Class schedule

2pm-4:40pm, UTS 206

We meet every Thursday, 2pm-4:40pm starting April 4th (except Week 7 (May 16th) when we'll have an online class). Our last class is June 6th. We will NOT meet during Exam Week.

Course Description

How do we feed cities in a just and sustainable manner? What is the role of the municipality in doing so? How has the city’s role in food systems planning changed over time and how are these formal interventions complemented by more informal or insurgent approaches? Over the course of this reading-intensive, discussion-centered graduate seminar (with some field trips and guest speakers), we will attempt to answer these questions. The course will introduce students to historical and contemporary efforts to foster more just and sustainable urban food systems, while critically evaluating their successes and shortcomings. We will draw on current food systems planning literature, policy documents, and organizational reports, and recent critical food studies scholarship.

Course objectives

1. Better understand the structural processes limiting food access in cities;
2. Analyze what a more “just” and “sustainable” urban food system entails at various stages of the food chain, from production, to processing and distribution, to consumption;
3. Understand the relationship between contemporary food systems planning efforts, their current contexts, and their historical precedents;
4. Review and analyze the effectiveness of the suite of formal and informal approaches and “best practices” currently in use by food systems planners, policymakers, and practitioners.

For students in the Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Food Systems, this course meets the following outcomes:

- Outcome 2 Privilege & Power
- Outcome 5 or 6 (depending what year you started) Strategies

In this class, I attempt to bring in diverse perspectives, especially from native/indigenous peoples and Black people, since part of food justice work is uplifting the work of those who have been most impacted by food INjustices. I encourage you to do so as well.

Class style
At the graduate level and for a seminar class, my job as a professor isn’t to lecture but, rather, to structure the course, to ask questions, and to keep us on track, if necessary. We will build on our collective experiences in food systems work, and also seek to identify resources to fill in gaps when we don’t know. I aim to de-center whiteness in the readings and materials, and to include materials about diverse experiences, epistemologies, ways of knowing, etc.

Our goals each week are to critically engage with the readings, and to think about their implications for practice. In order for this to work, it’s essential that you come to class having read all assigned readings and prepared to discuss them thoughtfully and critically. It will be obvious if you come unprepared.

As typical of a graduate seminar, we will be doing a lot of discussions and activities. You will asked to facilitate one half of class one week in the quarter.

Because this class is so dependent on your participation, that makes up a significant part of your grade, along with one class facilitation.

This is a 4 credit class. As such, it has a fair amount of reading. I also expect high-quality participation in class and high quality assignments (there are only two). In addition, we have one Saturday field trip.

**Prerequisites / Required Reading**

There are no prerequisites for this course. There also is no required book purchases.

We will mostly be reading journal articles, book chapters, and policy/planning reports, all of which will be made available as links/PDFs posted on D2L.

This class has a fair amount of reading- Plan to read about five or so articles per week (listed in the course outline below) and watch an occasional video/listen to a podcast.. As always, you should read strategically; remember, not all text is created equal! Focus on the authors’ key claims, how they structure and advance their argument, and/or the key take-away points.

**Weekly Topics**

In each of our ten weeks, we will examine a different topic related to our course objectives. See the individual webpage for specific assigned readings, podcasts, and/or videos. You must complete all the assigned material BEFORE class. To encourage you to do so, and to improve the quality of our in-class time, you are expected to post reading responses every week from Weeks 2-9.

- **Week 1:** Historical Perspectives of Food Systems Planning
- **Week 2:** The Food System Today
- **Week 3:** Local/Alternative/Good Food and some Limits
- **Week 4:** Direct Market Farmers (with a focus on access to land)
- **Week 5:** Food Justice & Food Sovereignty in the City
Field Trips/Class Activities

We have several field trips planned.

- Work trip: Saturday April 20th, Spring Dig In with Grow Portland. 10am start to 3pm finish (max time, work ends around 1pm with time for food and relaxing after)- MEET THERE. We also are asked to fund-raise as part of our group effort. Use this link
  - See details here: What is the Spring Dig In.pdf
  - We will all attend together- please be prepared to help build some backyard gardens! One goal of this service learning component is to build some team camaraderie, another is to get out of the ivory tower and get involved in real community work, even for a day. We'll collectively reflect on the experience, drawing on class materials. If for some reason you cannot make this work party-bummer.
- Udan Farm, an example of a Community Land Trust and of a farmer striving for agroecology practices- need two more drivers
- Portland Mercado- we'll bus there together (or meet us there)- last class! We'll celebrate with a shared meal.
- There are also a few times when I ask you to go on your own and visit a site
- Maybe others?

Guest Speakers

- Colin Anderson, researcher at Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR) in the UK
- Amy Coplen, PhD candidate, focused on food labor
- Maybe more?

Assignments

Grades are based on the following (please visit the assignment descriptions for further details):

- Participation (20%)- 2 points per class day (including for April 20 field/work trip and except Week 7, when we will have class online). I will add 2% to everyone's participation score at end of quarter- meaning you get one freebie missed class and/or bonus points!
- One class facilitation (10%)
- Reading Responses (10%), starting with Week 2’s Reading Response. You will do RR's for each of weeks 2-9. You do not need to complete a Reading Response for Week 10. I will drop the lowest RR score.
• **Access to Land Profile** (30%)
• **Critical Case Study of a municipal food system policy, program, or planning approach** (30%)

**Grading**

My general rubric for graduate-level assignments is as follows:

- **A+ or A**: Demonstrates original thought and synthesis of ideas, sophisticated, cogent analysis, and is clearly written or presented. Excellent work.
- **A- or B+**: Presents above average analysis with appropriate evidence to support the ideas and is clearly written or presented. Good work.
- **B**: Shows a basic level of understanding, with analysis limited to the most obvious arguments. Writing is competent. Adequate work.
- **B- or below**: Misunderstands or misrepresents the material, or is so poorly written presented as to obscure the analysis. Inadequate work.

**Some Additional Essential Resources**

- Growing Food Connections policy database
- Healthy Food Access portal
- ChangeLab Solutions Tools for Healthy Planning
- Urban Food Policy blog
- Civil Eats
- Food First

**Class Feedback**

- I welcome your feedback about the class and your learning throughout the quarter- please visit my office hours or send me an email.
- Please also complete the course evaluations at the end of the quarter. Tell me what worked and what can be improved.
- **Have feedback on Diversity, Equity or Inclusion (DEI) at the Toulan School? We welcome kudos, ideas, and concerns, related to this particular class or other issues in the Toulan School. Students are welcome to submit anonymous feedback here, and/or communicate with the DEI committee members directly.**

Class Policies: See D2L page

Student Resources: See D2L page