Overview In this course we examine the impact of the built and natural environment on human health and health behaviors. We will discuss environmental factors ranging from plates and portions, to nature and parks, housing and neighborhood, as well as sprawl and the automobile. We conceptualize “health” broadly to include physical health, obesity, mental health, and cognitive functioning, as well as health behaviors such as diet and physical activity. Several theoretical models are employed including the life course perspective, the bioecological model, and the reasonable person model (RPM). We focus on environmental factors that act as either protective mechanisms – fostering the long-term resilience of individuals -- or as risk factors – contributing to long-term vulnerability.

Readings: Articles on blackboard: www.blackboard.cornell.edu
Additional Resources: http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/dea6610/index.htm

Requirements & Grading
A. Discussion Leadership 15% Each week, 1 (or 2) student(s) will prepare discussion questions in advance and email these questions to me on the Sunday (by 3:00 pm) prior to our meeting. These student(s) will then facilitate discussion in class.

B. Class participation & mini assignments 30% Participation is critical. In addition to contributing to discussion, participation will involve completing several (4) mini assignments such as environmental evaluations, collecting a bit of data through interviews, observation, or some brief analysis and writing. Students are also invited to participate in a “good news show & tell” during the last ~20 minutes of each class.

C. Project 20%
- Product & presentation due Wed April 9, in class
- Topic, audience & idea [+ for BTG, community contact for BTG] (~ 1 page) due Mon Feb 24, 5PM
- Draft_outline of product/idea (2 page max) due Mon Mar 17, 5PM

There are 2 options for the 6610 project: 1) Sharing Reasonable Person Model or 2) Bridging the Gap: Science to Action

1) Sharing Reasonable Person Model (RPM). Create a product that will apply the Reasonable Person Model to an issue in your field or research area. The product could be a song, a video, a sculpture... It must represent and communicate the principles of RPM clearly and accurately, but need not name “RPM”. Ideally, your product will have a web presence.

2) Bridging the Gap (BTG): Science to Action. Create a research evidence-based product to address a real health/healthy environment issue in the local community. Must connect with a real agency or organization to be your partner or client. The “product” might be a 5-minute video, a booklet or brochure, or a website, for example. Themes could include: “Walk Your Kids to School,” “Build a Park,” “Test for Radon”...

D. Final Paper (~20 pages) 25%
- Topic Idea, & at least 5 references (1-2 pages) due Mon March 3, 5PM
- Paper Draft 5% due Fri March 28, 5PM
- In-Class Presentation of Final Paper 5% Wed April 30 & May 7

Your final paper will explore a topic related to environments & health. It must include a thorough, well-organized literature review (with at least 10 references – mostly journal articles). The paper may be either: 1) a research grant proposal or 2) an empirical research paper (for which you collect some data & report your findings).
OTHER RELEVANT RESOURCES:


WEBITES:

Change Lab Solutions: [http://changelabsolutions.org/](http://changelabsolutions.org/)


Health Impact Assessment, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm)


Dangerous by Design: [http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design/](http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design/)


COOL TOOLS:

- **EPA’s National Atlas for Sustainability**

- **EPA’s Urban Atlas (under development)**
  [http://www.epa.gov/research/docs/urban-atlas-fact-sheet.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/research/docs/urban-atlas-fact-sheet.pdf)


- **Gap Minder** [http://www.gapminder.org/](http://www.gapminder.org/)

**Week 1**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**22 January, Wednesday**

**Introduction: Environmental Impacts on Health**


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**Week 2**

**29 January, Wednesday**

**Historical background: Environment & Public Health**


Chapter 2: Urban design: creating an active city, p. 22-24; peruse 25-65


Review at least two of the following websites:

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, HIA: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm)
- Active Living Research, RWJF, HIA: [http://www.activelivingresearch.org/ressourcesearch/hia](http://www.activelivingresearch.org/ressourcesearch/hia)


*Optional Readings:*


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**Week 3**

**THEORETICAL GROUNDING**

**5 February, Wednesday**

**Human Ecology, Health Promotion, The Life Course Perspective & the Reasonable Person Model**


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1 Optional readings are not provided electronically on BB. Some may be useful resources for paper or other pursuits.
**Reasonable Person Model (RPM) – Read at least 2 of the 3:**


**Optional Readings:**


**Week 4**

**Housing & Health – Physical Health & Mental Health**


**Optional Readings:**


**February Break: Saturday 2/15 – Tuesday 2/18**


Transparency Project Website: www.Transparency.PerkinsWill.com


Optional readings:


**MON 24 FEBRUARY 5:00 PM PROJECT: BTG or RPM Topic, Audience & Product Idea DUE (include community contact for BTG) ~1 page**

**WEEK 6**

**26 FEBRUARY, WEDNESDAY**


Optional Readings:


Kuhlman, R. *Helping Johnny Walk to School.* National Trust for Historic Preservation [peruse]


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**Mon 3 March, 5:00 pm PAPER Ideas Due – 1-2 pages w/ at least 5 citations**

**Week 7**

**5 March, Wednesday**

**Environment & Obesity**


Kuhlman, R. *Helping Johnny Walk to School.* National Trust for Historic Preservation [peruse]


**Peruse:** McCann Consulting: [http://www.bmccann.net/publications.html](http://www.bmccann.net/publications.html)

**Optional Readings:**


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**Week 8**

**12 March**  
**The Food Environment: From Micro to Macro**


**Optional Readings:**


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**Mon 17 March 5:00 pm**  
**PROJECT:** *draft / outline of DUE 2 page max.*

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**Week 9**

**19 March**  
**The Life Course & Health**


http://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/02/magazine/02OBESITY.html?pagewanted=1& r=0


Optional Readings:

28 March, FRIDAY 12:00 noon Final Paper Draft Due

**Week 10**

26 March, Wednesday  Health Disparities: Poverty, Race & Health


**Week 11**

---------- SPRING BREAK – Saturday 3/29 – Sunday 4/6 ----------

2 April  No Class

**Week 12**

9 April, Wednesday  PROJECT: Bridging the Gap (BTG) or Reasonable Person Model (RPM)

9 April:  PROJECT [BTG or RPM] Due & In-Class Presentations

**Week 13**

16 April, Wednesday  Natural Environment & Human Well-Being

Optional Readings:

**Week 14**

23 April, Wednesday TBA

28 April, Monday 5:00 pm Final Papers Due

**Week 15**

30 April, Wednesday Consumption & Affluenza & Presentation of Final Papers

London, B. (1932). Ending the depression through planned obsolescence. (pdf retrieved from Wikipedia)
Optional: Ch 18 An emerging epidemic, pp141-147; Ch 19 The age of affluenza, pp148-154.


**Week 16**

7 May, Wednesday Environmentalism & Sustainability: Taking Care of our Planet & Presentation of Final Papers


Optional Readings:


Conservation Psychology website: http://www.conservationpsychology.org/