

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: Sustainable Urban Agriculture

Course No.: UESM 762

Course Section: 01

School: Architecture

Department: Graduate Center for
Planning and the
Environment

Program: Urban
Environmental
Systems
Management

Days: Wednesday

Time: 5:30 - 7:50
pm

Place of class meetings: PMC

Credit hours: 1

Course Coordinator or Chairperson (where applicable): Jaime Stein

Prerequisite courses/skills/other restrictions:

II. INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Perry Winston

Academic Title: Visiting Assistant Professor

Office Location: HHN 1

Contact Information:

Office hours: By appointment

Phone no(s): (917) 549-6057

Appropriate times to call:

Email address: : cel.win@ix.netcom.com

Class listserv: LMS

Special Instructions:

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Bulletin Description:

This course will explore the place and potential of urban agriculture in environmental planning, management, and development. Topics to be covered include fundamentals of a sustainable food system, horticultural principals and techniques, the place of food systems in urban planning, how urban agriculture can be accommodated within the urban built fabric, and contemporary examples of community gardening and urban agriculture locally and in other parts of the country. The principles of stormwater and solid waste management, nutrient and water cycles, and sustainable material sourcing will be explored as well.

Detailed Description:

As an environmental specialty Mini-Course, the goal of the class is to familiarize students with relevant concepts, literature, and practices, relating to Urban Agriculture at the local, regional, national and global levels and to apply their knowledge to an actual

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site in the New York City area. The mini-course aims to provide students concrete technical and analytical skills and an understanding of real world applications that will be important to their work as planners, architects, designers and/or environmentalists. Professors/Instructors have been selected who have significant professional experience with the topic they are teaching. Students will be required to critically evaluate what they have read and heard. In addition, the class will give students an opportunity to learn how to express their ideas verbally and through the final application assignment.

The purpose of the final assignment is to give the students personal experience in applying the knowledge and skills presented in the course to a real site and situation. Students will learn the fundamentals of gathering and applying environmental information; evaluation of appropriate methods and technologies; presentation of ideas and proposals in verbal, visual and written form.

Course Goal(s):

By taking this course students will:

- Gain exposure to the terms and practice of urban agriculture
- Develop an understanding of how urban resource systems function, with a focus on food systems
- Gain familiarity with NYC specific case studies in urban agriculture

Student Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify specific ways that urban agriculture can be applied (and when)
- Describe and debate the feasibility of urban agriculture and its role in our urban food system
- Recognize the limitations and benefits of urban agriculture

Course Calendar/Schedule:

6 sessions - 4 Lecture/Seminar classes; 1 Field trip; 1 oral presentation class.

The seminar will include readings, lecture, class discussion, and, where appropriate, site visits and/or field work.

- There is a course reader/ textbook
- Additional written and web-based references are included in the course Bibliography

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings, participate in class discussions and attend site visits/field work trips. Students must stay current with required readings as the quality of class discussions depends on all students staying abreast of the reading. Most of the required readings are in the required Textbook/Reader although additional readings may be handed out in class.

For materials from the Internet, students are not expected to read every word, but you should have a good grasp of the material and read thoroughly those parts that will assist them in class discussions

Session 1 –Urban Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems

Outline:

- Big Picture: Majority of world population now in urban areas; decreasing rural agricultural land area; peak oil cost squeeze; impact on food security.
- Urban Resource Systems; open/closed loop systems.
- Connection between nutrition & health.
- Benefits of Urban Agriculture
- Historical examples
- Presentation of Term Assignment

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Session 2 – Planning for Food Security

Outline:

- Food systems and the planning profession
- Elements of a food system; regional food sheds; “food security”
- Planning’s role in the market-based U.S. food system.
- Opportunities for planners to impact food systems; recent examples.
- Urban agriculture’s role in community development: farmers’ markets; school food.

Session 3 – Urban truck farming

Guest Speaker: John Ameroso, Urban agronomist, formerly with Cornell Coop Extension New York City.

Outline:

- Basic horticultural principles; choosing growing sites; quality of growing medium; nutrient inputs
- Marketable produce in urban areas; crop planning; seed sources
- Principles of garden layout and crop allocation, seed spacing
- Irrigation and water supply; composting; hot houses
- Harvesting & marketing; basic food marketing – from pricing to presentation
- Farmers’ markets; WIC/FMNP; government plusses and minuses

Session 4 - Infrastructure of Urban Agriculture

Outline:

- Urban Design and urban food production
- Community gardens: NYC recent history; activity in other U.S. cities
- Incorporation into educational facilities and curricula
- Architectural armatures for food production; residential; industrial; roof-tops; building envelopes
- International examples

Session 5 - Student oral presentation of their class assignments

Students make oral progress report on their term paper research to date.

Session 6 –Saturday Field Trip: United Community Centers Garden, Scheck Ave. & Livonia Ave., East New York, Brooklyn.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Textbooks, Readings, and Materials:

Project(s), paper(s), assignment(s):

Prepare a plan for an urban agriculture project on an urban site of the student’s choice. Presented orally in class and as a written report due at last session of the class.

Assessment and Grading:

30% of a student’s grade will be for the quality of contributions to the classroom sessions.

40% of a student’s grade will be for the quality of the final report.

30% of a student’s grade will be for the quality of the final presentation.

IV. POLICIES

Institute-wide policies listed in the “Community Standards” section of the bulletin:

All students must adhere to Institute-wide policies on pages 60-75 of the student handbook and Institute Bulletin under “Community Standards.” These include policies on attendance, computer, and network use. Please see http://www.pratt.edu/uploads/Online_Student_Handbook.pdf.

All work must be your own. If it is not, the source should be cited and documented appropriately.

Policy on students with disabilities:

Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must register with the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. They should contact the Disability Services Director, first floor Willoughby Hall, adjacent to Health and Counseling Services, 718-636-3711.

Any additional applicable school, departmental, or personal course policies:

All students are expected to adhere to the specific Health & Safety and Environmental Protection Guidelines of Pratt Institute.