

Scheme of work for the Permaculture Educators' Course Friland, Denmark, October 2013.



Illustration 1: Participants on June 2013 course.

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“I don't think I have learned so much in such a short period of time before...” Joshua

Course overview

During eight interactive and information-filled days, Small Planet will be offering a course to enhance your skills in teaching permaculture and to add new information to your curriculum. Permaculture offers key solutions to the environmental, economic and social challenges facing human occupation of the planet.

The course is suitable for anyone teaching, or interested in teaching permaculture or other related topics.

PEC 2013 will be held at the Friland community, 35kms from Aarhus, Denmark. It is a fully residential course, all meals and accommodation are included.

The program will include



- How to present using a variety of teaching methods
- Using icebreakers and energizers to keep interest
- ‘Micro-teaches’ to gain first-hand experience with peer-review
- ‘Open space’, games and small group discussions
- Tours and practical sessions
- Time for exchanging knowledge, experience and networking
- Participant presentations

Course objectives

- To present tools, ideas and methodologies to enhance teaching and curriculum design.
- To help educators teach creatively and confidently.
- To bring together European permaculture educators to exchange ideas about teaching methods and content.
- To provide the opportunity for educators to create their own support and communication networks across Europe.

Course learning outcomes

1. Course & Session Design

Participants will learn how to:

- Plan course programmes that optimise the opportunities for teaching and learning.
- Produce effective and imaginative lesson plans.

- Design and deliver effective presentations, to different target audiences.
- Create powerful and effective learning environments.
- Design sessions appropriate for different sized groups.
- Use effective group-work skills.

2. Creative Teaching Tools & Techniques

Participants will learn how to:

- Gain the confidence and competence to facilitate and teach permaculture.
- Use many creative teaching and learning techniques.
- Use a variety of teaching strategies that promote student-centred learning.
- Teach with consideration for 'multiple intelligences' and learning styles.
- Understand and use participation, motivation and inclusion methods.
- Use techniques designed to assist students in retaining learning.
- Develop strategies for coping with students with different learning styles, levels and needs.
- Identify stages in a group's development and teach appropriately.
- Apply different strategies suitable for teaching in a variety of environments.

3. Course Logistics

Participants will learn how to:

- Be a part of an effective permaculture design course team (lead tutor, support person, convener/organiser).
- Set up, finance and market a standard permaculture design course, as well as specific target group workshops and presentations.
- Budget for courses, set fees and form contracts.
- Issue certificates.
- Participate in a national and international community of permaculture educators.
- Find out how to work with local education providers to deliver courses.

Target group

The course will cover many aspects of teaching and learning, from a permaculture perspective. All participants need to have completed a permaculture design course. Where a prospective student can show they have considerable competence and understanding but have not completed a full permaculture design course, exceptions may be made.

The course will not include sessions on permaculture design theory, although participants teaching practice will use permaculture topics, and sessions will be included that enable participants to share knowledge and experience in these areas. A day of practical sessions will be included.

All teaching will be in English and a reasonable level of competence and confidence is required.

Timetable

Day schedule

- Days will start at 8.45 with a 30 minute opening session
- A 60 minute and a 45 minute session
- A 30 minute break
- Two 45 minute sessions
- A 90 minute lunch break
- Two 45 minute sessions
- A 30 minute break
- One 45 minute session
- A 30 minute personal reflection space (talk free)
- 45 minutes free time
- 90 minutes for dinner
- A 60-90 minute slot for student presentations.
- Followed by informal time for networking, films, fun.



This allows eight daytime sessions and one evening session, with games and short activities incorporated within and between sessions. Some sessions may be combined into longer exercises, but generally sessions will be 45 minutes long to enable good concentration and focus!

The timetable is intensive and will be challenging at times, but a good amount of time has been allocated to breaks and mealtimes to allow good group development and free time.

Day 1: Introductions and discovery

The first day will help us to get to know each other, the site and how the course will work. We will use games and energisers and a DIY tour of Friland to develop an understanding of our new group. Evening presentations by tutors and storytelling will complete the day and give an insight into our hopes for the future and our diverse backgrounds.

Day 2: Principles of learning and training

Day two will look at the fundamentals of learning and training. How do we learn and how do we use our natural learning styles to develop engaging and participatory training sessions? We will uncover our own styles and have time to reflect on strategies to develop ourselves as learners and trainers.

Day 3: Organising courses

A highly participatory day in which students will work together to develop proposals for a new course. Along the way we will learn about the key ingredients that will ensure your courses are well organised and well attended.

Day 4: First teaching practice – micro-teach sessions in pairs

Day four will give us an opportunity to practice teaching in a safe, nurturing and creative space. We will work in pairs and deliver 16 minute sessions, using permaculture topics. Everyone will also develop the skills of session evaluation, an essential skill for team

teaching.

Day 5: A practical day outside

Friland is an amazing space with many different natural and green buildings and some very creative people. They will treat us to a day of hands-on activities, and each participant will be able to choose from a range of options. We will end with a de-brief and see what we have observed about delivering and organising practical sessions. May include an afternoon adventure!

Day 6: teaching pathways – individual and network development

Today we plan and discuss. Using the open space methodology that is often used in transition initiatives, we will look at topics of interest to the participants. For example: How can we develop networks across Europe? How do we share skills and resources more effectively? How do we adapt to new opportunities and interests?

Day 7: Final teaching practice

After the first teaching practice, people always find ways to improve and develop. This day helps to consolidate that learning, take the skills further and increase people's confidence for teaching. We will work in different pairs, and use different topics. The de-brief at the end will also be an opportunity to think about your own teaching development plan, and consider opportunities for how you can use what you have learnt on the course back at home. Its also the last full day, so time for a party to celebrate our achievements!

Day 8: Evaluation and next steps

The last day and so time to reflect on what we have learnt, how we can improve the course for next time and where we go next. Time will be given for both personal and small group planning and reflection. A closing ceremony will help us to focus on our work after the course and remember that we are working as part of a bigger team and network that extends the world over.

Methods of delivery

We will use a wide range of teaching and facilitation methods to deliver the course. We will often step back to 'name the method' we are using so that the teaching process becomes transparent and people realise that they can learn at three levels:

1. What we are teaching – the 'content'.
2. How we are teaching – the 'method'.
3. How effectively the method of teaching was at delivering the desired session objectives – evaluation of session at the end of the day.

Assessment strategies



The primary assessment strategy is the running of two micro-teach sessions, during which participants can demonstrate their learning through the delivery of a 16 minute session in pairs. An assessment of each session will be made by:

1. The tutors and audience, fed back verbally directly after the session;

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2. Written comments from tutors;
3. Two participants (all participants will be responsible for evaluating another session) will also provide written notes;
4. Participants will have time to assess their own performance at the end of the day.

Student involvement

Participants are expected to play an active role in the course. This includes participating during sessions, timekeeping, helping keep the space clear and tidy, offering to timekeep, facilitate, help with opening sessions and games, helping to gather other students after lunch, etc...

Resources

The course will benefit from a series of resources:

- Permaculture and transition library (Friland, Jo, Lars, Cat);
- A small learning and education focussed library (Andy);
- Friland (an amazing resource of eco-buildings and gardens);
- Friland community building (teaching room, dining room, hallway and kitchen);
- The woodland, farming, nature and village around Friland;
- Tutors and course organisers (available for advice and support through the course);
- Participant books, project information, resources;
- Session plans, handouts and teaching resources that will be available for students to copy to external hard drives during the course.

Suggested reading

There are a huge number of teaching books. We are recommend the following as a basic and useful introduction to teaching and learning:

- The Accelerated Learning Handbook, Dave Meier, McGraw Hill, 2000.

Permaculture specific texts:

- Permaculture Teachers Guide, Andy Goldring (ed), WWF / Permaculture Association, 2000
- Earth users Guide to teaching Permaculture, Rosemary Morrow, Permanent Publications, 2013, (second edition).
- The Outdoor Classroom: A handbook for school gardens, Caroline Nuttal and Janet Millington, Permanent Publications, 2013 (second edition).
- Teaching Permaculture Creatively, Earthcare Education (now hard to get – but Ecologic books in the UK still do it.)

Other areas of study worthy of investigation are: cooperative games, nature awareness (especially Joseph Cornell), learning to learn, mind mapping (Tony Buzan), thinking tools (Edward De Bono), participatory planning.

Cathrine Dolleris

Cathrine is dedicated to preserving life supporting systems in nature and in society. Her background in geography, extensive travels and working with an NGO and an embassy has given her experiences with especially poverty, gender, community development, ethnic minorities and the environment.



She took an interest in permaculture first time in South Africa in 2000 while working with Zulu farmers and has studied and applied permaculture principles in her later work in Nepal and Vietnam. She has also worked as a consultant evaluating and documenting rural development projects including permaculture projects and Farmer Field Schools. In early 2010, the time was finally ripe for her to take the permaculture design course in New Zealand.

She has since then attended a teacher training course and training on the Transition Town concept at Friland and a natural building and organic gardening internship in Thailand. She has worked on designing permaculture gardens in Denmark, assisted the Nordic Permaculture Festival and started teaching introduction courses to permaculture.

Cathrine will be the assistant facilitator on the course.



Tutors for practical sessions

Andy and Cathrine will be joined by local experts who will lead a day of practical sessions half-way through the course. There may be opportunities for students to share their skills – please let the organisers know if you have a craft or other skill that you would like to offer during the practical day.

About Friland

Friland is 35 km north of Aarhus in Denmark. Based on a philosophy of living debt free, it has grown in three planned stages. It has a wonderfully diverse range of buildings, many of which were designed to be ecologically sustainable as well as beautiful and cheap to build.

We will have a number of opportunities to explore Friland over the course.

