FYS Course
I Want to Ride My Bicycle: Cycling and Social Change

Monday & Wednesday 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
Meredith Hall Room 229

Instructor: Erin Hurley Smith  erin.hurleysmith@drake.edu
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Bicycle culture is growing in the U.S., to the claim that cycling is changing
American cities. While it seems that using two wheels and pedals to get from
point A to point B is a renewed revolution, and embracing cycling as the ultimate
workout evolved since Lance Armstrong became a household name, bicycling
has a lively and intriguing history. Today bicycling has grown from simple human-
powered transportation to a grassroots movement that weaves myriad issues
such as alternative transportation systems, infrastructure accommodation,
sustainability, health and the desire to just have fun on two wheels. Is bike
culture a concept in search of a meaning?

This course will explore bike culture in Des Moines, Iowa, with a comparison to
the U.S., Europe and beyond, and from textbook to practical application.
Although the class will unfortunately not be traveling to Europe for comparison,
the exploration will sometimes happen on two wheels. The exploration will also
happen in the classroom, on campus, in the neighborhood, and in city
government offices. This course is a service learning opportunity to position
Drake University as a bike-friendly campus and lead change in the city of Des
Moines through community engagement.

The course is an outgrowth of the LEAD capstone project of spring 2015 to
position Drake University as a bike-friendly campus. LEAD students designed a
proposal on bike lanes and other bike-friendly initiatives in the Drake community
and want to build sustainability for the initiative through a First-Year Seminar.

Learning goals and assignments will address learning outcomes for FYS:

Writing: Students will keep a journal to demonstrate awareness of issue through
critical reflection of self and progress of initiative, construct proposals that are
persuasive and outline main objectives of initiative.

Critical thinking: Students will develop critical thinking through various class
exercises, activities and assignments.

Information Literacy: Students will conduct research to compare and contrast
bicycle culture in Europe and the U.S. Plus, students will evaluate information on
city planning, change initiatives, and sustainability initiatives.
Communication: Students will communicate initiative in form and style appropriate to diverse audiences, competence and confidence in presentation ability, and learn to deliver crisp and informative presentations.

Learning topics will cover:
- ecofriendly initiatives
- community engagement
- advocacy
- city planning
- biking/wellness

Objectives/Expectations
~ define and articulate issues, need for change and persuasive arguments
~ construct and execute change initiatives
~ sustain and grow the momentum of current project/plans
~ understand sustainability for project and build capacity
~ collaborate and communicate with peers, Drake leadership, community members, project stakeholders and government officials in written and verbal communication
~ understand the basics of fundraising techniques including grant writing

Course texts and readings:

*Bicycle: The History*, David V. Herlihy (excerpts)

*Pedaling Revolution: How Cyclists Are Changing American Cities*, Jeff Mapes (required text for students)

*Bicycle Diaries*, David Byrne (required text for students)

Various white papers and executive summaries of urban cycling initiatives in Europe and the United States

Additional articles and videos will be assigned.
Grading

A total of 1,000 points is available in this class, with individual assignments worth varying fractions of that total. Accordingly, students in this class do not earn “grades” on individual assignments; they earn “points” toward a final grade. Following is a breakdown of points-per-assignment or required activity:

Earn up to 15 points per class for preparedness, involvement and professionalism.

Class Points: 390 available during the semester

Reflective Essay 1: 25 points

Observation Exercise: 50 points

Service Learning: 135 points

Research Paper - First Draft: 50 points

Research Paper - Final Draft: 150 points

Persuasive Essay - Funder Focus: 100 points

Persuasive Essay - Drake Student Focus: 100 points

TOTAL

Final grades correlate to 100-point increments: 900-1,000=A; 800-899=B; 700-799=C; and so on. Point values are not rounded up or down.

A student’s performance in teamwork and collaboration can have three results: Effective, consistent participation in class discussions and in-class activities can raise the final point total by up to 50 points. Frequent absence, disruptive behavior, or inattention during class can lower a final point total by up to 50 points.

Special Accommodation

If a physical, mental, intellectual or emotional impairment makes necessary accommodations not already in place for this course (including the arrangement or meeting place of the class or the format of coursework, for example), please contact Michelle Laughlin, Coordinator of Student Disability Services, at extension 1835. I’m confident that we can make arrangements that answer your particular learning needs.
Email and Office Hours

The best way to contact me is in person, before, during, or after class or by appointment. You’ll get immediate results that way. Email is the second best form of communication for scheduling time with me or asking ever so brief a question (for instance, a question about a fact under discussion in yesterday’s class, or a question about a word limit or deadline). If you have a question about my expectations, about the work you’re doing, or about your performance in the class—all of which are likely to require a conversation—please plan to meet with me.

When you email me—or any professor—be sure to indicate what class you’re in, to use your Drake email address, and to provide some context for your question. In your emails to me, you may address me as “Erin” or “Professor Smith” (I’m comfortable with both). Please do not begin your email without a direct address, or with an interjection (such as “Hey—” or “Yo!”) or an imperative (“Listen, dude:’”). The subject line of the email address should concisely indicate the reason for your email (which means that, if you’re replying to an email from me, you’ll need to enter a new subject line). Please use your Drake email address to send emails pertaining to this course.

Etiquette and Academic Freedom

You are free to hold whatever opinions you choose, however, you should express only those that are relevant to our course content and goals during class-time. Please be prepared to explain the validity of your opinions and interpretations. It is possible that your opinion on a relevant topic may prove distasteful or even offensive to others; I ask that you take that possibility into account and that you weigh your words carefully as you express your point of view. Please do not “censor” yourself if you have something relevant and insightful to add to the conversation. If it appears to me that the views you express or the manner in which you express them are interfering with the goals of our class, I will let you know.

I realize, of course, that many of you have relationships with one another outside of class. I appreciate the role friendship and personal acquaintance play in determining in-class dynamics. Accordingly, I invite you to maintain those personal relationships in class, to the extent that they do not interrupt class. I also ask that you do not let your personal acquaintance with your classmates become exclusionary or clique-ish: Doing so will threaten the learning environment of the classroom.
**Attendance**

Attendance is required. More than two absences—previously arranged or not, and for any reason—will affect your final grade (see “Grading” above). (Two classes, incidentally, is one whole week of class). If you miss class—for whatever reason—you must contact me before class to make me aware of your situation. You alone are responsible for the learning you missed. If you believe your circumstances warrant special consideration, please make an appointment to discuss your situation with me.

**A Note on Laptops, Tablets and Other Technology**

Please do not use laptops, tablets or other technology in class unless I specifically ask you to do so. Please keep your cell phone silent and out of sight during class. If you are expecting an urgent phone call, set your phone to vibrate and quietly excuse yourself from class to take the call.

**A note from the University about Safety and Inclusiveness**

Drake University strives to create a respectful, safe, and non-threatening environment where its members are able to live, study, and work free from sexual and interpersonal misconduct. In keeping with this goal, the University has adopted certain policies prohibiting sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual exploitation), and interpersonal misconduct (domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking). The Policy on Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct and Notification of Complainant’s Rights is intended to notify victims/survivors of their rights and resources that are available to them when Sexual and/or Interpersonal Misconduct occurs.

Questions about this policy or procedure, making a report, or requesting accommodations to academic, living, working, and/or transportation arrangements, may be directed to:

- Drake University’s Title IX Coordinator/Equity and Inclusion Policy Specialist, Venessa Macro: 515-271-3962 or venessa.macro@drake.edu
- Acting Dean of Students, Dr. Jerry Parker (Students): 515-271-2835 or deanofstudents@drake.edu
- Director of Human Resources, Gary Johnson (Employees): 515-271-4804 or gary.johnson@drake.edu
- Coordinator for Sexual Violence Response and Healthy Relationship Promotion, Alysa Mozak: 515-271-4141 or alysa.mozak@drake.edu

*Working draft syllabus provided to students 8/31/2015. Subject to additional revisions. If revised, the updated version will be shared and fully communicated with students.*