Service-Learning & Research Project (SLRP)

1. Service
The service-learning component includes outreach with a local, non-profit environmental organization. Service can include trail maintenance, gardening, pulling out invasive species, working for environmental justice, mapping, recycling help, youth environmental education, (lots of flexibility on this!). The Community Service Learning office has a fantastic list of potential organizations and contacts. Patti Gorman, the Service-Learning Coordinator, will be leading an orientation on the service-learning experience on the first day of class. For a concise layout, look at page 11 of the Service-Learning Program Student Manual, entitled “Steps to Follow”. Your service experience will account for 35% of the final project grade.

2. Research
We will incorporate the service-learning experience into a research paper and presentation. The assignments address all of our course goals in one go – so this counts for a sizable chunk of your grade. The paper will be 50% and the presentation 15% of the final project grade.

**Paper (1300-1800 words – about 5 pages)**
Toward the beginning of the quarter I will lead in-class sessions detailing the layout of a good research paper, the basics of plagiarism and citing references. I will be available during office hours or by appointment to discuss any aspect of the research paper. The paper will include the following sections:

**Introduction (2 paragraphs)**
*In one paragraph, explain what your service organization is, what they do and how they began. In another paragraph, explain how this organization, and your service, is related to a current environmental issue.* The introduction must include a highlighted thesis statement, which presents your stance on the environmental issue.

*Example thesis statement:*
Urban agriculture is important to Seattle as it provides local and affordable food, builds community and encourages species biodiversity.

**Literature Review (3 pages)**
This section provides the background for the environmental issue you discussed in the introduction. It includes unbiased facts, not your personal opinions. It should include information relevant to your thesis statement and come from a number of resources including books, websites, scientific and/or newspaper articles. **All sources MUST BE CITED.** (Organizing and correctly stating your source of information is truly half the battle in science. We will discuss citations in class.)

*Example resources:*
- **Web:** Urban Agriculture Notes
- **Scientific Journal:** *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*
• **Book:** Agriculture in the City's Countryside by Christopher R. Bryant and Thomas R.R.
• **Newspapers:** Seattle Times, NY Times
• **Report:** US Dept. of Agriculture, Feeding Our Cities Report

*Example literature review topics:*
- Urban garden plots – how many there are in Seattle, their yield and types of plants
- Community surrounding farmer’s markets – where and when they occur in Seattle, the number of community events before and after them, what scientists suggest about the health of a community where farmer’s markets take place
- Species biodiversity – what is it, how USDA reports suggest that the number of plant and animal species are greater in regions where there is urban gardening

**Methodology (1 page)**
The methodology of a research paper includes your methods for supporting your thesis statement. For our purposes, the methodology will be a detailed description of what you did during your service-learning experience. Describe as if someone had to do exactly what you did over again.

*Example methodology:*
Each Wednesday morning at 9 am, I went to the Inter*Im gardens in the International District. The first week, along with the garden coordinator, I placed pumpkin runners in rows and pulled weeds from around the bok choy.

**Conclusion (1 paragraph)**
The conclusion will reiterate your thesis statement and fuse your service-learning experience with the research you have done. How did the two reinforce each other? What are you walking away with at the end of the quarter? The final paragraphs should give your paper a sense of completeness and leave the reader with your perspective on the chosen environmental issue.

*Example conclusion:*
It has been shown how urban agriculture supplements store bought food, fosters community and encourages species biodiversity. I experienced these aspects of the urban food chain first hand at the Inter*Im gardens, working with the community and seeing rare birds that were attracted to it. I feel that sustainability, in the form of food, community and biodiversity, is possible through small gardens like the one I served.

**Presentation**
The presentation is completely free form. The only requirement is that it conveys both the scientific basis of your environmental issue along with your personal reflections on your service-learning experience. The presentation could be a photographic exhibit, a series of sketches, a collage, a poster, a mural, a regular verbal presentation . . . I invite you to let your creative powers flow! We will devote two full class periods to presenting our projects.