

SYLLABUS

Chopping Up the Countryside

An Intensive Lecture and Seminar Course about the Impact of Big Rural Projects

Environmental Humanities Special Course

Professor: JOE SHERMAN

Fall 2005: six-weeks

Enrollment: 15 lecture & seminar students; 15 lecture only students

PURPOSE: The course will introduce students to the big promises and complex problems of large investment projects in rural regions. The focus is on three projects:

Saturn, the biggest one-time investment in the history of the United States

Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, a company started by two hippies in a garage in Vermont that became an icon of green corporate success

NEMAK, the multinational aluminum-engine manufacturer that opened a factory on some of the last good farmland in Northern Bohemia in 2004.

The projects will be reviewed, their complex environmental, economic, and social impacts discussed, and alternative visions presented. Based on lessons and ideas from the lectures, students will discuss and write about rural development today in the Czech Republic.

FORMAT: For six weeks, there will be two lectures and one seminar per week. Lectures will be two hours. Seminars will be one hour.

Lecture & seminar students (L&S) will attend lectures and seminars.

Lecture only students (L) will attend lectures only.

Lectures will present overviews and details on the three main projects. They will examine related topics, such as "big versus small" in rural investments, the dark side of good companies, farm land versus industrial sites, community voice and getting it heard, the shaping of public policy on rural development, and the challenges of researching multinational corporations and government departments.

Seminars will be informal. They will emphasize discussion, analysis, and debate.

Assignments will include readings from a text, from books in the library, and from on-line sources.

Joe Sherman will be available to all students during his posted office hours.

ENROLLMENT AND GRADES: Enrollment is limited to graduate students. Environmental studies, business school, and writing students are welcome.

L&S students will attend all lectures and seminars. They will write one paper to be discussed in the seminars. They will take a final exam. They will be graded.

L students will attend lectures only, take an exam and receive pass/fail grades.

