THE SECRET LIVES OF "STUFF" SYLLABUS

***Print or Copy/Paste This Syllabus***
Read this syllabus thoroughly. Copy and paste (or print) this document into a Course Notes file so you can easily access it throughout this course. It will be a useful reference tool.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Engage your K-12 students’ curiosity and help them become problem-solvers through investigating product life cycles. We see products in grocery stores or malls; we buy them; and we use them. But we don't know the complex chain of events that took place to get us these products. You, and in turn your students, will get a better understanding of the processes involved. You’ll be reminded of the value of recycling. You’ll also discover an often-overlooked solution that prevents environmental problems, and is good for the well-being of individuals and society. Materials introduced are interdisciplinary, classroom-ready and you can tie them to the Iowa Core.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
You will:

- Select lessons, activities and assessments that address the environmental impacts of products and meet Iowa Core standard(s).
- Design a mini-unit that infuses this course’s content into your existing curriculum.
- Implement your mini-unit in your classroom.

COURSE STRUCTURE, MODULES AND MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS
In the Introduction, you will meet your instructor and your colleagues in this course. You also will get a course overview and review student policies and other background information.

Then in **Module 1** you will reflect on what matters most to you.

In **Module 2**, activities will refresh your memory that all products come from natural resources, making us dependent on a healthy environment.
In Module 3, you will build on the content from Module 2 that all products come from natural resources. In this module, you will learn about product life cycles. You also will discover how product life cycles impact greenhouse gas emissions.

For each of the first three weeks, you will complete all activities in Modules 1-3. Each of these modules requires you to participate in Discussions where you reflect on the module topics, then create daily plans for helping your students learn each module’s topic.

The content for this course is interdisciplinary and K-12. Because of that, please make this content work for your grade and subject areas. For example, you are to develop a daily plan for each of the modules. If you are an upper-level science teacher, you may want to focus more energy on your Module 3 daily plan. Family and consumer science teachers may focus more on Module 1. English Language Arts teachers can connect all content.

Also, because the content is interdisciplinary, I love to see teachers work cooperatively to teach this content. At the elementary level, teachers often can integrate the content into multiple subject areas. At the middle and high school level, it is ideal to work with teachers from two or more disciplines. You will use your newly developed daily plans to create a mini-unit, integrating content from this course into your existing curriculum.

In Module 4, you will fine-tune your mini-unit. At this point, you can evaluate what proportion of the mini-unit you want to devote to each of this course’s topic areas. After you do this, you will exchange ideas with your colleagues to help enhance each other’s units.

Note: You are welcome to work ahead on your Module 1-4 assignments. You may especially want to do this if you are planning a vacation during the first four weeks of the course. If you work ahead, each week you will need to return to the module scheduled for that week. There you will reply to other students’ posts and provide a final module post.

Between Modules 4 and 5, you will implement your mini-unit. In Module 5, you will share with your colleagues in this course what you are thinking and learning, and share successes and challenges, both personally and professionally.

The modules vary in length. Most modules will have a mix of lessons, activities to review, tutorials, discussions and assignments.

- Items marked "Optional" are additional grade-appropriate resources on the topics we are examining in class. I encourage you to skim them and, as applicable, delve deeper into ones that interest you.
- You will complete items marked "Discussions" in conjunction with the rest of the participants (the whole class). These will include sharing, asking and answering
questions, and learning other teachers’ responses to the content and ways they will use the content.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Most resources will be found on the course website at https://ceee.uni.edu/find-an-activity. You need not purchase any texts for this course. You will be introduced to books you may want to borrow from libraries or buy. Some of these books will seem appropriate for elementary students, but if you are a 6th-12th grade educator, go forth with courage and use them. To learn effective strategies for using picture books with upper level students, skim this research study, especially pages 5-6: http://scholarship.rollins.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=mls.

EXPECTATIONS
This is an online course that requires you to be an active participant in your learning. You must log in to eLearning every week for the first four weeks and in the last full week of the course. You must also complete course assignments. If you work ahead, you may only need to log-in briefly to complete Steps 2 and 3 of Discussion posts. Contact me if you have questions about this. If you won't be able to log-in on a given week, contact me BEFORE the fact.

Students must be self-motivated and self-disciplined, and possess good time management skills. See AEA LEARNING ONLINE STUDENT POLICIES in the Reading called “Other Need-to-knows“ for more detailed student expectations.

NETIQUETTE FOR DISCUSSIONS. Ten netiquette rules are found at http://albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html. Read this page, and click on and read, at a minimum, Rules 1, 2, 5 and 10. As described in Rule 1, always remember to address your colleagues and instructor in a respectful manner. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the posting discussions. I expect you to agree and disagree in a civil and respectful manner. Avoid using texting "jargon" like "u" and "r." Proper English spelling and grammar are required. Also avoid simply, “Me, too” or “I agree” statements. Instead, show you care by coming up with a constructive reply. That doesn't mean criticism. Here are some common ways to create constructive replies that keep the conversation going and show that you care about what your classmates say:

- Ask a clarification question or two
- Give an example of how you experienced a similar incident in your own life
- State (even quoting) what you saw in that post that you liked the best, or what "resonated" with you
- Ask the person to "tell me more about..." a specific aspect in the post
• Illustrate what the person said that made you think "Huh! I never thought about that before"
• Add your own thoughts to what the person said

METHODOLOGIES
About 33% of the course is reading and reviewing lesson plans and other educational materials. Another third is interactive learning/discussion/planning/sharing, and about one-third is devoted to helping your students learn.