



ANTH-GEOG 308 Urban Agriculture in the US and Italy: Theory & Practice

Course Syllabus Summer
Semester II 2024

Instructor: Caroline Boules, PhD

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Meeting Days & Time: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, 2:15-4:30pm

Office Hours: TBC

Email: cboules@umd.edu

Course Type: Standard Course

Course Fee: \$ 60.00

Fulfills UMD GenEd: History & Social Science; Cultural Competence (Diversity)

Course Description

Urban agriculture (UA) has a long history and has always held a central place in the food system. In the last several decades, in light of climate change and growing food inequities, UA has experienced a resurgence in attention from many groups, including community members, activists and policy-makers. In this course, we will explore the role of UA in contributing to sustainable and equitable food systems, and compare the current state of UA in the US and Italy. Food systems in the US and in Italy look very different – ecologically, socially, politically and economically. We will study the similarities and differences, focusing on UA and the programs, policies and systems that shape UA in both places. We will do this both by reading texts but also by talking to the different actors that shape the food system, including but not limited to urban farmers and farmer associations, consumers and consumer purchasing groups, activists, food policy councils and policy-makers. We will use in-depth case studies in the region of Perugia, Italy to better understand these broad issues.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

Below are the course's learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- **Define** UA and **describe** its history, evolution and importance in the US and Italy;
- **Understand and describe** the political and economic contexts that shape the UA and food production in the US and in Italy;
- **Define** the role of different actors in the UA food system;
- **Critically discuss and evaluate** the role of urban agriculture in addressing multiple social and environmental problems including food insecurity and climate change;
- **Develop** a research proposal on urban agriculture in a regional context;
- **Present and discuss** research proposals with classmates.

Course Materials

Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course's Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

Assignment	Points
Student attendance & participation in class	10%
News article presentations	10%
Self-reflections (2 total, 7.5% each)	15%
Peer teaching assignment	15%
Field Notes Journal	10%
Lit. Review & Research Proposal Paper	20%
Final Presentation	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria:

In-class Participation (10%)

Participation is an important part of this course. There will be discussion and activities during the class sessions in

which engagement is expected. You can learn a great deal from discussing ideas and perspectives with your peers and professor. Participation can also help you articulate your thoughts and develop critical thinking skills.

News Article Assignment and Presentation (10%)

Students will be required to find a recent article that relates to the topic of lecture that day, summarize the article in a very brief oral presentation to the class, make connections to course content, and pose one question to the class to stimulate discussion.

In-class Reflections (15%, 2 total, 7.5% each)

Twice during each unit, once towards the start and once at the end, there will be a short reflection assignment which will require you to engage with the reading and class material. This may also include small group work and discussion with your classmates. If you are keeping up with the readings and participating in class, these should be intellectually stimulating, but not too challenging.

Field Note Journal (10%)

Field notes journal entries refer to the written account derived from data collected during ethnographic observations and interviews at different food venues and the farmers market in Perugia. Each entry should be typed with full sentences. They must be divided into **two sections**:

On the left (usually longer, descriptive and with many details): artifacts, décor, and elaboration of food service, food, people's behavior, what the staff/owners tell us.

On the right (usually shorter, condensed and more analytical): MUST CONTAIN 1) some level of interpretation or a hypothesis about what you saw in the observations 2) at least one reference to the readings you have done. Students will find on Moodle a full prompt.

Literature Review and Research Proposal Paper (20%)

The final exercise for this class is to write a paper that combines the literature on urban agriculture with a proposal for future research in Orto Sole (or other urban gardens in Perugia) or, alternately, a plan for a future community-engaged project. The first part of this assignment is for the student to write a literature review on a topic within urban agriculture. We'll practice recognizing and writing literature reviews, so students without experience in this need not worry. A full prompt will be available on Moodle.

Final Research Proposal Presentation (20%)

You will present your final research proposal to the class, including how you have incorporated course content and your learning from the CITI training into your final proposal.

Further detail on each of the assignments, including rubrics for the larger assignments, will be made available throughout the semester on the Moodle system. Due dates and times are posted on Moodle as well as listed on the course schedule below. Please remember that final grades for this course are earned through individual assignments. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be submitted electronically via the Moodle system.

Extension & Submitting Late Work

If students submit work after the deadline, they will incur a 10% grade deduction for each day the assignment is late. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first absence per course due to illness will be considered an excused "sick day" and does not require medical documentation. To receive additional excused absences due to illness, students are required to see a local physician or request a letter from an Institute-approved doctor documenting they should be excused from class for illness.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student's final course grade by 4% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences (4 or more,

not including the excused “sick day”) may lead to receiving a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower the students’ grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness includes: death in immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute’s Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually. Any student arriving up to 15 minutes late or leaving up to 15 minutes earlier than the scheduled class end time will be marked as tardy. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 1% off the final grade. However, should a student arrive more than 15 minutes late or depart more than 15 minutes before the conclusion of the class, it will be recorded as an absence.

Students are also expected to remain in class during the time of instruction except for a reasonable amount of time to use the restroom. Students who leave class and do not return during the class session will receive an unexcused absence or late penalty.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism. Should the Institute become aware of a student’s use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones or laptops while in class or during co-curricular events and activities, unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus or expressly permitted by the instructor for special learning. This policy also applies to earbuds and headsets. Students who do not respect these rules will be subject to disciplinary warnings and probation, be given an unexcused absence from class, and other disciplinary action including dismissal from the course.

Moodle

Please note that Moodle, not this syllabus, is the ultimate reference for due dates, assignment prompts, and course announcements. It is *the student’s responsibility* to check the site regularly to be aware of announcements as well as to see and record all due dates for assignments.

Course Schedule

Date	Day	Topic	Assignment/Reading Due
UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS, HISTORY AND POLICIES			
	1	Review syllabus and course goals; Introductions. What is urban agriculture (UA)?	
	2	History of UA & meaning of UA (Guest lecture: Zach Nowak)	McClintock 2014. Radical, reformist, and garden-variety neoliberal: coming to terms with urban agriculture's contradictions.
	3	[Perugia Food History Tour during class time]	PANORAMA OF URBAN AGRICULTURE WITHIN THE CITY OF PERUGIA How To Read A Journal Article Quickly (and Well)
	4	UA and Environmental/Climate Impacts News article presentation	Reducing greenhouse gas emissions with urban agriculture: A Life Cycle Assessment perspective.
UNIT 2: FOOD SECURITY & UA POLICY			
	1	UA as a solution to food insecurity Peer Teaching	Siegner, A. 2018. Does Urban Agriculture Improve Food Security? Examining the Nexus of Food Access and Distribution of Urban Produced Foods in the United States: A Systematic Review. UA & FS Case Study (Optional reading or peer teaching): Community Food Production as Food Security: Resource and Economic Valuation in Madison, Wisconsin
	2	UA and Food insecurity Pt. 2 News article presentation (second hour of class in San Matteo degli Armeni garden—meet at Fountain at 6pm)	
	3	Food & Ag. Policy in the US News article presentation Excursion: Perugia Farmers Market	Lisa Held, Civil Eats. 2023. This Farm Bill Really Matters. We Explain Why. Wake up to the Secret Farm Bill U.S. and EU Agricultural Support: Overview and Comparison (Table 4 & excerpts)
	4	Food & Ag. Policy in the EU & Italy News article presentation	Cultivating Change: The Role of Urban Agriculture in European Policy Action needed for the EU Common Agricultural

			Policy to address sustainability challenges
UNIT 3: IS UA RADICAL RESISTANCE? ECONOMICS OF UA			
	1	Economic Impacts of UA: Cost & Price of Food and Farmer Livelihoods Pt. 1 News article presentation	Cost of Food: Unattainable Trifecta of UA Finding the fat: The US Farm Bill and health Image: Why does a salad cost more than a Big Mac?
	2	Economic Impacts of UA: Cost & Price of Food and Farmer Livelihoods Pt. 2 [excursion to Dept. of Agriculture's community garden] News article presentation	The Cost of Food: Consequences of Not Valuing Soil and Water and the People Who Manage Them
	3	Is UA radical political resistance? Pt. 1 Peer teaching	DeLind 2010. Are local food and the local food movement taking us where we want to go? Or are we hitching our wagons to the wrong stars? Peer teaching/case study: Giacche et al. 2017. Cultivating changes: Urban Agriculture as a tool for socio-spatial transformation.
	4	Is UA radical political resistance? Pt. 2 Peer teaching (debate)	Mudu & Marini. Radical Urban Horticulture for Food Autonomy Myers & Sbicca 2015. Bridging good food and good jobs: From secession to confrontation within alternative food movement politics
UNIT 4: JUSTICE, CONCLUSIONS AND CLASS PRESENTATIONS			
	1	[Guest lecture: Domenico Lizzi from Fuori di Zucca, an ethical purchasing group]	
	2	UA and social justice News article presentation	Reynolds, K. 2014. Disparity Despite Diversity: Social Injustice in New York City's Urban Agriculture System
	3	Student presentations	
	4	Why do urban agriculture?	Santo et al. 2016 Vacant lots to vibrant plots: A review of the benefits and limitations of urban agriculture.

Note: This is a tentative schedule, and subject to change as necessary – monitor the course Moodle page for current deadlines. In the unlikely event of a prolonged university closing, or an extended absence from the university, adjustments to the course schedule, deadlines, and assignments will be made based on the duration of the closing and the specific dates miss