Food Systems Planning

City and Regional Planning 694, Spring Quarter 2011

Class time and location:  M/W 6:00 – 7:48 pm

Instructor  Office hours
Jill Clark, Director  TBA, or by appointment
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Course Info:  Access all course info at http://carmen.osu.edu

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to build knowledge of the food system, how it functions, and how it interacts (or could) with planning and public policy. Food planning and policy has traditionally been considered a national domain, and has dealt with issues such as public health, nutrition, anti-hunger, food safety, food labeling, international trade and food aid. In the past several years, however, food planning and policy has been recognized as an issue for local governance and planning. Community food governance and planning (or lack thereof) affects the ways that people produce, obtain, consume and dispose of their food. Food decisions affect where and how food can be grown, where and how food can be accessed, and how food is integrated into broader community goals.

The intent of the course is to familiarize students with key issues related to the practice of food system planning (the practice of creating and implementing food policies). Further, basic issues in our conventional food system (production, distribution, marketing, and disposal of food), particularly with regard to those elements that may be influenced by civic action and public regulation, will be addressed. Building on these basic issues, the course will provide the fodder to examine and critic alternatives to this system (e.g., urban farming, local foods, direct markets, civic agriculture). The class is structured to develop and challenge participants’ thinking through readings, lectures, guest lectures, and structured discussion. At the end of the class, students should have an increased understanding of food systems as a planning and community development topic.

Course Objectives

• Learn the components and actors in the conventional food system and understand the problems and opportunities related to this system
Identify and critique major issues and recent debates in urban, local and regional food system planning
Develop an understanding of the planners role in food system development
Hone and improve communication and presentation skills

Structure

The course is structured into topics by week. We will use readings, lectures, film viewing, interaction with guest lecturers, structured discussions, and a possible field trip to achieve the above objectives. Readings for each week will be from Carmen, books, and handouts as necessary. Because a main component of this class is discussion-based it is expected that you will have done the reading before the class session. This is crucially important; you should come prepared to discuss the material. Several class sessions will include guest speakers and films to inform our discussions.

Grading and Course Work

Class participation is a crucial part of this class, and will be a component of the grading as well. Further, to facilitate discussions and assist in synthesizing your thoughts, weekly summaries will be assigned based on the required readings. These are to be one page, double-spaced and will be graded on a binary scale (that is, you did it, or you didn’t). They are to be submitted using before class begins, and you should bring a copy to class for your use. The syllabus provides some suggested readings as well for students who are interested in learning more on a topic.

The remainder of the grade will be composed of a presentation and a final project. Further instruction will be given on all three during class time.

Working in small teams, students will review and analyze a community food system plan or assessment (provided by the instructor). These teams will present the plan to the class and provide their analysis. For example, does the plan adequately address food system access, infrastructure, urban production and other aspects of the community food system?

Working in small teams, the final project for undergraduate students will be to take an existing community comprehensive plan (provided by the instructor) and write a chapter on the community food system, including planning goals, objectives, and implementation (5-10 double-spaced pages). Also working in teams, the final project for graduate students will be to write prospectus for a local food policy council assessment (10-15 double-spaced pages).

Requirements and Approximate Percent of Grading:
Class participation 10
Weekly summary/reflection 30
Presentation 25
Final Project 35

Academic Honesty
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (XX).

Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Course Introduction and Our Current Food System (Obstacles and Opportunities)


Film: King Corn

Week 2 Planners in the Food System – History and Current Roles


Suggested Readings

**Week 3 Community Food Security and Healthy Food Access**


**Suggested Readings**


**Week 4 Alternative Food Systems: Urban Agriculture**

**Week 4 Part 1: Introduction**


**Suggested Reading**


**Other:** The Diggable City: Making Urban Agriculture a Planning Priority:

http://www.diggablecity.org
Week 4 Part 2: Farming in Urban Space – Location and Design


Guest Speaker: Katherine Bennett, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, Knowlton School of Architecture, The Ohio State University

Week 5 Alternative Food Systems: Building Local/Regional Food Systems


Suggested Reading

Week 6 Alternative Food Systems: Civic Agriculture


Guest Speaker: Shoshanah Inwood, Researcher, Social Responsibility Initiative, The Ohio State University

Week 7 Local Policies and Regulations and the Food System

Pothukuchi, Kameshwari, and Jerome Kaufman, 1999. “Placing the food system on the urban agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning.” Agriculture and Human Values 16: 213-224.
and Economic Development, and Metropolitan Planning Commission. This package also includes a 1996 report from the annual retreat of the Food Policy Council reflecting on the implications of recent developments in food systems for FPC work.

**Guest Speaker:** Amalie Lipstreu, Coordinator, Ohio Food Policy Council

**Week 8 The Food System and Energy and Student Presentations**

**Week 8 Part 1: The Food System and Energy**


**Suggested Readings**


The Validity of Food Miles as an Indicator of Sustainable Development. DEFRA. ED50254 Issue 7. July 2005.

**Week 8 Part 2: Student Presentations**

The remainder of this week will be set aside for student presentations

**Week 9 – Assessing the Local Food System**


**Suggested Reading**


**Guest Speaker:** Representative, Agriculture and Food Systems Working Group, MORPC

**Week 10 Community-based Economic Development for Food and Agriculture**

**Week 10 Part 1 – Food, Agriculture and Economic Development**

*Suggested Reading*

**Week 10 Part 2 – In-class work on Final Project**

**Exam Week**

Final projects are due.