SOCY3320 / ENVS3320 / APSY3320: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Online through Canvas May 21-29 and June 12-22
Onsite in Boston May 29 - June 5 (McGuinn 415)
Onsite in Detroit June 5 - June 12 (classroom TBD)

Instructors: Mike Cermak and Matt DelSesto

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

This course will investigate the contemporary urban environmental condition through the eyes of urban farmers and community innovators who are building more equitable communities and sustainable relationships with the land. Fieldwork, class discussions, environmental media, and workshops with community partners will facilitate our engagement with urban sustainability narratives and practices. Course themes include urban planning and racial politics, problems and possibilities of deindustrialization, the environmental justice movement, youth education, organizational development and community-based urban transformation.
Schedule / logistics
week 1 (May 21-28): online introductions and engagements with the course
week 2 (May 29-June 4): on site in Boston with class meetings, fieldwork and site visits
week 3 (June 5-12): on site in Detroit with class meetings, fieldwork and site visits
week 4 (June 13-22): online submission of final course assignments and reflections

The onsite portion of the course begins in Boston at 3pm on May 29. June 5 is a travel day, and the Detroit onsite portion begins at noon on June 6. Meals, onsite travel, and accommodations (on the Boston College and Wayne State University campuses) are included in the course tuition throughout the duration (May 29 - June 12) of onsite portion of the course. Travel to Boston, and departure from Detroit are not included. Itinerary and course schedule will be distributed in the first week of the course.

Required books to purchase:
- The Good Food Revolution, Will Allen
- Farm on the Roof, Anastasia Cole Plakias
** Selected additional articles/chapters will be available online

Class assignments/grading:
Organizational analysis (20%), Mixed-media journal (20%),
Class participation (25%), Monologue project (35%)

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 (4.0), A- (3.67), B+ (3.33), B (3.0), B- (2.67), C+ (2.33), C (2.0), C- (1.67), D+ (1.33), D (1.0), D- (.67), F (0)

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
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, or perform a number of farming-related tasks while standing or 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 fieldwork tasks that you anticipate may be challenging for you, 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, and 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)