**Please note that this DRAFT syllabus should be regarded only as a general guide to the course and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion**

**SOCY 3320 / ENVS 3320: URBAN AGRICULTURE IN DETROIT (3 credits)**
Boston College Summer Session 2017
July 8-18 and online

Instructors: Mike Cermak (cermakm@bc.edu) and Matt DelSesto (delsesma@bc.edu)

**Boston College Mission Statement**
*Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation’s finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry. Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world-view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.*

**Course Description**
With more than 1400 farms and gardens, Detroit has become a global leader in urban agriculture and symbol of urban sustainability. In this course we will investigate the contemporary urban condition through the eyes of Detroit farmers and gardeners who are creating more equitable communities and sustainable relationships with the land. Daily urban agricultural fieldwork, class discussions, environmental media, and workshops with community partners will facilitate our engagement with Detroit as we reflect on our own relationship to food and cities. Course themes include urban planning and racial politics, problems and possibilities of deindustrialization, the environmental justice movement, and community-based strategies for urban transformation.

**Books to purchase**
*The Farm on the Roof*, Anastasia Cole Plakias (2016)

**Canvas**
This course will use Canvas for you to access additional electronic readings, submit assignments, and receive feedback on course work. If you are not familiar with canvas, visit: www.bc.edu/offices/cte/tools/canvas.html
**Course Objectives**

Through participation in this course students will...

1. Develop an **on-the-ground understanding** of how the scientific, political, economic and cultural aspects of the world's environmental challenges impact people in urban communities.
2. Grow in personal capacity to **reflect** on their own position in food systems and urban development and **think critically** about their contributions to cities and the environment.
3. Practice working and thinking at **multiple scales** (from inter-personal to the urban and global) when considering or implementing sustainability solutions.
4. Gain experience working with a **group to address everyday urban ecology** challenges as they arise in urban/environmental planning and implementation.
5. Develop competency writing, speaking, and presenting across cultural settings and will learn the impact of **race, gender, and power** in urban agriculture.
6. Demonstrate understanding of **ethical issues** in the design/planning of cities and food justice organizations through written assignments, group work, personal reflection, and presentations.

**Grading**

Organizational analysis report (20%), Final monologue and presentation (30%), Media project (15%), Reading responses / essays (15%), Class participation and field work (20%)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the Office of Student Services. The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:

- A (4.00), A- (3.67)
- B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
- C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
- D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
- F (.00)

**Deadlines and Late Work**

PLEASE NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF THE CONDENSED NATURE OF THE COURSE YOU WILL NEED TO GET A HEAD START ON READINGS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL IN DETROIT. No late work will be accepted, and deadlines will be strictly followed, with penalties for late work. Assignment due dates may be modified based on in class progress, and special circumstances may merit extra time for certain assignments at discretion of the instructors.

**Course Assignments**

**Organizational analysis (20%)**

You will have the opportunity to analyze the organizational development/structure of an urban agriculture or food justice organization. In groups you will produce a report about the selected organization. Examples and assignment guidelines will be given in class.

**Monologue project (30%)**

The monologue is a major project for this course, and it includes the development of a five-minute oral presentation. This piece will be written first (700 word limit), then presented to the class (or instructors) for feedback and edits and finally presented in its final form. Your task is to choose a symbol of contemporary environmentalism (for example: hybrid cars) and bring a perspective that will add a dimension of social justice to the narrative of this symbol. You are required to include at least one excerpt of related poetry that supports your topic. At the same time you deconstruct this symbol you will incorporate your personal social location and history to enhance your argument.

**Media project (15%)**

With guidance from instructors, you will use recorded video responses to reflect on learning, conversations, fieldwork, and other experiences before, during, or after the course.
Class participation and field work (20%)
Students are expected to be in Detroit for **ALL** planned course meetings and to promptly follow the course schedule for class meeting times and fieldwork. Please arrive to class meetings on time and prepared to engage the readings and your classmates. If circumstances arise prior to July that will necessitate excessive absence from class, or make it difficult to participate in fieldwork, please contact the instructors immediately and consider withdrawing from the course.

Reading response and essays (15%)
There will be specific essay prompts posted to Canvas at least one week prior to the due date indicated on the schedule. Note that there will be occasionally be requirements that you read and comment on the work of your classmates. In this case, your comments need to include substantial responses that ask a question based on your own interpretation or elaborate on a point the classmate is making. While you are encouraged to disagree with classmates please keep online discussion respectful and constructive.

**Course Schedule**

**THE DETROIT CONTEXT OF URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**SUNDAY, MAY 7:** Meeting in Boston for syllabus overview and course logistics

**THURSDAY, JUNE 22 (online): personal introductions**
*Assignment due:* Introductory pre-Detroit reflection essay

**THURSDAY, JUNE 29 (online): readings and response**
* Read: “The Kidnapped Children of Detroit,” Marsha Music; “Urban Farms Wrestle with Gentrification and Displacement,” Brian Massey; “Urban Gardening as Resistance in Detroit,” Monica White; “These are times that grow our souls,” Grace Lee Boggs; “A Century of Being in the World,” interview with Grace Lee Boggs (text and audio)  **[35 pages total, plus 1 hour interview]**
* Assignments due: Submit your reading response essay AND make two comments to other responses

**SUNDAY, JULY 9:** arrivals in Detroit, settling in, team building, logistics and introductions
*Read: Good Food Revolution (pages 1-110) and Farm on the Roof (pages 1-116)
  Media: Grown in Detroit [film]

**FOOD JUSTICE AND YOUTH**

**MONDAY, JULY 10:** urban agriculture biking tour (10am-noon), lunch and study time (noon-3pm), class meeting (3-6pm), dinner together (6-8pm), evening activity (8-10pm)
*Read:* “Teaching a Hip Hop Ecology,” Mike Cermak; “Nutritious Media,” Mike Cermak
  Media: Planting for Peace [film]

**TUESDAY, JULY 11:** Detroit activity / study time and lunch (9am-2pm), class meeting (2-6pm), dinner (6-8pm), evening activities (8-10pm)
*Read: Good Food Revolution (pages 110-end)
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND URBAN LAND

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12: morning stretching/movement (8am-9am), field placements (9am-noon), lunch and rest/study time (noon-2pm), class meeting (2-5pm), dinner together (5:30-7pm), evening workshop/film/lecture (7-10pm)
  Media: The Garden [film]

THURSDAY, JULY 13: morning stretching/movement (8am-9am), field placements (9am-noon), lunch and rest/study time (noon-2pm), class meeting (2-5pm), dinner together (5:30-7pm), evening workshop/film/lecture (7-10pm)
*Read: Restorative Commons (selections), Lindsay Campbell and Anne Wiesen; “Radical Farmers Use Fresh Food to Fight Racial Injustice,” Leah Penniman
  Media: Tierralismo [film]

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FRIDAY, JULY 14: morning stretching/movement (8am-9am), field placements (9am-noon), lunch and rest/study time (noon-2pm), class meeting (2-5pm), dinner together (5:30-7pm), evening workshop/film/lecture (7-10pm)
  Media: The Way of the Green Dragon [film]

SATURDAY, JULY 15: morning stretching/movement (8am-9am), field placements (9am-noon), lunch at Eastern Market (12-3pm), course meeting (3-5pm) dinner together (5:30-7pm), evening workshop/film/lecture (7-10pm)
*Read: Farm on the Roof (pages 116-end)

SUNDAY, JULY 16: morning stretching/movement (8am-9am), class meeting (9am-noon), lunch and study time (noon-2pm), class meeting (2pm-5pm), dinner (5:30-7pm), work session for final organizational analysis (7-10pm)
*Assignment due: final organizational analysis

BRINGING IT HOME

MONDAY, JULY 17: final class meeting for final synthesis and presentations (9am-noon), lunch (noon-2pm), Belle Isle cookout/visit and final group activity (2pm-9pm)
*Assignment due: final monologue and presentation

TUESDAY, JULY 18: departing Detroit throughout the day

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4 (online): post-Detroit reflection
*Assignment due: reading response synthesis essay

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23: visit to food justice sites in Boston area and final gathering
**Accommodation and Accessibility**

Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. *Note that as part of fieldwork for this course, students may be asked to lift 20+ pounds, work in warm weather, and perform a number of farming-related tasks while standing and kneeling. Although there will be choice in the kinds of tasks available, please be prepared for this kind of work. Please also take appropriate breaks. If there are specific urban agriculture fieldwork tasks that may be challenging for you because of a documented issue, you need to present your documentation and determine your level of participation with instructors BEFORE arriving in Detroit.*

There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- **The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC)** coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- **The Disabilities Services Office (DSO)** coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at [www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility](http://www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility)

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**

Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information at: [https://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html](https://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html)