Metropolitan Food Systems

CPLN 621

Spring 2010
Friday, 12-3pm (*except where noted)
Meyerson Hall B6

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Office Hours: 10am-12pm Tuesday
10am-12pm Wednesday
* Please sign up for office hours in advance on office door.

Description and goals:

This course introduces students to the planning and development of metropolitan food systems. It focuses on strategies by which planning and design professionals can impact food systems through traditional and non-traditional planning and community economic development institutions. Major topics include regional planning; public policy; community food security; distribution and markets; and sustainable agriculture. The class includes a mix of lectures, discussion, and field trips, some of which involve hands-on work. Assignments include two short papers, a take-home exam, and a group community food assessment. Ultimately, the course aims to develop students’ broad knowledge of food systems planning, with an emphasis on community and economic development strategies for sustainable food systems and food security.

Upon completing this course, students will:
• Understand how food systems work.
• Have broad knowledge of food systems planning, policy, and development in the global North and South.
• Have in-depth knowledge and capacity to analyze community and economic development strategies for food security.
• Have practical experience in a community food assessment, involving research design, fieldwork, and planning and development recommendations.
Assignments and Grading

For Masters students

Class participation 30%

*Class participation grades are based on students’ willingness to participate, ability to synthesize and critically analyze assigned readings in class discussion, and performance in in-class exercises (on trips as well as in the classroom).*

Four lunches essay 5%
Planning exercise 10%
Take-home exam 25%

Community food assessment (group assignment)
  First draft 20%
  Final draft 10%

For Ph.D. students

Class participation 30%

*Class participation grades are based on students’ willingness to participate, ability to synthesize and critically analyze assigned readings in class discussion.*

Food planning research prospectus (due 3/5) 20%
Term paper (due 5/1) 50%

*The format and focus of this paper will be determined in consultation with the instructor. It may take the form of a research paper, annotated bibliography, or review essay.*

Trips & Workshops

Class trips will be on foot and via transit. Wear comfortable, sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. Penn will pay for tokens when we take SEPTA. At least two class trips will involve active participation in learning to work with soil, plants, and perhaps minor construction at farms and gardens. On “workshop” days, students are expected to wear appropriate clothing (boots, clothes that can get dirty) and come prepared to work with your hands. Work gloves will be provided, where necessary.
University of Pennsylvania

SCHEDULE (overview)

I. Metropolitan food systems and planning

January 15  Introductions and history of food systems planning
January 22  Comparative food systems
Assignment due: four lunches dish/meal (group) & essay (individual)
January 29  Metropolitan systems
February 5  Regional food planning
Guests: Alison Hastings, DVRPC
         Beth McKellips, Intervale
February 12 Neighborhood and city food planning

II. Community Food Security

February 19  Inner city ecology and health
Assignment due (individual): planning exercise
Guests: Prof. Amy Hillier, Penn Planning
        Yael Lehmann, The Food Trust
February 26  Hunger and policy
Guest:  Steveanna Wynn, SHARE
March 5  Food justice

Spring Break

March 19  Work in groups on community food assessment

III. Community Economic Development

March 26  Markets, distribution, and value chains
Trip: Reading Terminal/Fair Food Farm Stand
Assignment due (group): community food assessment (first draft)
* Take-home exam distributed
April 2  Food enterprise and workforce development
Brief presentations on first phase of community food assessment
Guest:  Brianna Sandoval, The Food Trust
April 9  Urban agriculture policy and practice
12-5pm  Workshop: Weavers Way Farm
April 16  Sustainable agriculture systems
12-5pm  Assignment due (individual): take-home exam
         Workshop: TBA
April 23  Wrap-up
12-5pm  Trip: Las Parcelas garden
April 30  Assignment due (group): community food assessment (final)
I. Metropolitan food systems and planning

January 15  Introductions

Reading:
- Suggested reading on food systems planning history:
  - Gregory Donofrio, “Feeding the City.”
  - Laura Lawson, “The Planner in the Garden.”
  - Domenic Vitiello, “Planning the Food Secure City.”

January 22  Comparative food systems

Reading:
- Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, selections.
- Deutsche Bank, “Investing in Agriculture” (2009), pp.6-17.
- Browse and read at least five articles on world food systems from *The Guardian* and *New York Times* (links on Blackboard).

Assignment due: Four lunches (distributed Jan. 15)

January 29  Metropolitan systems

Reading:

February 5  Regional food planning

Reading:
- Tom Daniels, “Farmland Preservation Planning in Local Land Use Planning.”
- Vivid Picture Project – browse to get familiar with the process and outcomes.
- Portland regional food study – skim to grasp the study’s scope and indicators.
- Lynn Markham, “Farming Subdivisions: Problematic or Promising” (2007).

Guests: Alison Hastings, DVRPC
       Beth McKellips, Intervale
February 12  Neighborhood and city food planning

Reading:
• Samina Raja et al, Community and Regional Food Planning (2008), ch.2 & 6.
• Barbara McCann, Community Design for Healthy Eating (2006).
• Laura Lawson et al., Greening Cities, Growing Communities (2009), ch.1-2.
• Vancouver food charter, regulations, and food policy council.
• Strongly suggested: APA food policy guide.

II. Community Food Security

February 19  Inner city food environments

Reading:
• Mari Gallagher Group, Examining the Impact of Food Deserts (2006).

Assignment due: Planning exercise (assignment distributed Feb. 5).

Guests:  Prof. Amy Hillier, Penn Planning
         Yael Lehmann, The Food Trust

February 26  Hunger and food policy

Reading:
• Patricia Allen, “Reweaving the food security safety net” (1999).
• Mark Winne, Closing the Food Gap (2008), chapters 5, 9, and conclusion.
• Spend some quality time reading hunger and policy links on Blackboard.

Guest:  Steveanna Wynn, SHARE

March 5  Food justice

Reading:
• Frances and Anna Lappe, Hope’s Edge (2002), chapters 3-4.
• GFJI & WHY, “Race and the Food System” (link).

Assignment due: 2-page research design for group community food assessment
This group project aims to immerse students in the design, research, and production of Community Food Assessments (CFAs), one of the foundational tools of food systems planning at the neighborhood and municipal levels.

In phase one (February-March), students will work in groups to:
1) Refine research questions and develop a research design and work plan;
2) Conduct fieldwork including visits to food retail outlets, food relief organizations, and other parts of the food environment in the group’s assigned neighborhood; and
3) Analyze field and administrative data in a brief report including maps, tables, and concise but specific narrative analysis. This initial report will assess food security, access, and the overall food environment of the neighborhood.

In phase two (April), each group will refine its analysis of the food environment and develop concise planning and community economic development recommendations. The entire report (phase 1 analysis and phase 2 recommendations) should total 2,000-3,000 words.

The CFAs will be posted on a publicly accessible web site developed by the class, and will be used by The Food Trust, the class’s partner in this project and the national leader in inner city food market redevelopment, to inform its work with corner stores, farmers markets, and related projects.

Important project dates (all meetings noted are in class):

February 19  Introduction to food environment assessment/mapping with Amy Hillier (Penn Planning) and Yael Lehmann (The Food Trust)
            Group meetings to discuss research design
            * Initial field research to test methods before class on 2/26.
February 26  Group meetings to finalize research design and develop work plans
Mon. Mar. 1  Research design and work plan (2pp.) due with any questions you have for The Food Trust
March 5      Group meetings in class (as needed)
* March 19   Entire class meeting devoted to group meetings to analyze data
March 26     First draft due: a summary of your research findings, including maps and analysis of the neighborhood food environment, access, and security
April 2      Informal presentation of findings (7 minutes)
            Debrief with Brianna Sandoval (The Food Trust), discussion of next steps
Mon. Apr. 26 Final draft due: including edited analysis and recommendations
III. Community Economic Development

March 26 \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Markets, Distribution, and Value Chains}

Reading:
- Wallace Center, Sysco case study
- Gilbert Gillespie et al, “Farmers’ Markets as Keystones in Rebuilding Local and Regional Food Systems” (2008).
- Browse markets and distribution sites on Blackboard.

Trip: Reading Terminal/Fair Food Farm Stand

Assignment due (group): Community food assessment (first draft)

Take-home exam distributed

April 2 \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Food enterprise and workforce development}

Reading:
- Browse enterprise and workforce development sites on Blackboard.

Debrief community food assessments with Brianna Sandoval, The Food Trust
* Brief (7-minute) presentations and discussion of next steps

April 9 \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Urban agriculture policy and practice}

*12-5pm

Reading:
- Browse urban agriculture links on Blackboard.

Workshop: Weavers Way Farm
April 16  **Sustainable agriculture systems**  
*12-5pm*

**Reading:**
- Browse sustainable agriculture sites on Blackboard.

**Assignment due:** take-home exam (individual)

**Workshop:** Forest gardens and composting at SHARE

April 23  **Edible cities**  
*12-5pm*

**Reading:**
- Dickson Despommier, “A farm on every floor” (2009).
- Browse sites on Blackboard.

**Trip:** Las Parcelas garden (for discussion more than hard labor…)

Monday, April 26  **Assignment due (group):** community food assessment (final)