Metropolitan Food Systems

CPLN 621
Spring 2020
Tuesday 9:00-11:50

Prof. Domenic Vitiello
vitiello@upenn.edu
215-898-5226
Office: Meyerson Hall G18
Office Hours: by appointment (generally available Tues. afternoon and Wed. morning)

Description and goals:

This course introduces students to the planning and development of community and regional food systems around the United States and the world. It focuses on strategies by which planning and allied professionals impact food systems through traditional and non-traditional planning and community economic development institutions.

The course aims to develop students’ broad knowledge of food system planning, with an emphasis on community and economic development strategies for community food security.* Major topics include foodshed planning; municipal food policy; hunger and food assistance; distribution and markets; enterprise and workforce development; urban agriculture; and food justice. The class includes a mix of lectures, discussion, guest speakers, and field trips, some of which involve hands-on work.

Upon completing this course, students will:

• Understand how food systems work at the local, regional, and global scales.
• Have broad knowledge of city, regional, and national food system planning, policy, and development in the global North and South.
• Have in-depth knowledge of community and economic development strategies for community food security.

* Community food security is commonly defined as a “condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision-making.” (Hamm & Bellows, 2003)
Assignments and Grading

For Masters students

Class participation

Participation grades are based on students’ attendance, willingness to participate, and ability to critically engage assigned readings in class discussions. Strong participation consists of contributing to our full-class discussions (i.e., speaking up), ideally more than once each week, as well as to discussions in smaller groups. Students are expected to attend all class meetings, and should email the instructor in advance if they cannot attend, or email the instructor as soon as possible in cases of unexpected absence (reasons of health or household/family emergency are considered “excused” absences).

Five brunches essay

* Each student must choose (by February 14) one of the following two options:

**Option 1:**

Four (4) reflection papers *with associated activities* 60% 
~2,000-2,500 words each

Reflection papers engage with the assigned readings from selected dates and relate them to our trips, guest presentations, and discussions. In this option, for each reflection paper, students must complete (and discuss in the same paper) one additional activity outside of class – e.g., visiting markets, volunteering at a food pantry, soup kitchen, or urban farm.

**Option 2:**

Four (4) reflection papers (no extra activities) 30% 
~1,000-1,500 words each

Reflection papers engage with the assigned readings from selected dates and relate them to our trips, guest presentations, and discussions in class.

Group or individual project 30%

Students may propose and develop a group or individual project of your own design. This may take many forms – paper, report, web site, video, photo essay, etc.; work with a community organization or alone. It must involve some original research related to food and cities, regions, or communities. The instructor can help you connect with an organization if you wish. *Proposals for group or individual projects are due by February 14, and must be approved by the instructor.*

For Ph.D. students

Class participation

Written assignments for doctoral students will be negotiated with the instructor on an individual basis at the start of the semester.
Reading

Course readings provide the foundations for class discussion and are intended to introduce students to food systems, planning, policy, and community economic development around the world. All students are expected to come to class having thoroughly explored the material and well prepared to discuss it in detail. You should expect to spend an average of 2.5 to 3 hours per week reading (and watching) assigned material outside of our class meetings.

All readings are posted on or linked from the course Canvas site – see: canvas.upenn.edu

Trips

Two or three of our trips will be via SEPTA – students are responsible for purchasing fare cards and arriving to class with fares already purchased. On other trips, we will carpool. On all of our trips, students are expected to wear appropriate clothing (boots, clothes that can get dirty); and on some of our trips come prepared to work with your hands. We will always end in time for you to return to campus by 12:00pm. For at least one trip, we will meet and depart before 9:00am.

GENERAL POLICIES

Laptops, Tablets, and Smart Phones:

Students may not use laptops, tablets, smart phones, or other screens during class discussion (unless approved by Penn student services).

Students will be asked to use laptops and/or tablets occasionally during group exercises in the classroom, so please bring your laptop or tablet to class (not trips).

Students may use phones and cameras to take pictures and notes on our class trips.

Academic Integrity:

All students are responsible for following the policies (in particular, regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, and original work) contained in the University of Pennsylvania’s Code of Academic Integrity.

Late Work and Extensions:

Unless you contact the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the assignment deadline, or have a last-minute emergency, no written work will be accepted late. Please plan ahead and ask for an extension at least 5 days in advance if you need one.
SCHEDULE (overview)

**Part 1: Food systems and planning**

January 21  Introductions and history of food system planning
January 28  Comparative food systems
  *Assignment due:* five brunches dish/meal (group) and essay (individual)
February 4  Regional and land planning
February 11  City planning and policy
  Guests: Amanda Wagner, Philadelphia Department of Public Health
  Ash Richards, Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation

Friday, Feb. 14  *Assignment due:* reflection paper 1

**Part 2: Food environments and access**

February 18  Assessing food environments
  *Trip:* Upper Darby
February 25  Food retail interventions
  *Guest:* Brian Lang, The Food Trust
March 3  Hunger and food relief
  *Trip:* Philabundance, hosts: Jonathan Miller, Glenn Bergman

*Spring Break*

March 17  School food and youth
  Guests: Mary Summers, Penn Fox Leadership Program
  Jarrett Stein, Rebel Ventures

Friday, Mar. 20  *Assignment due:* reflection paper 2

**Part 3: Labor and enterprise, distribution and waste**

March 24  Food enterprise and workforce development
  *Trip:* Center for Culinary Enterprises, host: Val Cadet
March 31  Wholesale distribution and waste
  *Trip:* Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market (meet at 7:00am)
April 7  Local value chains
  *Trip:* Common Market, Philly Good Food Lab, Mycopolitan Farms

Friday, Apr. 10  *Assignment due:* reflection paper 3

**Part 4: Urban agriculture**

April 14  Economic and social impacts
  *Trip:* Southwest Philadelphia gardens and farms with Michael Nairn
April 21  Politics and policies
  *Trip:* Upper Roxborough farms and gardens
April 28  Ecology and design
  *Work day:* TBA

Friday, May 1  *Assignment due:* reflection paper 4
I. Food Systems and Planning

January 21  **Introductions and history of food planning**

Reading: News and reports on food systems – links on Canvas.

January 28  **Comparative food systems**

Reading:
- See assignment for instructions on reading: selections of Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* (2006); or fair and just food articles.
- Continue reading news and reports on Canvas.

**Assignment due:** Five brunches exercise (distributed Jan. 21)

February 4  **Regional and land planning**

Reading and listening:
- Browse U.S. regions’ foodshed studies, plans, and visions.
- Tom Daniels, “Farmland Preservation Planning in Local Land Use Planning.”
- Black farmer and farming subdivisions articles and radio story.
- Urban Land Institute, *Cultivating Development* (2016).
- Continue reading news and reports on Canvas.

February 11  **City planning and policy**

Reading:
- Kevin Morgan, “Nourishing the City” (2015).
- Elyssa Ludher and Thinesh Kumar, “Food and the City” (2018).

**Guests:** Amanda Wagner, Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Ash Richards, Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation

Friday, February 14: **Assignment due** – Reflection paper on part 1
II. Food Environments and Access

February 18  Assessing food environments

Reading:
- Food deserts and swamps articles.
- FAO/RUAF, City Region Food Systems Programme (2018).

Trip: Upper Darby

February 25  Food retail interventions

Reading:
- Julie Guthman, “If they only knew” (2011).

Guest: Brian Lang, The Food Trust

March 3  Hunger and food relief

Reading:
- Lang, Barling, and Caraher, Food Policy (2009), chapter 2.

Trip: Philabundance, hosts: Jonathan Miller; Glenn Bergman

March 17  School food and youth

Reading:
- Food issue, Philadelphia Public School Notebook (2016).

Guests: Mary Summers, Penn Fox Leadership Program
        Jarrett Stein, Rebel Ventures

Friday, March 20: Assignment due – Reflection paper on part 2
III. Labor and Enterprise, Distribution and Waste

March 24  Food enterprise and workforce development

Reading and listening:
- *Community Food Enterprise* – read at least five cases.
- Immigrant farming case studies – read at least two.
- Browse enterprise and workforce development links on Canvas.

Trip: Center for Culinary Enterprises, host: Val Cadet

March 31  Wholesale distribution and waste

Reading and watching:
- Wallace Center SYSCO case study.

Trip: Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market *meet at 7:00am

April 7  Value chains

Reading:
- Dubbeling, Hoekstra, and van Veenhuizen, “From Seed to Table” (2010).
- National Good Food Network reports on processing; food hubs; value chains.
- Catholic Relief Services, “Inclusive Value Chains” (2013-14).

Trip: The Common Market, Philadelphia Good Food Lab, Mycopolitan Farms

Friday, April 10: *Assignment due* – Reflection paper on part 3
IV. Urban Agriculture

April 14  
**Economic and social impacts**

Reading and watching:
- RUAF videos.

Trip: Southwest Philadelphia gardens and farms with Michael Nairn

April 21  
**Politics and policies**

Reading:
- RUAF projects – see Canvas for instructions.

Trip: Upper Roxborough farms and gardens

April 28  
**Ecology and design**

Reading and watching:
- Dickson Despommier, “A Farm on Every Floor” (2009).
- Lauren Comiteau, "World's First Floating Dairy Farm…” (2019).
- *Seed: The Untold Story* (2016), first 50 minutes.
- Ron Finley, “Food Forest” (2012), 12 minutes.
- Browse links and videos.

Work day: TBA

Friday, May 1: *Assignment due* – Reflection paper on part 4