

NR 5634 Urban Ecology
Offered: Summer I (12-week)

INSTRUCTOR: David P. Robertson, PhD (davidrobertson@vt.edu)

REQUIRED TEXT: All reading materials are provided by the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Our planet is increasingly urban. Approximately 505 of the world's people now live in urban areas. In many regions of the world, the rate of urbanization is declining; however, individual cities, metropolitan regions, and urban areas continue to grow (in number, extent, and population). In this context, urban ecology is an important approach to environmental science and sustainable development. The purpose of this course is to gain a better understanding of the emerging theory and practice of urban ecology and sustainable urban development. Key questions: What is an urban ecosystem? Are cities sustainable environments? What are our major urban environmental challenges? What are people in local communities and global society doing to ensure that urban and urbanizing landscapes are healthy and desirable places now and in the future? *Critical and creative thinking are required!*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Grades will be computed on the following basis:

Class discussion — 40%

Assignments — 60%