Course Number | PLAN 548Z
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Course Credit(s) | 2.0
Course Title | Current Issues in Planning: Food Systems Policy, People and Planet
Term | Summer 2018

**Instructor**

**Office**

**Telephone**

**Email**

**Office Hours**

**Short Course Description**

This course introduces concepts and tools for food systems planning, using ecology, biodiversity, sustainability and food system strategies as our central themes. The focus is to examine complex systems in nature, compare how planners design community and regional food strategies, and identify tools for capacity building (such as public engagement, inclusion of diverse populations, policy education and community asset analysis). There are no prerequisites for this class.

**Course Format**

This course will take place at UBC Botanical Garden using both indoor and outdoor learning spaces. This course consists of 5 main classes (5-6 hours) that will include lectures, guest speakers, demonstration, hands-on activities, outdoor exploration, group discussion and group work.

**Course Overview, Content and Objectives**

This course aims to expand systems thinking in students by unpacking complex systems we see in nature, within communities and in food systems. It is intended for students interested in learning about ecology, food systems, policy and how to consider a diversity of perspectives when planning. The course is based around four sets of interconnected themes including:

- Ecology and biodiversity
- Sustainability
- Local and global food policies, strategies and practices
- Engagement strategies for diversity, inclusion and community development.

**Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain examples of complex systems in ecology & biology, sustainability and food systems.
- Explain examples of local, regional and international food systems strategies, policies and priorities.
- Consider and create inclusive engagement sessions to identify community food priorities.
- Develop and advance their own knowledge and understanding of systems thinking.
**Additional Course Requirements**
There are no additional course requirements but time spent outdoors walking and exploring UBC Botanical Garden will be required. Appropriate clothing and supplies for outdoor learning is essential.

**Attendance**
Attendance for all classes is mandatory. Exceptional circumstances for absences will be considered.

**Evaluation Criteria and Grading**
Evaluations are based on 3 main criteria including:

1. **In class participation (20%)**
2. **Group Project and Presentation (40%)**  
   Deadline: June 14, 2017
3. **Individual reflections on systems thinking (40%)**  
   Deadline: June 14, 2017

1. **In class participation.** Group discussions, reading reflections, engagement and in class participation will be assessed. Assessment will consider attendance, preparedness, depth of understanding, quality of reasoning, respect shown to others, and contribution to collective learning.

2. **Group projects – presentation and report.** Small groups (2-4 people) will select a food system strategy or policy (local, regional, national or international) to explore its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). They will be asked to host a 30-45-minute session for their selected food strategy in which they will be required to create a meeting agenda, present their findings (in a presentation and with a short report (2 pages)), engage stakeholders and report back. All members of the group will receive the same grade: however, in case of extreme disparities in individual contribution, the instructor reserves the right to assign individual marks. Assessment will be based on quality of the SWOT, organization of the agenda, oral communication, short report quality (should include recommendations, executive summary, background, discussion, next steps) and engagement strategies used.

3. **Individual reflections on systems thinking.** Systems thinking means different things to different people. This assignment (2-4 pages) requires students to reflect on their own knowledge and understanding of systems thinking in relation to ecology and biology, sustainability and/or food systems. Assessment will be based on their ability to examine and explain their own understanding of complex systems, their capacity to communicate this through writing and reflections on engagement strategies for diversity and inclusion.

**Required Readings and Videos**

**Class 1: Sustainability, Ecology and Biodiversity**
- UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals  
- The Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA) Framework (UN-FAO - [http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3957e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3957e.pdf))
- The Interaction of Human Population, Food Production and Biodiversity Protection  
  [http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6335/260](http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6335/260)
- Biodiversity Losses and Conservation Responses in the Anthropocene  
  [http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6335/270](http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6335/270)
Class 2: Food Systems Planning and Policy
- Vancouver Food Strategy (see website and full report http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/vancouvers-food-strategy.aspx)
- The Local Food Action Plan of the Vancouver Park Board (vancouver.ca/files/cov/Local-food-action-plan.pdf)
- Burrard Inlet Action Plan (https://twnsacredtrust.ca/burrard-inlet-action-plan/)
- Metro Vancouver Regional (http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/RegionalFoodSystemActionPlan.pdf)
- BC Food System Policy Database by Kwantlen Polytechnic University (http://www.kpu.ca/isfs/foodpolicydatabase)

Class 3: Community Development and Engagement
- Vancouver Coastal Health Food Asset Map (http://www.vch.ca/public-health/nutrition/food-asset-map)
- Beyond the Roots of Human Inaction: Fostering Collective Effort Toward Ecosystem Conservation (http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6335/275)
- How Diversity Makes Us Smarter (https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/)

Class 4: Critical Food Literacy: Education for Food Democracy

Course Schedule

Class 1: Thursday May 3 (9am-2pm = 5 hours) – Sustainability, Ecology and Biodiversity
- Syllabus review
- Field School Team Building (3 hours) – Local sustainability: food, water, biodiversity and waste
- Grow Green with Metro Vancouver: Climate change local impacts & ecological systems in nature

Class 2: Thursday May 17 (9-2 = 5 hours) – Food Systems Planning and Policy
- Required Readings Review
- Overview of food systems planning process (with invited speakers)
- Food policy and planning toolbox
- VCH Food Asset Database
- Introduction to food policies and strategies

Class 3: Thursday May 24 (9-2 = 5 hours) – Community Development and Engagement
- Required Readings Review
- Introduction to capacity building
• Diversity and inclusion strategies
• Exploring engagement strategies

Class 4: Thursday May 31 (9-2 = 5 hours) - Critical Food Literacy: Education for Food Democracy
• Required Readings Review
• Introduction to critical food literacy: education in formal and informal settings
• Designing for food democracy
• Challenges and opportunities for designing food strategies for North America

Class 5: Thursday June 14 (9-3 = 6 hours) – Presentation of Group Projects and Final Reflection Paper
• Presentation of group projects and feedback
• Final reflection paper due

Special Needs
Please inform instructor of any special needs.

Academic Integrity
The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University’s policies and procedures, may be found in the Academic Calendar at http://calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0.