Community Learning in Action

CLIA, short for Community Learning in Action, are courses involving some form of community-engaged learning.

CLIA 24 (W) Class of 1959 TeachNYC Urban Education Program

SPEC 24 Class of 1959 TeachNYC Urban Education Program Students in this course learn about the front-line challenges of urban public education by working in one of New York City's public schools. Participants engage in a full day's program of observing, teaching, tutoring, and mentoring in their choice of more than 20 different school situations from elementary through high school. Each participating school will have a resident supervisor to meet with the January interns to arrange individual schedules and provide mentoring during the month. There will be weekly seminar meetings of all the interns who are expected to participate in the discussions, keep a journal, and write a 5-page paper reflecting upon their experience. The course will conduct orientation meetings with students before January, matching each student's interest with appropriate teaching subject areas and a host school. Dormitory-style housing is provided along with some assistance with transportation and a $400 stipend for food. Further help is available for financial aid students. Interested students must 1) attend the course info session in early October or contact the Instructor (tff1@williams.edu) and 2) submit a statement of interest sharing a) why they are interested in the program and b) describing relevant experience (e.g., tutoring, teaching, coaching, camp counselor work, etc.). The statement must be emailed to Program Director Tracy Finnegan (tff1) by October 13th.

Requirements/Evaluation: Short paper and final project or presentation.
Prerequisites: Send Statement of Interest to the Instructor by October 13th
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: seniority
Expected Class Size: NA
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: $400
Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2024

INT Section: 01 TBA Tracy Finnegan

Winter Study -------------------------------------------------------------

CLIA 10 (W) Garden Mindset: Native Plants & Humans' Landscapes

Why have we humans planted what we have planted where we have planted things? Do these historical choices still make sense, in an era of rapid climate change? These questions will guide "Garden Mindsets: native plants, pollinators and human-planted landscapes." Plants - with their seemingly magical ability to transform sunlight into sugars - are the basis of every ecosystem and food web on earth. Beautiful plants please human aesthetic senses, and, even more importantly, they transform sunlight into food, homes and shelter for all other living creatures on earth. At the same time, plants can only make seeds, to reproduce themselves, when they are pollinated, often via specialized relationships with specific insects. Pollinators everywhere are in rapid decline, and, humans can better support plant-pollinator relationships, and thus food webs, via our landscaping choices and practices. As Doug Tallamy, one of the most well-known leaders of the movement to use native plants more widely has stated: Every square inch of planet earth has ecological significance, even where we live, work and play. If we landscape these areas with plant function as well as aesthetics in mind, we can create viable habitat where humans are, not just where humans are not. Conservation is not just something "out there", it can take place in our own backyards and town environs. This course will provide hands-on opportunities to grow native plants, and to learn how to use them in our human-designed landscapes in ways that benefit pollinators. We will learn how to use ecologically sound methods to convert small areas of lawn into pollinator habitat, and, students will learn simple garden design techniques. We will read books, watch videos, and interview experts, introducing participants to ecological gardening and the movement to create beautiful, ecologically "useful" garden habitats, in an era of rapidly changing climate.

Requirements/Evaluation: Paper(s) or report(s); Presentation(s); Performance(s); Creative project(s); Other: Students may choose to design a planting, or, write a paper about their experiences, or, compile annotated resource bibliography for community use. Skits or plays could also be...
Prerequisites: None save for a willingness to read and learn about native plants, via talk and video, books and field trips.

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Students who truly want to use this knowledge to inform summer gardening and landscape practices. Experience in gardens not necessary, more, a willingness to learn and think about human-plant-planted landscape relationships. Selection via short essay

Expected Class Size: NA

Grading: pass/fail only

Unit Notes: Laura Bentz, M.Ed., has created native plant-based gardens for thirty years, frequently using plants grown from native seed. Her local portfolio includes gardens for pollinators at The Spruces & Caretaker Farm, as well as private homes.

Materials/Lab Fee: $95

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses SLFX Winter Study Self-Expression STUX Winter Study Student Exploration

Winter 2024

LEC Section: 01  TBA  Laura Bentz

CLIA 11 (W) Teaching 3rd Graders about Zebrafish - BioEYES
BioEYES brings tropical fish to 3rd-grade classrooms in Williamstown, Lanesborough, and North Adams Elementary schools, in a science teaching workshop. Elementary school students will breed fish at the school, then study their development and pigmentation for one week. Williams students will adapt BioEYES lesson plans to the science curriculum for the schools we visit, work with classroom teachers to introduce concepts in genetics and development, help the 3rd-grade students in the classroom, and assess elementary student learning. No zebrafish experience or science expertise is necessary. All training is provided. During the first week, Williams students will learn to set up fish matings and review BioEYES lesson plans on embryonic development and the genetics of fish pigmentation. In small groups, students will practice teach hands-on experiments using living animals.
In the subsequent three weeks, students will present lessons at the schools and review assessment data. Time commitment: Week 1 - approx. 6 hours total for program training and lesson preparation with additional outside-of-class time needed to create teaching posters, dates, and times TBD Weeks 2 & 3 - approx. 3 hours per day, times TBD, dependent on elementary school schedules during the regular school day between 8:30 am and 3:00 pm. Week 4 - TBD: 3 hours per day if running a school program; minimal hours if not running an elementary school program.

Requirements/Evaluation: Presentation(s)

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: Preference given to first years.

Expected Class Size: NA

Grading: pass/fail only

Unit Notes: Jennifer Swoap, a former 3rd-grade teacher, oversees Williams Elementary Outreach, where over 150 Williams students teach, tutor, and mentor in five local elementary schools. Renee Schiek currently serves as the liaison between Lanesborough Elementary School and the Williams Elementary Outreach, where Williams students teach hands-on science lessons at area elementary schools. She has a BS in Mechanical Engineering.

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2024

LEC Section: 01  TBA  Jennifer C. Swoap, Renee Schiek

CLIA 14 (W) Food Justice and the Righteous Entrepreneur
The pandemic and the simultaneous racial reckoning and awaking that the country has experienced over the last two-plus years have highlighted the fragility of our food system, the thin line between food security and insecurity for so many, and the structural and systemic inequalities that create these realities. DC Central Kitchen, an iconic, food-based social enterprise that was founded in 1989 to turn the notion of charity on its head, has been at the forefront these issues for over three decades. The Kitchen’s CEO, Mike Curtin ’86, will lead the class on an exploration of food access, food justice and economic opportunity through the lens of DC Central Kitchen’s growth and evolution. We will also work through DC Central Kitchen’s Eight Rules for Righteous Entrepreneurs, principles that have defined the organization’s impact. The class will also discuss the basics of nonprofit
management and the roles social enterprise and innovation can have in disrupting a more traditional nonprofit structure. The main text for the class will be Food Fighters, DC Central Kitchen's First Twenty Five years on the Front Lines of Hunger and Poverty by Alex Moore, the Kitchen's Chief Development Officer. This will be supplemented by readings and other materials provided by guests who are also engaged in the fight against hunger and for systemic changes to our food system and access to economic opportunity and liberation. Guest speakers will engage with students, share their work and challenge students to look at food justice from environmental, legal, political, racial and economic perspectives. Past guests have included and will include chef and humanitarian, Jose Andres; Pulitzer Prize winning author, Marcia Chatalain; former US Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Kathleen Merrigan '80; Congressman Jim McGovern; food and racial justice activist, Chris Bradshaw; and several DC Central Kitchen alumni and staff.

Requirements/Evaluation: Short paper and final project or presentation.

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: If over enrolled, preference will be given to students closest to graduation.

Expected Class Size: NA

Grading: pass/fail only

Unit Notes: Mike Curtin '86 is the CEO of DC Central Kitchen and has been responsible for taking the Kitchen from a small mom and pop nonprofit to one of the most respected and impactful social enterprises in the world.

Attributes: STUX Winter Study Student Exploration

Winter 2024

LEC Section: 01 TBA Mike Curtin

CLIA 21 (W) Introduction to Engaged Scholarship

This course enables students to learn the theory and practice of community-engaged scholarship while engaging in a small partnership project with a community organization. Engaged scholarship is understood as mutually beneficial learning partnerships between higher education institutions and community entities addressing pressing social and civic issues. Through brief readings, class discussions, and meetings with community partners, students will learn the history and context of engaged scholarship, explore the ethical, political, and cultural issues associated with this work, and improve their understanding of the Berkshires and town/gown relations. Through their project work, students will learn how to navigate the simultaneous challenges of engaging as learners, collaborators, knowledge co-creators, and social change agents.

Requirements/Evaluation: Project presentation and written reflection

Prerequisites: If overenrolled, the instructor will choose participants based on statements of interest.

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Preference will be given to first-year students

Expected Class Size: NA

Grading: pass/fail only

Unit Notes: Dr. Consolini earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley. Her research experience includes studying the educational effects of jury service and consulting for the World Bank, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and the Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority.

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses STUX Winter Study Student Exploration WELL Winter Study Wellness

Winter 2024

LEC Section: 01 TBA Paula M. Consolini