



LA 429/529 Civic Agriculture
Winter 2020 CRNs 23423 & 23446
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 – 11:50
222 Lawrence Hall • 4 Credits
Harper Keeler (hkeeler@uoregon.edu)
(Winter Office Hours:
Tues/Thurs 1:30 – 3:00)
212 Lawrence Hall
Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Oregon

The question before us, then, is an extremely difficult one: How do we begin to remake, or to make, a local

culture that will preserve our part of the world while we use it? **Wendell Berry**

Introduction – As the realization that the state of our industrialized food system is neither healthful nor sustainable becomes more self-evident, and that food is the primary defining element shaping how and where we live, communities of all scales are seeking to re-embrace the skills and sensibilities that once defined civilized food production and consumption. Simultaneously, forward-looking thinkers are united in the desire to re-discover and re-develop new methods in which to construct food systems so that they fit into a modern, responsible and more sustainable social paradigm. Civic agriculture is the embodiment of these concepts.

Course structure – This course is intended to be a place-based, experiential model of learning where students will identify - and contribute to the actual development and enhancement of – the complex set of constituents and recognized tactics that are required to design, create and maintain a socially responsive, responsible and equitable local food system. Working alone and in teams, students will research, develop and implement various strategies geared toward repairing the damaging effects of industrialized food production and distribution, within our local community.

Course work will be organized around weekly lecture/seminar presentations, supported by interpretive activities, along with guided and individual field-work. Course activities will consist of discussions, field trips, guest interaction, project critiques and audio-visual presentations. Students will be expected to participate in regular seminar discussions and will earn credit for this contribution. Assignments will include essays, multimedia creations, and class presentations. Students should expect to perform individual and team field investigation, the results of which, will be shared with the general group. Assigned readings from the two required textbooks will be supplemented by additional required weekly reading and assigned projects.

The course is open to majors of any discipline and there are no prerequisites required for registration. This course serves as an elective option for the BLA degree and for credit toward a minor degree in Food Studies. Graduate students in the MLA program can earn Area of

Concentration (AOC) credit with approval from their assigned advisor. This course also earns credit towards a Graduate Specialization in Food Studies.

Course Objectives - Upon successful completion of this course students will develop:

- an understanding of the cultural history of American agriculture from its outset, through mechanization and industrialization, to a return to food production based on a local vernacular
- a refined perspective of the potentiality of re-purposing open spaces into edible landscapes
- an appreciation of the role of small-scale (non-industrial) food systems in fostering local economies
- an appreciation of the importance of civic agriculture in shaping human communities
- an understanding of how of first-hand interactions with actual agrarian efforts - that seek to re-invent the local food-shed - inform their understanding of where they live, work and eat
- an increased familiarity with topics relevant to the evaluation and selection of site-scale urban farming, such as; site cultural history, geology, soils, climate and micro-climate, ecology, hydrology, aesthetics and zoning

A word or two about Attendance and Participation – As with most seminar style courses, it is vital that everyone in the group partake in thoughtful and critical discussion in order get the most from the experience. This means that you must ‘be there’ and ‘be involved’. With that in mind, all students should feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and perspectives regardless of whether these ideas line up with their peer’s or those of the instructor. A healthy - and even rousing - dialogue is often the best method for unpacking the often complex issues within food systems and community.

Receiving Graduate Credit (LA529)

Students seeking graduate credit will be expected to perform additional coursework in order to earn graduate credit. An additional reading regimen and/or enhanced project assignment criteria will be added to reflect this extra effort. This work is expected to demonstrate a more refined understanding of the subject from a more critical lens. The details of this additional work will be agreed upon on an individual basis, before the end of ‘week two’ of the term.

Required Texts:

Civic Agriculture, Thomas A. Lyson

The Essential Agrarian Reader, Edited by Norman Wirzba

These titles are available in the UO Bookstore on the LA 410/510 class shelf.

Additional suggested titles can also be found in the class section at the bookstore or by going to this web address: <http://literaryduck.uoduckstore.com/CourseMaterials.aspx>

Student Evaluation Criteria

You will be given assignments on a weekly basis. The total score for the quarter will be based on a combination of the assignments and participation.

Your grade for the class will be based on the following:

- Food Identity Project (A1) 5%
- Book Review Assignment (A2) 15%
- Neighborhood Mapping and Assessment (A3) 15%
- Term Project (A4 parts a, b & c) 20%
- Weekly Reading Reviews 5%
- Attendance / Seminar Participation / Style 40%

About Attendance:

In order to earn full percentage points for attendance, students must attend every class session. Students will be docked 2.5 points for each missed class. Any excused absences must be cleared in advance. You are responsible for all material covered in class and it is your own responsibility to make up for missed classes. Students should not assume that lecture notes and slides will be provided by the instructor.

Assignment Descriptions

A1: Students will produce a written and illustrative product that tells a story of their own personal food identity to be shared in class.

A2: Students will choose 7 essays from the Essential Agrarian Reader (EAR) to review. Each review should be approximately 450 words and should discuss the manner in which each essay connects to the major themes presented over the course of the term.

A3: Assignment #3 is a field based neighborhood assessment where students will intimately study and identify existing and potential urban agriculture activity. From this gathered data set, students will make educated assumptions regarding the collective appreciation and importance of neighborhood scale food production and its ability to transform the local foodshed.

A4: Assignment #4 is a hybrid place-based inquiry and researched project where students will identify specific opportunities and/or constraints within their community food system. Students will choose specific elements of this system and re-imagine and/or design improvements to them based on the research conducted. Detailed dossiers of information supporting each student team's project will be compiled as a document collection that supports the project and illustrates each team's understanding of complexity of the system element that they will have focused on. Additionally, a graphic poster will also be presented to the group with the intention of highlighting the mission of the team and the general tactics involved in the project.

Late projects will not be accepted unless circumstances are discussed beforehand. Each late project will be marked down 10% per class session. After one week from project due date, no late projects will be accepted without pre-clearance.

A Word or two about weekly work expectations:

There will be weekly assigned reading throughout the course of the term. Much of the daily lecture structure and tempo will relate to the readings in Civic Agriculture, The Essential Agrarian Reader and other selected essays. Students should expect to spend approximately 6 hours per week on reading assignments and reviews. (10 hours a week for Graduate Level). Addition-

ally, students will need to be prepared to commit approximately 3 per week to individual field study. (4 hours a week for Graduate level) Finally, students should expect to invest 4 or 5 hours at the end of the term for class presentation preparation.

A Word or Two about Grading:

Although this is a hands-on experiential course, student grades will reflect a mastery of the subject matter commensurate to any 400/500 level course. The following standard grading rubric will serve as a useful guide for students to consult in order to measure their advancement over the term.

A+ through A-: Exceptional or outstanding work that demonstrates keen insight, original thinking, critical analysis, and full command of the material covered in lectures and readings. An "A" grade reflects students' ability to clearly and thoughtfully articulate what they have learned in the course.

B+ through B-: Good to excellent work that demonstrates strong originality, comprehension, critical thinking, and attention to detail. In addition, a "B" grade reflects students' ability to clearly articulate what they have learned in the course.

C+ through C-: Work that exhibits basic comprehension of the material covered in lectures and readings, and some evidence of critical thinking and attention to detail. A "C" grade reflects students' ability to adequately articulate what they have learned in the course.

D+ through D-: Work that demonstrates minimal comprehension of the material covered in lectures and readings, and little attention to detail. A "D" grade may reflect students' difficulty in articulating what they have learned in the course.

F: Work that does not demonstrate comprehension of the material covered in lectures and readings. It exhibits consistent problems with comprehension, organization, critical thinking, and supporting details. An "F" grade reflects students' inability to articulate what they may have learned in the course.

A Word about written assignments:

As with all University writing, you will be graded on style as well as content. Even though we are most interested in hearing about your experience and will give primary credit to the degree to which student work satisfies the spirit of the assignment, points will be deducted for grammar errors, typos etc. You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, ask! Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Fortunately, it is also easy to avoid and if you are the least bit careful about giving credit where credit is due you should not run into any problems.

Policy Statement on Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and originally produced for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. Students are encouraged to work together and assist one another, but unless an assignment is specifically assigned as a team project, each student is expected to complete their own work individually. See the UO guide to avoiding plagiarism: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>. For the consequenc-

es of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt as to the requirements or the nature of specific projects in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor before you complete the project/activity in question.

Students will not have the opportunity to rewrite a paper or exam if they commit plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will be discussed with the student, and be sent to review by Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) as deemed necessary by the instructor. Any disagreement between the instructor and the student about the act of plagiarism is automatically sent to SCCS. If SCCS finds that a student has plagiarized, that student will receive an "F" for the course.

Remember, improper citation is plagiarism. If you have questions about citation please talk to the instructor, GE or get help from the Writing Center. Also please review the following if you have questions: <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism/styleguides>

Special Needs

Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, arrange to meet with the course instructor within the first week of the term. The documentation of your disability must come in writing from the Accessible Education Center in the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services. For more information on Accessible Education Center, please see <http://aec.uoregon.edu>

Basic Needs

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support. Furthermore, if you are comfortable doing so, please let me know about your situation so I can help point you in the right direction for assistance.

Mandatory Reporting

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of prohibited discrimination. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about prohibited discrimination to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following link for detailed information about mandatory reporting: <https://president.uoregon.edu/content/employee-reporting-responsibilities>