

**Geography 590: Community-Based Geographic Research**
Department of Geography – San Diego State University Spring – 2015

**Instructors**
Fernando Bosco, Professor, fbosco@mail.sdsu.edu (619) 594-7187 (Main instructor)
Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, Associate Professor, pmarcell@mail.sdsu.edu (619) 594-0906
Jamie Speed Rossiter, Doctoral Teaching Associate, jaime.rossiter@mail.sdsu.edu
Curtis Battle, Graduate Teaching Assistant, csbattle@gmail.com

**SDSU Course Catalog Description**
Local social and/or environmental issues. Research design, data collection and analysis, collaboration with community-based organizations, reflection on research and social responsibility, communication of findings. One lecture and four hours of activity or fieldwork. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. Recommended: Statistics 119.

**Detailed Course Description**
This is a project-based course designed to provide students with hands-on research experience while also helping advance social and environmental justice in the local community. This semester, the course is organized around three community-based research projects. Students in the course will choose one of the following three research projects to get involved throughout the semester:

*Project 1: Young People’s Food Daily Activity Spaces and Routines in City Heights, San Diego*
Research young people’s daily food routines and identify how key places in their food environment relate to different types of food choices. Students will achieve this by mapping the daily food routines and analyzing the content of interviews to provide a richer context to the geographic information. The course research activities include fieldwork and data collection through geo-tagged photography and interviews with students at Hoover High School. Students will attend several of the GIS classes at Hoover High School for the fieldwork and data collection parts of the course. This project is managed and supervised by Professors Fernando Bosco and Pascale Joassart Marcelli.

*Project 2: Applied Sustainability and Habitat Stewardship in an Urban Setting with San Diego Canyonlands*
Work with San Diego Canyonlands (SDCL), a local non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, protect and restore the natural habitats in San Diego County canyons and creeks by fostering education and ongoing community involvement in stewardship and advocacy. With this project, you will work on stewardship projects in San Diego canyons, involving different types of fieldwork activities. This project is managed and supervised by instructors Jaime Speed Rossiter (jaime.rossiter@mail.sdsu.edu) and Curtis Battle (csbattle@gmail.com). Professor Bosco is the instructor of record.
Project 3: Urban Conservation, GIS mapping and planning with San Diego Canyonlands
Collect GIS field data including trails, infrastructure, erosion, fence, and other elements in an assigned urban canyon in San Diego. Process collected fieldwork data in the geography spatial analysis laboratory in order to produce a set of existing conditions maps that will be used for planning purposes by San Diego Canyonlands. This project is managed and supervised by Curtis Battle (csbattle@gmail.com). Professor Bosco is the instructor of record.

Learning Outcomes
Through this course, students will:
- Develop community awareness: identify community needs around social and environmental issues;
- Apply skills and knowledge to real world problems: use geographic approaches to understand social and environmental issues
- Cultivate social and environmental responsibility and promote social and environmental justice: become prepared for active civic participation in a diverse democratic society;
- Enhance interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others;
- Develop effective communication skills to reach multiple audiences.

Course Meeting times
Project 1:
Class meeting: Tuesdays 2 to 2:50pm in Storm Hall 325 (Geography Seminar Room)
Fieldwork in Hoover High School: M, T, TH & F 12:20pm to 1:25pm, W 11:50 to 12:41pm
Be aware that you will need transportation to your research site. City Heights is located about 3 miles from campus and can be accessed by car, bicycle and public transit. Bus 15 leaves the SDSU Transit Center every 15 minutes and goes West along El Cajon Blvd with multiple stops in City Heights. It takes approximately 25 minutes to reach Hoover High School.

Project 2:
Class meeting: by appointment with instructor
Fieldwork in San Diego canyons: Saturdays or other arranged times (variable times)
Be aware that you will need transportation to your research site.

Project 3:
Class meeting/lab time: Fridays 9 to 11am (Spatial Analysis Lab, Dept. of Geography)
Fieldwork: Saturdays or other arranged times (variable times)
Be aware that you will need transportation to your research site.

Office Hours
Fernando Bosco: Tuesdays 1 to 2 pm and by appointment (SH 301C)
Pascale Joassart-Marcelli: by appointment (SH 309B)
Jamie Speed Rossiter: Monday 12:45-1:45 pm, Wednesday 3:30-4:30 or by appt. (SH 301A)
Curtis Battle: by appointment
Course Requirements and Evaluation

Project 1: Young People’s Food Daily Activity Spaces and Routines in City Heights, San Diego

Requirements for successful completion include:

- Collection and analysis of geographic data, including the production of maps and transcription and analysis of interviews with young people regarding their food routines.
- Starting on about week 3 of the semester, you will spend between 3 to 4 hours off-campus volunteering and collecting data with students in a GIS class in Hoover High School, using a variety of geographic research tools and methods. For the fieldwork portion of the class, you will need to keep a time log, which will be signed by us and/or our partners in Hoover High School.
- Learn and complete training on working with human subjects on research

Grading will be divided as follows:

- Class Participation, communication, completion of human subjects (IRB) tutorial (10%)
- Fieldwork in community setting, including time log (40%)
- Preparation for data collection, data collection and data analysis (50%)

Project 2: Applied Sustainability and Habitat Stewardship

There are four requirements for successful completion:

- Class meetings: Students are required to attend intermittent with instructors to monitor their progress.
- Stewardship: Students will be required to complete 50 stewardship hours with SDCL outside of the classroom. Opportunities for stewardship hours are available on the calendar at Canyonlands’ website (www.sdcanyonlands.org/event). The bulk of these events fall on Saturdays. SDCL and its partners will be relying on you and failure to show as expected on time will not only negatively affect your grade but be a hardship for their programs. Students will be required to hand in monthly timesheets signed by a SDCL representative showing they have completed the required hours.
- Paper: Students will be required to write a paper at the end of the semester, discussing their experience with SDCL and relating it to course readings. You will also be required to complete a one-page paper prospectus and an annotated bibliography relating to your paper. Further instructions will be given later in the semester.

Grading will be divided as follows:

- Class Participation: 10%
- Paper prospectus: 10%
- Annotated bibliography: 10%
- Final Paper: 30%
- Completion of stewardship hours: 40%

Project 3: Urban Conservation, GIS mapping and planning

There are four requirements for successful completion:

- Project Meetings: Students are required to attend weekly Project Meetings in the SAL GIS lab (SH-324) Fridays 9am-11am. During these meetings we will: (1) check in last
week's fieldwork data, review, determine needs to be edited during the week's deskwork, and what needs to be re-done/ground-truthed in the field; (2) assign/train for next week's fieldwork and check out data (3) general Q&A opportunity with instructors; and (4) do the required desk work edits as time allows.

- Students not well versed in the fundamental GIS skills required by this class (e.g. editing features and attribute tables) may need do some additional independent training/reading in order to ensure they gain the necessary level of comfort and expertise to perform the GIS tasks necessary for this course.

- Fieldwork & Deskwork: Students will be responsible for using Arc Pad on Trimble Juno GPS units and annotated field maps to collect field data including trails, utility infrastructure, erosion, fences, etc. in an assigned urban canyon, and process/edit this data in the lab using ArcGIS Desktop.

- Completed GIS Data/Maps: Students will work to process their data in the lab in order to produce a pair of existing conditions maps (socio-infrastructure and geotopographic/view shed) for their assigned canyon. These data/maps will be used by SDCL, the City of San Diego, and other agencies and therefore must be as organized and as accurate as possible. Poorly made maps/data will not only negatively affect your grade but will also significantly impede the conservation efforts of SDCL, its public agency partners and the CEP program generally.

Grading will be divided as follows:

- Project Meeting Participation, Individual Fieldwork, Individual Data/Maps: 50%
- Final Group Data/Maps: 50%

Required Readings
Course materials, including book chapters, journal articles and other media will be made available through the Blackboard page for this course or via email. There is no textbook for this class. Materials will vary according to the research project in which different students are participating.

General Course Policy
You are responsible for doing any required readings prior to class and for coming to class prepared to discuss them. In addition to the readings noted in the schedule, you are responsible for occasional supplemental readings that will be assigned.

Regular attendance, communication and participation are very important to the success of this course. You should not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns (see contact information above). You should also communicate regularly with your community partner and the other students in your group via Blackboard. We ask that you check your email daily and provide us with the most efficient and reliable contact information.

Fieldwork is a crucial component of this course. Students who fail to engage in any scheduled fieldwork for more than two consecutive weeks (without prior approval) during that same period will loose at least one full letter grade.
For projects for which assignments are required, full credit for late assignments will only be given in case of documented illness or another valid, documented reason. Ten percent will be deducted per day for late assignments; after one week, no late assignments will be accepted.

If you will need special accommodations due to a documented disability, or if you will miss class due to participation in a university-sponsored sport, due to a religious holiday, or for another documented and valid reason, you must let me the instructors know within the first two weeks of class.

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct includes conduct which is aimed at falsely representing a student's academic performance such as cheating, plagiarizing, unauthorized collaboration on course work, falsifying records or data, or intentionally assisting another individual in any of the above. Students involved in academic misconduct will receive an "F" and the SDSU’s Judicial Coordinator will be notified. You are responsible for learning about SDSU’s policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct.

**Course Schedule**

The instructors of each specific project will make a specific class schedule of activities for each project available to you. Check Blackboard, your email and your class meetings for updates and to obtain a full schedule of activities.