

051301

Requirements for the Permaculture Design Project

DRAFT 15 – 7/14/08 Copyright, ©, Dan and Cynthia Hemenway

THIS POST PERTAINS TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE REGISTERED FOR THE DESIGN PRACTICUM OR WHO PLAN TO BEIGIN THE DESIGN PRACTICUM IN ONE OF OUR LIVE 10-DAY DESIGN INTENSIVES. If you are not taking the course for certification, or if you are an online clinic participant, you still have to comply with all the formatting instructions, deadlines, draft submissions, etc. You should get permission for any variation from other requirements.

We try to keep all materials consistent, however with more than 300 items on the course CD alone, sometimes there are inconsistencies. This document trumps all other documents provided to students, except in the case of updates announced during the class by the lead instructor.

This document is your bible for preparing your design reports and other reports. Consult it frequently.

You may copy this post to your hard drive or you may print out one copy. Be sure to file it where you can easily find it. You will want to consult it frequently. This is supplemental information and not intended to replace the information on permaculture design presentation in the readings and otherwise presented to the class. The latest version of this post will be available ASAP on our web site, also. You are responsible to comply with the version of this post in effect at the time that you submit your report.

The formatting and style rules below apply to all reports submitted by students, not just design report drafts. You are responsible for meeting the requirements of the latest version of this document that has been posted at the time of your report submission. For design report drafts only, you may use the pre-existing version if this document was updated less than two weeks before your draft is postmarked. [In all other cases and situations, we use the date received, not the date sent, for a deadline.] We will try to keep any changes during a course cycle to a minimum, and all such changes will be announced to students via email.

DESIGN DRAFTS AND STRATEGIES:

*This section treats the strategic considerations of various options in the design process. **Other matters are addressed later in this post.***

Drafts

It is important to submit drafts or comparable design progress reports as you go through the course. I have scheduled times for this. A good start is an outline of your design report. (See below.)

You should submit drafts, even if you are a deliberate track or 2-cycle student. Only the final report draft is deferred until a later time in these tracks.

You have three situations when you may ask questions or seek feedback pertaining to your design:

- When the topic is covered in class. For example if you have a problem figuring the correct angle for glazing on a solar greenhouse, you can ask for help when we discuss ENERGY in Week 8. You may do this even if you have not registered for the practicum. Have relevant data ready and send the question and background information **at the beginning of the week.**
- When we have a regularly scheduled session to discuss student designs. Please try to submit a draft or supporting material with your question. Be sure to include your question or concern so I can focus on it. Reviewing design work is very time-consuming and I may not have time to go over everyone's submission in the week allowed. I give fast track certificate candidates priority.
- During any scheduled review session. Whether, or not you are registered for the practicum, as above, you may ask questions **if they pertain to topics that we have covered.** We try to schedule review sessions just before the times for you to submit a draft for discussion. (This also lightens the reading

load so you have more time for last minute touches to your report draft.)

If you have an emergency question that prevents you from proceeding on the design, ask it in class. I may defer it or I may get to it immediately, but at least I will be advised and can take the best action (by my lights) to help within the context of the course. In this connection, topics relating to WATER often are the subject of early design questions, because this subject comes late in the course cycle. Please do not ask premature design-related questions on this or any topic until you have read in advance all assignments and posts for that topic week! Then, if an issue still seems to block progress on your design, submit it to the class. Sometimes these matters can be handled in your study group.

Finishing a Design in Six Months

I originally designed the online course to allow students to complete their design while they progress through sections 1, 2, and 3 of the course. After all, students in the live 3-week course do this, and, invariably, well. Fast track and non-certificate students still complete their design in one course cycle. The advantages of this timetable are:

- 1) You may get certified at the end of the course cycle. This may be important for college credit, a job, or some other external factor.
- 2) Implementation of the design can begin early. This can be important, for example, if you or another wishes to occupy the site soon.
- 3) You have support during the entire design process.

The disadvantage of this approach is that you are learning about what to include in your design at the same

time you are trying to put it together. You do not have the whole picture yet. The Course CD helps here, as you can read ahead where you need information that is scheduled to be discussed later.

Carryover Designs

Deliberate track and two-cycle students carry a design over to the next course cycle. This has the potential of giving you more time and full information to do a good job. But this arrangement also has potential pitfalls.

Advantages are:

- 1) You have all the course material in time to make best use of it in your design.
- 2) You have more time to research aspects of the design, resources, and so forth.
- 3) You get to experience the design site with “permaculture eyes” for a full year, through all seasons.
- 4) You can concentrate more on the content of sections 1, 2 and 3 in the first cycle.

Pitfalls of this approach are:

- 1) The instructors are not available between cycles to support your design process except on a paid consulting basis. We encourage you to form a peer review group for mutual support in carryover designs. We will help you set up such groups on request.
- 2) Some people do not work steadily on their design over the six-month intersession. Instead they rush the process as the deadline approaches. However, the information is six months stale for them because

they have not regularly worked with it. Their design will fail to meet certification standards.

- 3) Implementation is delayed.
- 4) Circumstances can change over the intersession, and the student may no longer have the time to do the final work correctly.
- 5) Students who plan to carry over their design project sometimes do not use the design review and other design support opportunities well. This is a major error since these are the only times this support will be available to them before the final draft is due. You must start your design in the cycle for which you register, or you will not get enough chances to have your work review and direction corrected.*
- 6) If a student fails to satisfactorily complete all other assignments during the first cycle in which s/he is enrolled, s/he may not, without paying more tuition, participate any further in the course, regardless of what track s/he has enrolled in.
- 7) Tuition for a carry-over design track costs more. (You forfeit the extra tuition if you fail to complete other assignments in the initial course cycle.)

* In a very few cases, students *who so arrange in advance* can take their entire practicum in a later course cycle at no surcharge. Usually, this is the student who is in the market for a new home which s/he will wish to design with support of the course. Very infrequently, we make exceptions for other reasons beyond the student's control in every regard.

Generally, if you are self-motivated and self-disciplined, you can succeed as a carryover student.

Students who have not completed section 1 because of late registration **must** carry their design project over to the

following course cycle. Most carryover designs will be submitted and reviewed in section 1 of the second cycle. However, students who need to “make-up” section 1 will report in section 2.

Hybrid Design Projects

As described in the course protocol, a student may attend one of our 10-day or two-week design intensives as a first step in developing a practicum design. The design produced by that group becomes the basis for the student’s practicum. Up to 20 students can work on this design, if they all attended successfully the design practicum.

The hybrid approach is absolutely the best training we can offer. You probably will have to organize the live workshop yourself. We almost never organize these, but teach where invited if we have time. You can find more information on organizing workshops for us to lead in the BFPCInfoSheets folder on your Course CD or on our website. [For personal reasons, we have to restrict our availability for travel to an absolute minimum as of 2007.]

Team Designs

Students may form teams to work on a single design. This is a much better approach than solo designs, but is seldom practical in the online course because rarely do students live close enough together. The students on the team must all have frequent access to the design site. As suggested above, the hybrid design project readily lends to team participation. Husband and wife or other forms of life partners almost always work as a team. Special tuition discounts apply to teams. See the Course Fee Table.

Students who have all participated in the same Permaculture Design Intensive may also form a team, to carry the design begun in that workshop forward into an online

course cycle. In this case, they may live distant from the design site, as they are already intimate with it. However, it is best if at least one team member lives near the site, as usually designers need to check site details that they did not think to observe and note initially.

THE DESIGN PRACTICUM

For certification, the design practicum consists of two interlocking elements, the permaculture design itself and the design report, the means by which you communicate the design to your clients. If you are a clinic participant or a not-for-certification student, it is still useful for you to read these requirements. If you plan to deviate from them, first gain permission from the lead instructor. Many of the report requirements are for the benefit of the instructor, to make it possible for him to focus on the design. Some requirements accommodate the limitations of beginning designers and the time line of the program. We will not read designs that deviate from these requirements. Within them, there is almost infinite room for creative and intelligent design.

THE DESIGN SITE

1) The design site should be small. **You are a beginner. Do not attempt complex designs,** particularly not in the email course in which most of you are working alone. A 1/4 acre to 1/2 acre site is good. A whole acre is OK but pushing it. The limit is two acres or **less** than a hectare. Designing two acres in Kansas is likely to be a lot more design work than two acres in Western Massachusetts. Open land requires more work than forest. You also may design just the Zones 1 and 2 of a site larger than two acres. That is OK. You need to take context into account, of course, and you may need to rough out details of the overall property and surroundings to properly site a dwelling and

develop water supply and access, for example. Good. Start very early.

[At some time in the future we may offer a course for people who want to predesign a larger site.]

2) The design site should be real. We are not interested in reading hypothetical designs, ever, for any reason. We absolutely will not review hypothetical work.

3) If you are not designing for yourself, you need to be sure that the people who control the land **want** a permaculture design. *Allowing* you to do a design is not enough. If they do not enthusiastically *want* a design, your practicum will fail. Rental residents can also implement permaculture designs, but of course the design needs to take into account the limitations imposed by the rental arrangements. These are real constraints, no more onerous than a mountain blocking the best solar access. A permaculture design can contribute considerably in these situations, since renters can take many actions to improve their settings. Because there are three sets of clients (residents, owner, and the reviewer in our program), rental designs require more time and effort. Allow for it.

4) The design site should be **residential** and contain a full zone 1 at a minimum and, preferably, a full zone 2. I will consider exceptions to the zone 2 requirements in urban designs on a site-by-site basis. **There cannot be an exception to the residential requirement,** if you want to use your design for certification. I need to see how well you design to meet human needs. It is possible to have a design for non-humans, principally, e.g., a butterfly farm. But I need the human clients for certification purposes. **Only one residence per site is appropriate for beginning design work.**

[• Design for communities is very advanced and requires much more training than the basic course.

• Clinic participants may choose to design non-residential sites, such as a community garden or a butterfly farm, because we do not need to evaluate them for certification.]

- 5) It is smart to design for yourself first if possible. You do not need to OWN land to do this.
- 6) Avoid multiple clients, institutional designs, and so forth. These require advanced skills. Avoid designs where the residents are sure to move on soon, for example a student residence or a halfway house. These sorts of designs take more time and experience than you will be able to bring to bear. While we do not absolutely forbid such design projects in the online course, be advised that you probably will not meet certification standards within the time available.

THE DESIGN REPORT

1) Presentation Quality

- a) The design report must be clearly written and in good English. (English is OUR limitation—obviously you can write designs in any language once you are qualified.) While we don't require design reports to be literary works, they must efficiently and effectively communicate your recommendations. Since you have a computer, make good use of the grammar and spell-check features of your software. We are looking for a professional quality consultation report, not a term paper! A report that would get you an 'A' in college could well fail to meet our certification standards. This has happened.
- b) Use an 18 point sans-serif type for the body text.

- c) **Identify plants and animals by their scientific binomials. These must be correctly spelled.** An inaccurate binomial will disqualify your entire design from certification. I may decide to stop reading when I encounter a wrong binomial. I will definitely ignore sections of non-certificate design reports with inaccurate binomials. We will make exceptions in unambiguous circumstances, for example if refer to a dog or some chickens you can leave out their scientific names. If in doubt, though, look up the binomial. I spot check these, and often I know when they are wrong without checking. For more information about binomials and what they mean, read: “Diversity Among Plants” in **TIPSY 1**, which you all have in your reading packages. Our standard reference for plant binomials of plants is *Hortus Third*. We may fall back on *Cornucopia II* for edible plants. After that, we have assorted references that cover the less commonly mentioned species. The “Plants for a Future” web site has a lot of this information, but **we do not regard any web site as a primary authority.**
- d) The final draft should be as perfect as you can make it in every way. The final draft is normally presented before the week 20 deadline with carryover drafts typically due by week 3 of the following cycle. We will not allow time for extensive revisions. Your earlier drafts should take care of that. Remember, **permission is required to carry over a design project to the next cycle.**

2) The design report should include all necessary visuals— maps, drawings, schematics, etc. **Present graphics and tables imbedded in text, not as a separate section.** Color illustrations are OK, but bear in mind that I am dazzled only by brilliant

design. **We almost never give permission to put the graphics at the end or anywhere except within the text where they belong.** A design is not useful if one has to be going constantly back and forth between the copy and the illustrations at the end. **The design report is a tool, and, like any tool, it should be easy to use.**

- 3) Every connection between different design elements must be clear. Use keys, footnotes, parentheses, whatever works. **Always refer to the exact page number** in the “final” draft. (For example: “See especially *The Manual of Dog Manure*, Appendix VII, p. 352.”) Be consistent. Make keys very clear. **Use 14 point sans serif or larger on keys. If I can’t easily read it, you’ll have to do it over, wasting everyone’s time.** **Keys for graphics should be on the graphic, not** on some other page or somewhere in the design narrative.
- 4) **Red** text and **yellow highlight** are reserved for Dan Hemenway’s review. Neither the designer nor other reviewers are to use these colors.
- 5) Every design requires a very good staging section. Bad staging is the commonest failing of permaculture designs, particularly student designs. If your staging simply presents a list of tasks, it is weak. **All design recommendations require justification, including staging.**
- 6) No Type 1 errors are acceptable. If you disagree when I point out a Type 1 error, you may state your case once. Then I decide. **We will not debate my determination.**
- 7) Sections required in every student design are listed below. **Use exactly these titles.** Unless you have strong reasons, arrange chapters in the order below. If I disagree, you may have to do the report over.

In addition, you may need special chapters for themes, for example, flooding problems and remedies, urban community options, children in this design, etc.:

Chapters-Introduction

- **Client Description.** Make it brief and relevant to the design. Include detailed client interviews in an Appendix, not in the body of the report.
- **Site Description.** This is the site as you find it. Include the base map here.
- **Community.** Include relevant data about the community. Maps locating the community in the region are helpful, but beware the potential for copyright infringement.
- **Region.** Describe briefly the bioregion and the region. Locate the site on a map of the region. For example, if your site is in Southern Ontario, locate the site with respect to the surrounding Great Lakes. Remember, we have students and instructors from all over the world. We may not know about your region at all.

Chapters-Design Recommendations

*The order of these chapters is up to you, **except as noted below.***

- **Water**
- **Shelter** (not just buildings)
- **Access** Access usually follows Shelter but may come before if it is relevant to site selection for the dwelling. Include access within structures, access throughout the site, and access outside the site, e.g., commuting, getting to medical facilities, shopping, etc. Parking space comes under access, as does storage. Include public transportation facilities (bus, air, interstate highways, etc.)

if they are relevant to the clients. Travel to work, shopping, etc., are access concerns. Efficiently accommodate moving materials around the site.

- **Energy** Energy and access are interrelated and usually we place them one after the other in the design. Address all forms of energy, including power and fuel purchased or generated on site, human energy needed to do tasks, energy storage (including potential energy) etc. **Do not forget to address transportation energy.**

Generally, we want to see energy treated in two ways:

+ sources of energy, e.g., grid electricity, solar thermal and PV, purchased and site-generated fuels, conservation, etc.

+ Uses of energy, e.g., food cooking, processing and storage, hot water, transportation, space heating and cooling, garden cultivation, etc. See the sample designs for a more complete list.

- **Nutrient Cycles**, which includes
 - i. **Soil Management**
 - ii. **Food production**
 - iii. **Human excreta management**
 - iv. **Food processing and storage**
 - v. **Animals recommended in the design**

[Do not call this chapter anything but "Nutrient Cycles!]

- **Community**, which includes:
 - vi. **Markets, job opportunities**
 - vii. **Educational opportunities** (some designs only)
 - viii. **Implementation skills available for hire or barter**
 - ix. **Material resources for design implementation and management**
 - x. **Pertinent building codes and other regulations affecting design implementation**

xi. Often other considerations

- **Economics**, which includes
 - xii. a **budget** for design implementation showing anticipated costs, anticipated income, and capital expenditures, e.g., from savings, loans, etc. The best way to present this is in a spreadsheet or table.
 - xiii. A **narrative** describing how you reached these numbers. Add an appendix if extensive background information is relevant. (But do not include information for its own sake!)
 - xiv. An **analysis** of on-site income potential. You may here profile several income-producing opportunities that suit the client's skills and potential. You must assess markets as well. If you are exporting materials generated in the site (e.g., food, water), state how these affect site sustainability. If you have detailed information on an enterprise, make the details an appendix. (You may end up with a standard design.)
 - xv. **Economic contingency plans**. Describe backup strategies that you have built into the design if implementation does not proceed as expected. Avoid putting the client into debt, and if debt is unavoidable or already incurred, design strategies to protect the client against interruption of income.
 - xvi. **Savings vs. cost**. The design should save the client money. It should not cost money in the long term. Investment in implementation should be staged so that funds are almost certain to be

available. Under no circumstances put your client into a situation of economic stress.

Locate the economics section just before staging at the end of the design.

- **Hazards.** Put this near the end of the design, usually third from the end, just before *Economics*.
- **Staging.** *[This subject is in process of elaboration in a separate document devoted solely to staging. Be sure you have read all we have to say about staging before attempting your final design report.]* Your staging should not just be a list of recommendations, but a justification for their placement in the staging. A table makes a lot of sense. You might do a subsection, showing required staging sequences. This would duplicate the table, but break out allied sequences. For example, you might recommend keyline cultivation, followed by annual cropping, followed by tree planting, followed by intercropping for a number of years until canopy closes. The necessity of this sequence and the reasons for it should be covered here.

A staging table may have the following headings:

xvii. Task

xviii. **Reference** (page numbers in design recommendations where the task is discussed)

xix. Justification Certain recommendations constitute clusters that affect one another's staging. Describe these clusters as part of the staging chapter.

xx. **Sequencing** (requires this task, must precede that task, etc.) Indicate if the timing of certain events depends on external factors. For example, some actions will depend on seasons of the year, for

example planting trees. Or they may depend on cash flow affected by off-site forces. In our site, we wait for particularly dry years to harvest muck from the bottom of our canal for chinampa building. You get the idea.

- xxi. **Calendar of staging actions** Find a way to indicate how much flexibility is in the calendar. Tell how to proceed if the client falls behind.

Staging should be the last section of the design narrative, just before the appendices.

Appendices required Your design recommendations should be painstakingly cross-referenced to these. A report reader should be able to go quickly from a section of the report to the location of relevant information, for example the name and address of a supplier.

- **Client responses** to the questionnaire. This is a convenience to the client, so that the material is kept with the rest of the design report. In the case of this course, I may need to refer to it to evaluate the design, also. If you use the survey questions on the CD (not available to clinic participants), you may need to send a separate version to monitors, who are not entitled to a copy of this document.
- **Resources**. This would be the sort of information you get from **TRIP**, mainly places to get information and skills support. We use **TRIP** extensively in our design reports, identifying entries by serial number in the report narrative. See the predesign on the CD for an example.) You would also list non-commercial sources of materials (scrounge sites, etc.) and labor (internships, volunteers, etc.) here.

- **Suppliers.** You don't list sources of ordinary supplies such as a 1/4-inch bolt, but you would list vendors of uncommon supplies, such as a toilet seat that snaps onto a 5-gallon bucket. Again, we use our database, *The Permaculture Supplier List*, for this, again referencing serial numbers. Always include physical addresses and phone numbers, not just email addresses and URLs. Designs will fail certification if you only list internet contact info.

Always verify contact information before including it in the design. This sort of information changes frequently. Don't just copy the information from another source. Mail to physical addresses, call phone numbers, verify URLs and email addresses, etc.

- **References.** This is NOT a bibliography citing where you got your information. It tells the client where to get further information. Obviously there is overlap. Do not rely on one book for any crucial reference, since that book may be unavailable to the client. Include books, periodicals, and CDs. Web sites are a desperation measure. They are ephemeral. A topic for which you have only a web site is a weak reference. I maintain a database of references that I use in designs, so I can just print up a list relevant to a specific design when I need one. Again, designs that only list web and email contacts for crucial resources will fail certification.

The References Appendix of your report, like all resources that you mention, should strive to give complete information about where to get materials. In the case of literature references, you need to tell people the physical address of the publisher to the full extent that it is listed in the work. Most modern texts do give the full address of the publisher in the

page with the copyright notice, ISBN, etc. You should also give ISBN and/or ISSN whenever you can get that info, as they help vendors or librarians run down publications.

- **Climate information.** Here you provide at least seven, preferably 10, years of data for rainfall (precipitation expressed as rainfall), wind, temperature. **Average data is not enough.** We also need high and low figures for **each month**. Averages DO help you spot trends, if any. You don't plant crops by the average frost-free date to mature before the average first frost. If your averages are May 30 and Oct. 1 but you can get frosts June 15 through Sept. 15, then you plant frost-sensitive crops to grow during the latter period. If someone shoots at you and misses to the right by 3 feet with three shots but hits you between the eyes on one, you are not, on average, alive. (Why this is hard to grasp mystifies me.) You **must** have data on extremes. Average data is a minor luxury.
- At the very end after the appendices, an **Index**. This is not required if your report is less than 10,000 words, though it is always helpful. If the index is not thorough, I will not approve it. See the course Index for an example of what I consider to be adequate.

Additional Appendices

There are almost always some appendices that you add to meet requirements of the design. In one design, I did a special appendix including all the information I could find on termite control, and another on growing potatoes from seed (eliminating the need to store tubers in unfavorable storage conditions). This is where your **standard designs** go. You may have more extensive economics information here, such as a **business plan** or a list of potential funding sources for some

project. You also can put in **papers** to support the design, or even package one or more **books** that provide key information for design implementation. (If you do the design for hire, you add your cost of these to the cost of the design. Don't go overboard.) For example, if I did a design that really required the Kourik edible landscaping book, I would include a copy and charge for it. You may be working in a country where a certain reference would be almost impossible to get. So you supply it. Etc. This is also where you put the **county soil survey, aerial photographs of the place, supplemental contour maps, demographic reports, utility bill summaries, a copy of the building code, zoning regulations, species lists, etc.**

A URL is not complete information and should only be used to supplement reliable data.

Treat each appendix as a separate chapter.

7) **Do not try to reinvent the wheel.** If someone has written a book that describes the sort of composting toilet you recommend, refer to the book and provide clear details on where to find the book in the **references** appendix. If there are experts on the subject available, list them (**including complete contact information**) in the **resources** appendix. **Do not list species, services, or products that are not very commonly available without making a note in the Resources or Suppliers Appendix telling where to get each item or service. You should not strive for originality unless existing, proven approaches are inapplicable.**

8) **Always give credit.** Be sure that you know and honor the difference between fair use of previous thinking and theft. (Copyright violation will **permanently** bar you from certification in our course.) None of us designs without using ideas we have gotten elsewhere. If you do not understand

the principle of Standard Designs from the reading and class work, ask about how this works in permaculture.

- 8) **Be specific.** Quantify wherever reasonable. For example, you would quantify the capacity of a tank for roof catchment storage, but obviously you cannot quantify discussion of a view, which can be equally important in the design. Do not write things like: “You will probably need a really big tank to hold all the water.” This is garbage. If you can’t work the numbers, you need to ask some very specific questions in the next review session. If you start on your design after we have done all the review sessions, you have shot your self in the foot. See you next time we offer the class! (...or not 😊)
- 9) When writing for others, be friendly, not stuffy, and not overly familiar, clearly professional, in tone. While your design must meet the requirements of the “client,” bear in mind that the client is a temporary event on the site. Be sure that the next resident can pick-up your design and continue following your recommendations...and that the recommendations will be relevant to the new people living there! The design report becomes part of the equity of the property, to put it in materialistic terms. As I have stressed elsewhere, the Earth is our principal client, with the people we work for being temporary representatives of the Earth, aspects of Her. We do not work for people whose aims are hostile to the Earth, though if they seem to be of good will we try to explain the problem before we blow them off.
- 10) Write the class design report as for another, even if it is for yourself. I must see how you present material in this way. It also helps you step back and look at the design from another perspective. **Also, remember than in addition to the on-site client, Dan Hemenway is a client and you must write the report**

with his review process in mind. If you assume experience of some feature of the site, for example, we cannot properly review the design. We have never been there! Even if for some reason I've visited the site, the rest of the class has not, so you still need to explain every feature relevant to the design. Do not assume that everyone remembers discussion at some time during the course that explains site features. Put needed information in the design report!

11) The following is the **style** that is required in permaculture designs submitted in this course:

- a) Use 8 ½ x 11 inch paper or the nearest metric equivalent if you are in a country where metric is standard.
- b) Bind hard copy of reports. Do not submit a bunch of loose pages. I recommend using a ring binder in a standard three-hole arrangement. This makes it easy and inexpensive for you to make last minute changes.
- c) Use 18 point type of an easily to read sans-serif font, like Geneva. (Larger fonts can be used for headings.) My eyesight is failing.
- d) Use standard formatting (Italics for book titles—that sort of thing.) Get an MLA style manual if rules of style mystify you.
- e) Headings, subheadings, captions, and so forth should be formatted to make the design easier to use. If the report is not easy to use, you have not designed it well. Permaculture principles apply to all activities, including report writing. Your report design is an example to me of your design ability. I evaluate it as such.
- f) All designs should begin with a **Table of Contents** that is specific. See the table of contents for the Northern Ontario design that I have included in the course CD.

- g) Again, thorough indexing is **required in design reports of more than 10,000 words**. The design is not only a guide, it is a reference work and will be followed more closely if it is easy to “find one’s place,” to find information about a project when the time for implementing that portion of the design comes up.
- h) All pages should be clearly numbered. **The numbers should be in the center or outside corner, top of the page.** I’ll make you do it over if you don’t observe this rule. A really spiffy design will have the chapter heading and subheading at the top of each page, too. This is not required, but it does make the design easier to use. Word processing programs do that more easily than the desktop publishing programs that I’ve used.
- i) Do not use **red** text. This is reserved for Dan Hemenway’s review.
- j) Do not use **yellow highlight**. This is reserved for Dan Hemenway’s review.

Any device that makes the design easier to use, makes the relationship between parts clearer, and makes it easy to find subjects for reference, is a good one. If your report is sloppy and difficult to follow, one might suspect that the design itself will have similar limitations.

12) Remember that **this is a DESIGN report, not a research report**. Research is always required, obviously. Put research results mostly in appendices, **if the client really needs them**. **Do not put detailed research results in the body of the report**. Reserve the body for the design recommendations and your justification for them. The connections and synergies and staging will be clearer if you do not clutter the design with your brilliant research. You are NOT writing a term paper or a thesis. **I will not review a design report written with all the**

extraneous material put into the body. You must put this in an appendix, **if you include it at all**, and I will require you to do so before I read it. I want to read the design recommendations and the thinking behind them (justification) in the body text. Make clear, specific reference to where (**always including page number**) the supporting appendices or associated parts of the report are located.

13) Avoid jargon and indirect ways of saying things. Strive to write in the active voice. State that the design consists of recommendations at the outset, so that you can write: “Dig a trench 8 inches wide by 2 feet deep.” Not, “A trench 8 inches wide by 2 feet deep is recommended.” Semi-garbage.

Do not use permaculture jargon. Anyone who comes along must be able to use your design report. There are reasons behind terms like “zone 1” and “stacking functions” and the reasons must be clear to someone who has not read permaculture books. So do not refer to the zone concept in the design report. I don’t care if you think that the client understands the concept.

COMPATIBILITY ISSUES:

Present designs to the class in a format that everyone can open and read. I strongly recommend that you conduct tests with each of the students and monitors to be sure that they can open the design in the way you will need to send it. (This was scheduled to be completed several weeks ago.) Common word processing programs, such as Microsoft Word, or universal format programs such as Adobe Acrobat (pdf files), are best. It is helpful to send word processing documents in versions that are a few years old. While we can read PDF files, we cannot review them as conveniently as on Microsoft Word. We do have GraphicConverter, that will open most nonproprietary graphic formats, but do send tests. JPEG graphic files are best for compatibility. We also have

Adobe Photoshop. Since graphics for reports will be embedded in the document, graphics formats only become relevant if you send a picture to the class for discussion, outside of the report context. Not everyone will have the very latest version of your program. Verify compatibility in the first weeks of the course. (See the schedule.) If someone cannot read your design report and you have not tested for compatibility, you have a problem. **I will not take up your report until everyone has a copy s/he can open, unless a person who does not has failed to speak up during a test. Your report is not for yourself alone, it is a learning experience for everyone in the class.** For some reason, this seems to be difficult for many students to understand.

SUBMISSION RULES

Early Drafts

Early drafts may be submitted via email attachment in compatible programs. I can be more thorough in my review of your draft if you submit it on Microsoft Word or some format that I can import into Word. Otherwise, you may provide an extra hard copy for me to mark up. All hard copy must exactly match the electronic version that you provide. We must receive all hard copy before the deadline.

All Drafts for My Review

- 1) Email the design draft to the entire class. If there is any chance of compatibility problems, you may need to send the draft as hardcopy to affected students by conventional mail. Again, your report is not considered to be submitted, and I will not consider reading it, until every student has a copy s/he can read.
- 2) To me, send **also**, by real-mail (**NOT A DELIVERY SERVICE**), a hard copy plus the design on CD. Rarely, I may try to open floppy disks if I'm, convinced there is no other

option. **Send test floppy disks** in advance so you are sure that I can open what you will send. Otherwise, the delay in achieving compatibility may be fatal to your design review and to certification. I will not extend the end of the course. Your design is not considered “received” until we have all formats to work with. Do not send designs on DVD.

3) In other words, **I will have your report in triplicate formats, email attachment, CD, and hard copy.** Note that we can read many word processing programs, but we cannot read most desktop publishing programs, which are otherwise yummy for preparing designs. (You can render a design with a desktop publishing program and then convert it to Adobe Acrobat, however.) JPEG images seem to be universally accepted. Microsoft Word works pretty well cross platform if you happen to have it. We can translate quite a few other PC formats, and almost all Mac word processing programs.

4) **FILE SIZE LIMIT AND DEADLINES.** Our ISP does not accept attachment file sizes greater than 16MB. To be safe, consider 15MB the limit. If your report draft exceeds this size, make it smaller. If you need help, usually there is someone in the class who can provide it. Often, resetting the resolution of graphics to a lower, but still adequate, level will do the job. Also review your writing. Direct, active declarative sentences save space. Good writing uses fewer words and many fewer syllables than bad writing. I will happily edit a sample from a report for one student each cycle to demonstrate how you can save space by better writing.

If all efforts to make the file smaller still do not bring it within 15MB, you must rely solely on a CD sent by mail. **THIS REQUIRES MY PERMISSION.** As stated elsewhere, ***I will not***

attempt to read a design split into two or more files. You may, if you wish, provide a split file to the others in the course, except that other instructors may also refuse to work from split files.

To receive permission to send me only a CD because of file size, you must first report what you did to reduce the file size and how much you shaved from it. Be clear and complete. The deadline clock is ticking and you don't want me to have to ask questions about your report on the file size.

The CD meets the deadline only if I actually RECEIVE it before or on that date, providing it was mailed on or after I approved this option. When you send it is immaterial. If you require a signature, the date received is obviously the date when Cynthia or I sign. Within the USA, you may waive the signature on Express Mail. Since we are rarely at the post office when it is open for over the counter business, requiring a signature could substantially delay when we receive your draft. While I generally try to have mail picked up from our box shortly before deadlines, it is wise to allow extra days because we don't get to the post office on a daily basis. Three days in addition to normal delivery delays should be safe.

Except when arranged prior to the deadline, I will grant an extension only in case of catastrophic circumstances, e.g., a death in the immediate nuclear family, your house was blown away by a tornado, etc. "The computer ate my homework," never suffices as a valid reason for an extension. Back up work and print out drafts regularly. Part of permaculture is preparing for potential catastrophes.

If you receive an extension and do not successfully complete your design by the assigned deadline in the next course cycle, you may chose to register for another design practicum. We

have discounted the fee for this. See the fee table in your course CD **CourseTools** folder for details. Successful completion includes my review time and approval.

There is no limit to the number of times you sign up for a design practicum, in theory. However, if we are at full enrollment, you must wait for an opening. Once you are a graduate of the course, you can also register for the practicum to get feedback on additional designs done after you are certified, so long as we have room in the course. The limit on designs that we can responsibly read and critique is specified in the **Course Protocol**. Some of the other instructors may be available to read designs, as well.

Outside of the course structure, our minimum reading and comment fee for a design is \$2,500. **You can earn advanced certification in design** using the practicum approach in follow up course cycles. Generally graduates who wish to design for others should get some kind of support from an experienced designer for a few years. This is **one** way to do that.

The deadline for applying for a practicum extension is announced at the beginning of each course. **We strongly recommend request weigh the pros and cons carefully. Carryover designs will serve you best if you know you can and will follow through and work on them throughout the intersession.**

5) See the **Course Protocol** for the maximum number of readings that we will provide for your design report.

Subsequent design readings between cycles require payment of consulting fees, if we have time at all. Otherwise, see the latest **Course Fee Table** for re-enrollment in the course practicum. Questions pertaining to a design decision, or portions of a design submitted during the discussion of the

relevant material, such as your greenhouse design submitted during the Energy module, do not constitute a reading. We want to discuss your design with you but we also need some provision that it does not become a career.

6) **We very, very highly recommend that you do not wait until the end of the course to submit your design.** No one who has waited until the end of the cycle to submit a full draft has ever achieved certification. Any time from week 7 through week 20 you can submit your first draft. Allow some weeks for us to review your design before the end of the course. We may not be able to drop everything to review your design at the last minute. Generally, we strive to reply within two weeks. If we take more than 30 days (after the submission deadline) for feedback, I may grant an extension. At six months from the first day of a course cycle, it is over.

Normally, there are draft review sessions scheduled around Weeks 7 and 15, with the final draft due to be received by the first day of Week 20. Your course CD and course calendar will have specifics for the current cycle. We schedule carryover design drafts earlier to benefit new students and ensure that we don't get bogged down with a lot of drafts to review at one time.

7) We have found that students who take the extra six or so months to complete their designs in the next cycle have a better experience and a higher rate of certification. Therefore, we now recommend that you take the extra time if you can possibly do so and have a proven record successfully of working alone. For the most useful design experience, work on the design continually after you complete Section I of the course, submitting drafts at each opportunity. Then take six

months to perfect the design for the next cycle. Remember, you have no support for your work in this six months unless you join a peer review group or pay us consulting fees (which work we may not accept, anyway). **You need to get our design support during your initial course cycle with us.**

- 8) If you are uncertain about any aspect of the design practicum, it is unwise to fake it. Ask questions. State concerns. **Do not submit garbage just to get some sort of draft into our hands. This wastes everyone's time and strongly prejudices me against ever certifying you. I can refuse to review a carelessly thrown together design.**

DESIGNS CARRIED OVER FROM LIVE WORKSHOPS

From time to time, we teach a 10-day or two-week design intensive. These are organized by people who want such programs in their area. In these programs, the class forms teams and puts together a draft design for the site. Students may arrange **in advance** to use this design as the basis of their practicum. We give a credit against the tuition for the online course if the practicum is begun in this way. See the fee table or protocol for details. Because of the live teaching, site work with the instructor, and slides, this is a superior training to either live or online programs separately. To get practicum credit, the student(s) must submit the design to the next online course at a time that I specify. **These designs must meet all the requirements of the online course.** This means that the student(s) must:

- polish the design including writing, organization, and graphics,
- develop resources and appendices, etc.,

- flesh out, complete, and/or revise design recommendations made in the live program, and
- make any changes that I require when I review the design.

One draft in the online course will be allowed before submitting the final design for certification. I strongly advise taking advantage of the opportunity to submit a draft, because I will be able to scrutinize the design much more carefully online than after a verbal report in a classroom. So I may require additional changes. (I always have.) This early draft should be as good as you can make it or you will not have enough time to make further improvements required.

If two or more students from the same workshop choose this option, they must work as a team in preparing and presenting the design in the online course. I don't want to review multiple versions of the same design! Life is too short.

If you have questions about the practicum, please reread this post plus the protocol. If the questions remain, address them in a class post. Because this is a feedback issue, such a post is appropriate at any time during the course.

Dan