



USA

Permaculture at Sirius Sustainability in Action Summer

Learn how to create sustainable, productive, and beautiful human environments using natural ecosystems as models. Permaculture is an evolving and expanding design system for ecological living, integrating plants, animals, buildings, people, and communities. Through experiential, participatory and classroom learning, participants will explore the relationships between personal, social, and ecological sustainability in the rich context of life at the Sirius Community - an educational Ecovillage in scenic Western Massachusetts. Students also complete a one-week hands-on practicum, putting permaculture into action in neighborhoods, farms, homesteads, orchards, and more.



Students work with real world clients to design and present sustainable systems and solutions.

Program Highlights

- ☀️ Become a Certified Permaculture Apprentice
- ☀️ Visit old-growth forests, Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects, eco-homesteads
- ☀️ Be part of the 4th annual permaculture gathering at Nuestras Raíces, an urban farm in Holyoke, MA.
- ☀️ Work in a team to create an integrated site analysis and permaculture design for a residential "client"

Academic Credit and Program Dates

Earn 4 transferable credits through the University of Massachusetts—Amherst
Course: Permaculture (Plant and Soil Sciences 398P)



Summer June 28 - July 19 (subject to change)

Living Routes is an independent, non-profit educational organization whose academic programs are accredited by Life Education.

Sirius Community

Sirius is an Intentional Community of 35 adults and children, based on respect for the individual, cooperation with nature, and spiritual growth. The ecovillage practices sustainable techniques including organic tilth and co-creative gardens, passive and active solar architecture, composting toilets, rain and wastewater cycling, off-grid energy, water catchment, greenhouse bioshelter and season extending techniques. As an educational center, Sirius offers a wide array of workshops, internships, and short courses on sustainable living and design.



Application Deadline

(rolling admissions, contact us for late availability)

April 15

Costs (subject to change)

Tuition* \$1,550

~~Living Routes~~ credit included

Room & Board ** varies

* Some need-based scholarships are available

** Shared room, camping, and commuter options, range from approximately \$295 to \$1000

Faculty

Jono Neiger, M.A., Landscape Design, Conway School of Landscape Design, MA; B.S., Forest Biology, SUNY Syracuse, NY Conservation biologist, permaculture teacher and ecological designer, Neiger's portfolio includes riparian restoration with the California Nature Conservancy, wetland restoration projects with Native Wet Prairie Seed Collection, and land steward at the Lost Valley Educational Center. John has conducted research in vegetable cropping systems, plant nutrition, seed emergence, and seedling vigor of new sweet corn genotypes, and pepper flowering and fruit set.

Kay Cafasso B.S., (Assitant Faculty) Environmental Geosciences from Boston College; Natural Building and Solar Home Design Certification, Solar Energy International; Permaculture Design Certification, Naropa University
Kay is a permaculture instructor, designer, gardener, and natural builder. She is inspired by the ability to regenerate natural systems with thoughtful design of landscapes, dwellings, and communities.

Ethan Roland M.S. Associate Candidate, (Assitant Faculty) Gaia University International, Integrative Eco-social Design, TN; B.S., Biology, Haverford College

Ethan is a permaculture designer, teacher, and researcher based in the central Connecticut River valley. He studies and practices regenerative design in all corners of the world, from the wild apple forests of Kazakhstan to the tropical rainforest ecosystems of Central America.

John Gerber, Ph.D., (UMass Faculty Sponsor) Vegetable Physiology/Agricultural Education/Soil Science, Cornell University
Gerber is a professor at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, in the plant and soil sciences department. He teaches courses in sustainable agriculture, plants and the environment, agricultural issues, agricultural systems thinking, and sustainable living.

Dave Jacke, M.A., (Guest Lecturer) 67 Landscape Design, Conway School of Landscape Design, MA; B.A., Environmental Studies and Land Use Planning, Simon's Rock College, MA

Jacke is a professional ecological landscape designer, land use planner, permaculture consultant and educator. His groundbreaking book, *Edible Forest Gardens: A Delicious and Practical Ecology* was published in 2005 to wide acclaim.

Course Topics

Reading and Designing the Landscape

Design principles and skills; land assessment for optimal, multi-functional use; patterns and cycles of nature; seat-of-the-pants engineering and site mapping skills; design drawing and presentation skills

Water in Permaculture Design

Water catchment and storage; keyline management; ditches, swales, dams, and ponds; aquaculture in streams, ponds, and tanks; grey and black water treatment and use

Building Healthy Living Soil

Reading a soil profile; self-renewing fertility design; dynamic accumulators and nitrogen-fixers; sheet mulching & composting; green manures, living mulches, and intercrops

The Cultivated Ecosystem

Low-maintenance ecological garden and orchard design; ecological pest management; small livestock; rotational poultry and animal forage systems; agroforestry systems and forest gardens

Ecological Shelter

Integrated, energy efficient design; alternative and least toxic building materials; appropriate technologies

Community Strategies

Regional economics; urban-suburban restoration; village and community design

