are working on creative solutions to environmental and social challenges. You will learn about innovative ideas to rethink agriculture, energy, economy, education and governance. <<https://www.tomorrow-documentary.com/-synops-section>> The documentary should help you to start thinking about how we can meet our basic human needs within our edge city while still supporting the health and well-being of all who live here.

Part 1: Ethnographic Mapping

For this assignment, we will all contribute to a shared Google Earth Map where everyone will be responsible for documenting life in our communities by uploading descriptions, photos and videos that will help us to collectively understand and answer the above questions. You will need to upload a total of **3 photographs and/or pictures with accompanying video interviews** (that you will conduct) that explore issues of economic, social and environmental sustainability within our communities.

You may start by exploring the specifics of what a healthy and productive, urban ecosystem would look like such as having good air quality, fresh water supply, and reduced pollution; however, you should also think about how this basic infrastructure impacts your community's social and economic health and well-being. Here are some questions to consider, but please do not limit yourself to these alone. I'm sure there are many more questions that you could engage in.

Economic:

- Are there enough jobs?
- Is the minimum wage sufficient to support families?
- How many people are below the poverty line in your community?

Social

- Are the streets safe at all times of day?
- What are shared public spaces like? Who interacts in them?
- How does social class impact how people use these spaces?

Cultural Space

- What kinds of visual culture or artistic expression exist in the community?
- What does the existing architecture of these spaces represent to the community?
- What kinds of performative activity animate the space?

Environmental

- How far is the nearest public transport?
- Where is your nearest food store? And, what kinds of products are available?
- What kind of green areas are available for food production and for parks?

After you have explored these and other questions, do an inventory of your community and collect **3 photographs and/or pictures** (these should be original—meaning you created them) that reflect your **answers to these questions**. These can include areas where your communities have developed a **positive relationship to sustainability** and **areas where this may not be the case** and where we need to think more pointedly about solutions.

After you have collected your photographs and pictures, please **interview three people in your community**, one for each representation and what it brings up. The interview doesn't have to be long (3-5 minutes) and can be recorded on your phone or in an online conferencing platform and should be uploaded to *YouTube*. The idea is to engage your interviewees in reflection on the sustainability issues that you are bringing to their attention. Here is a sample interview schedule to help you think about how you will navigate your own:

Interview Schedule Idea: I am surveying and documenting our community to better understand how it supports the people who live here. I collected this representation of _____, and I'm wondering what it brings up for you? What does it make you think about? If there is a problem, what actions or solutions might you suggest? Or, if _____ is already working well, why do you think that is?

For each representation (photo/picture) and interview, you will need to save it to your desktop and upload it into our class Google Earth Map at the location/address that it represents. You will find a link to the map on our class website. Here are some basic steps to follow:

1. Please click on the link to our class project titled: Fill in the Blank
2. Once you are in Google Earth and in our class project page, please click on the *search* button. You can input an address or name of a location there.
3. Once Google Earth has identified your address/location, please click on *add to project*.
4. Then, click on *edit to place*.
5. You will then have the option to add written descriptions, photos, pictures, and *YouTube* videos.
6. Once you have uploaded these, please click the arrow to go back to our class home page. Your location addition should be added as a place on our collective map. You should be able to click on it and see your description, photo/picture and interview.

*Note: When you upload, please be sure to include a short paragraph description (5-7 sentences) of what the photo/picture represents and how it illustrates an issue connected to economic, social, cultural space or environmental sustainability in your community.

Here is a rubric that will be used to grade your work:

Fieldwork	Points
Photograph/Picture 1: A photo or picture that is original, that you have created, that depicts a positive relationship to sustainability within your community or where this may not be the case and where we need to think more pointedly about solutions.	8 points
Photograph/Picture 2: A photo or picture that is original, that you have created, that depicts a positive relationship to sustainability within your community or where this may not be the case and where we need to think more pointedly about solutions.	8 points
Photograph/Picture 3: A photo or picture that is original, that you have created, that depicts a positive relationship to sustainability within your community or where this may not be the case and where we need to think more pointedly about solutions.	8 points
Interview 1: A 3-5 minute video recording is created that is uploaded to YouTube. Documentation of informed consent.	12 points
Interview 2: A 3-5 minute video recording is created that is uploaded to YouTube. Documentation of informed consent.	12 points
Interview 3: A 3-5 minute video recording is created that is uploaded to YouTube. Documentation of informed consent.	12 points
Description 1: Create a short paragraph description (5-7 sentences) of what the photo/picture represents and how it illustrates an issue connected to economic, social, cultural space or environmental sustainability in your community.	10 points
Description 2: Create a short paragraph description (5-7 sentences) of what the photo/picture represents and how it illustrates an issue connected to economic, social, cultural space, or environmental sustainability in your community.	10 points

Description 3: Create a short paragraph description (5-7 sentences) of what the photo/picture represents and how it illustrates an issue connected to economic, social, cultural space or environmental sustainability in your community.	10 points
Upload to Class Project on Google Earth Map: Each photo/picture, interview and description is successfully loaded to our class Google Earth map project.	10 points
Total	100 points

Part 2: Paper on Sustainability

After all materials are uploaded, please take a look at the map we've collectively created and write a **5-7 page reflection** on what you have learned based on our collective gaze at sustainability. In addition to analyzing our **ethnographic map**, you should **also include materials from our class readings and discussions**. Finally, please include a **statistical chart** that shows your interpretation of the issues through a counting of how many times you understand that specific issues came up. You can design the codes/themes within the chart however you want as long as you are interacting with the data we have collected (table, pie chart, graph, etc.). Your reflection should describe and explain your statistical portrait on urban sustainability within our shared communities.

Here is a rubric that will be used to grade your work:

Paper Components	Points
Introduction: Please start your paper with an introduction that outlines the class project and the major points that you would like to address in your paper about sustainability within our shared communities—what our major findings have been as a class and how you understand these issues moving forward.	10 points
Statistical Portrait: Using our class map in Google Earth, please do some coding and theming of the issues represented. You will need to create descriptive categories and count how many times that each category came up in our collective representations. You will then need to create a statistical portrait of that coding/theming. You can decide how to approach this (table, pie chart, graph, etc.)	15 points
Description: Please describe your statistical portrait as a way to understand our collective class findings. What are the positive relationships with sustainability, as you understand it? What are the negative ones? What potential solutions are offered? What needs to be considered? What is working overall? What isn't?	15 points
Analysis & Interpretation: Using our class readings and other course materials for investigation, please analyze our class findings using concepts from this class. How do you understand what is happening from this perspective?	15 points
Reflection: After you have analyzed our collective findings, you may start to develop a vision for what a sustainable, urban community should look like and how that might reduce poverty and other inequities in your area. Please reflect on what you have learned through this process and what your vision looks like. Some questions to consider are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is fair & equitable sharing of resources? ● What does appropriate access to resources look like? ● How would planning and policy frameworks need to be written to reflect these values? ● How do these values and initiatives connect to our globalized world? 	15 points

Conclusion: This section should summarize your arguments without adding new material.	10 points
References: Please include in-text citations along with a separate page of full bibliographic citations for each source used in the analysis and interpretation.	10 points
Grammar & Clarity: Please remember to spell-check your paper and to have another pair of eyes read it for both grammar and clarity. Your paper should follow a logical progression and should easily transition the reader through each section supporting the statements put forth in your introduction.	10 points
Total	100 points

Part 3 Class Curated Virtual Exhibit

Now that we have created an ethnographic map of our community, our edge city, and you have each analyzed and interpreted our collective understandings of how sustainability works here, we are going to **curate a virtual exhibit** on what we've learned to **solicit feedback from viewers** on how they understand our cultural representation of sustainability.

As a class, we will divide into groups, and each group will pick 4 images from our ethnographic map that best explore the **four categories of sustainability that guided our work: economic, social, cultural space and environmental**. Your group should select **four images**, one from each of these categories, from our ethnographic map. Please select your images with intention. Within your groups, please discuss the elements that make up the photograph/picture under consideration for selection and what impact it has on the viewer in terms of its message. Please create a process of selection criteria related to how impactful, well composed, and arresting/interesting the photographs are.

Once your group has selected four images, one from each sustainability category, you will then need to **write a 300 word didactic for each image**. A didactic is interpretive/educational text, usually written by exhibition curators, that is displayed on panels on exhibition gallery walls. As you write your didactic for each image, please include the following: 1) What narrative does the photograph/picture tell? 2) What is the context behind that narrative? 3) How does this narrative relate to the UN Goal on sustainable communities? and 4) If the picture illustrates a positive relationship with sustainability, what variables have cultivated this response? If the picture illustrates a negative relationship with sustainability, what variables need to change in order to create a sustainable equity for all who live in this space?

Each group will then create a presentation of their selected images and didactics to share with the class. From this presentation, we will then **collectively decide on twelve images (three for each category) that will be displayed in our class virtual exhibit on Artsteps (artsteps.com)**. Each class member will be given the chance to participate in a class discussion on selection choices and then to vote on the final twelve images selected.

As a class, we will also create a **short, visitor survey (using Google forms)** to include at the end of the exhibit for visitor feedback. We want to see if our understanding of sustainability is similar or different to people living in our communities or elsewhere. Each class member will be responsible for sharing the virtual exhibit with at least three people and for them to fill out the visitor survey.

The final step will be to analyze the data we collected from the visitor survey to **better understand how knowledge is produced, represented and circulated**. You will **write a five-page reflection** on what you have

learned to **include a descriptive statistical interpretation** of the collected data for each question in the visitor feedback survey.

Here is a rubric that will be used to grade your work:

Virtual Exhibit Components	Points
Group Work: Your group creates a presentation to share with the class that highlights your curation process and the 4 images you chose, one for each sustainability category (economic, social, cultural space & environmental) with accompanying 300 word didactics that includes: 1) What narrative does the photograph/picture tell? 2) What is the context behind that narrative? 3) How does this narrative relate to the UN Goal on sustainable communities? and 4) If the picture illustrates a positive relationship with sustainability, what variables have cultivated this response? If the picture illustrates a negative relationship with sustainability, what variables need to change in order to create a sustainable equity for all who live in this space?	20 points
Class Curation: You discuss your rationale and criteria for image selection with the class and participate in class voting for the final twelve images selected.	15 points
Exhibit & Visitor Survey Development: While specific members of the class will input the selected images into our virtual exhibit on Artsteps and will input our questions into the visitor virtual survey, we will all preview and comment on the final products before we circulate them to a greater public.	15 points
Public Sharing of Exhibit & Visitor Survey: Each class member will be responsible for sharing the exhibit with at least three people in their social networks and having them fill out the visitor survey. A list of names and emails will be collected to verify submission from these contacts but will not be circulated with anyone without their informed consent.	15 points
Five-Page Reflection: After we have discussed our findings from the visitor survey in class, The final step will be to analyze the data we collected from the visitor survey to better understand how knowledge is produced, represented and circulated. You will write a five-page reflection on what you have learned to include a descriptive statistical interpretation of the collected data for each question in the visitor feedback survey.	35 points
Total	100 points

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