



**LA 429/529 Civic Agriculture**  
**Winter 2022 CRNs 23930 & 23943**  
**Monday/Wednesday 10:00 – 11:50**  
**231 Lawrence Hall • 4 Credits**  
**Harper Keeler (hkeeler@uoregon.edu)**  
**(Winter Office Hours by appointment)**  
**231 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, possible 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.

**A word about COVID:** This course is intended to be a hybrid class where there will be in-person and possibly remote instruction combined with individual and instructor led field study. We will center our projects on specific aspects of our local community and it will be neces-

sary for all students to be present in the classroom and in the field. All group interaction will strictly adhere to the University of Oregon COVID guidelines with regard to masks, distancing, room sanitation etc.

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 (available on-line)

Palaces for the People, Eric Klinenberg

The Essential Agrarian Reader, Edited by Norman Wirzba

These titles are available in the UO Bookstore on the LA 429/529 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/Video 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.

### **A few more words regarding in-person learning during COVID**

As everybody knows, COVID has wreaked havoc on virtually all of our normal university fixtures. As we now transition back to in-person learning we must remember that this comes with a great deal of responsibility and we are all in this together. In coordination with the office of Safety and Risk services, we will implement strict safety practices to insure that every student and instructor is protected. This will include distancing, wearing masks at all times, minimal sharing of materials and regular sanitizing. Details of these tactics will be shared within the group as a whole and it is imperative that we remain diligent and focused. Staying separated - both in the classroom and outdoors - allows us this opportunity, but this protects no one if we let our guard down. It's 'all hands on deck' in a very real sense, and the possibility of keeping the University back to normal depends on how well we demonstrate our commitment. Detailed guidelines and links for COVID safety can be found at bottom of this course description. Please review them and share widely among your peers.

### **Assignment Abstracts**

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). Additionally, 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 consequences 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 Acces-*

sible 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>

### **UO COVID-19 Regulations & Prevention**

( <https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/regulations> and <https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/prevention#if-sick-stay-home> for more information)

“The University of Oregon (UO), in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, Oregon Health Authority, and Lane County Public Health requires faculty, staff, students, visitors, and vendors across all UO locations to use face coverings, which include masks (note: masks with exhaust valves are discouraged), cloth face coverings, or face shields, when in UO owned, leased, or controlled buildings. This includes classrooms. Please correctly wear a suitable face covering during class. Students unable to wear face coverings can work with the Accessible Education Center to find a reasonable accommodation. Students refusing to wear a face covering will be asked to leave the class.

- Students should maintain 6 ft. distance from others at all times. Classrooms tables and seats have been marked to accommodate this distance. Please do not move any furniture in the classroom or sit in areas that have been blocked off or otherwise marked as unavailable.
- Students should obtain wipes available outside of classrooms before they enter class and use them to wipe down the table and seat they will use.
- Please conduct regular symptom self-checks (<https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/regulations#self-check-procedures>) and do not come to class if you are experiencing symptoms. I will work with you to make sure you can stay caught up with the class.
- Use this self-check log: <https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/sites/coronavirus1.uoregon.edu/files/2020-08/self-monitoring.pdf> to track your symptoms.

In addition, familiarize yourself with these exposure scenarios and guidelines to determine if you should come to class after suspected exposure to someone with the virus. <https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/covid-exposure>