

The Urban Farm

**Dept. of Landscape Architecture
University of Oregon
Spring 2020
LA 390
4 Credits, Harper Keeler**

There are two sections of the Urban Farm class in the Spring
CRN 33285 - 12:00 - 1:50
CRN 33284 - 3:00 - 4:50
Tuesday and Thursdays

“A person who undertakes to grow a garden at home, by practices that will preserve rather than exploit the economy of the soil, has his mind precisely against what is wrong with us.... What I am saying is that if we apply our minds directly and competently to the needs of the earth, then we will have begun to make fundamental and necessary changes in our minds. We will begin to understand and to mistrust and to change our wasteful economy, which markets not just the produce of the earth, but also the earth’s ability to produce.”

-Wendell Berry, *Think Little from A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural & Agricultural*

Wendell Berry also once described eating as an agricultural act. As we become more aware of this intrinsic connection, the necessity of understanding where our food comes from becomes extremely vital. Eating Local has joined Organic as an important criterion for learning how to behave responsibly and sustainably. Consequently, the necessity to preserve vanishing prime agricultural land has become equally important and has the potential to shape how we reassess our Urban Spaces.

The Urban Farm is a model for alternative urban land use where people grow food, work together, take care of the land, and build community. Throughout its 44 year history, the Urban Farm has been a place and a process, integrating biological, ecological, economic and social concerns. Key to these concerns is the Urban Farm’s interactive relationship with like-minded Community Programs, offering guidance and hands-on assistance. Urban Farm students are introduced to and directly involved with local concerns such as FOOD for Lane County, The School Garden Project of Lane County, Huerto de la Familia and many others.

The class is a hands-on experience where students learn by doing, drawing upon several organic gardening philosophies. Students should be prepared for physical and sometimes tiring work. Students are also expected to think deeply about how the work they are doing fits into the food system, of which they are a part. There will be numerous assignments where they will demonstrate the degree to which they have done this critical thinking. Be prepared to work hard and write about your experience. Be prepared also to enjoy the bounty of springtime at the Urban Farm.

**For information regarding the Urban Farm Program contact:
Harper Keeler at hkeeler@uoregon.edu**