

PROJECT GUIDE HANDBOOK

BUILDING A JUST AND REGENERATIVE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

IC FALL 2012 *Tuesday and Thursday 9:25 – 12:05*

Location TBA

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What's in this Guide?

- Thank you!
- Overview of the Project
- Deciding on Outcomes and Tasks
- Team Process and Community Skills
- Staying Organized
- Keeping Students Accountable
- Staying in Touch
- Readings
- Presentation at the End of the Project
- Final Report/Portfolio
- Feedback / Evaluation Process
- Schedule

Thank you!

Thanks for considering being a project guide in **Building a Just and Regenerative Local Food System**. My intention is for it to be a significant contribution to our community! It's a challenge to foster closer connections between young people and communities and organizations, when the students are pulled between idealism and disempowerment, and the communities are resource-deprived but understandably cautious or even cynical about university-based efforts. Often, though the university's efforts are well-meaning, those efforts have paternalistic, top-down, "charity"-oriented frameworks or components. The quality of faculty guidance and community-based guidance students get is a critical factor in the success of this collaboration. And this is where you and I come in.

Ideally, what students learn with you will deepen what they learn in the classroom, and what they learn in the classroom will enrich their ability to work well with you. This should be especially so in this course, since we're focused not only on information and concepts but on **Building a Just and Regenerative Local Food System**. Please have a look at the short course description at end of this document so you are aware of ways we can coordinate our efforts.

I realize that leading a project group can take a good amount of preparation and effort and may also be a new and/or daunting task for some Project Guides. I will do my best to support your work in as many ways as I can, so please keep me in the loop about what you need and want, and how things are going. I very much appreciate and celebrate your willingness to do this work!

Overview

Each team will have 2-4 participants. Students are expected to put in 5 hours a week each, including the 1 or 2 hours a week they have with you (as needed), for about 11 weeks of the semester. Project Guides will hopefully be able to **present about their project for up to 20 minutes at IC on Thursday Sept 6** (leaving time for questions) Location TBA . The first project day will be Thursday, September 13. **See schedule at the end with highlighted lines indicating project weeks, evaluations, and presentations.** Teams will periodically report in or share materials or issues in class for feedback and do a final presentation and report for the class and/or the organization/community, as appropriate. Team members will self evaluate, peer-evaluate and get a short evaluation from you midway and at the end.

We will introduce and reinforce communication, teamwork and cultural competency skills and issues early on in the class to support their success in working with your project. Your suggestions in this regard are welcome.

Outcomes and Tasks

Think through what the students could do that will significantly further the work of the your organization or project and make a positive difference now and for the future. The work you assign them should also provide an opportunity for participants to learn by working with each other and with community members. Identify a reasonably achievable set of outcomes and tasks for an 11 week period (mid-September to mid-December). This does not have to be a grand accomplishment; *it can be a small but necessary step in a process that might span many semesters or years.* (That's why it's essential that the team document their accomplishments, connections and proposed next steps, for the next group to build upon.) My hope is that they can make a substantial contribution, make connections with diverse community members, and develop a sense of identification with this community. This outcome is rare in the current academic bubble.

What actually happens will *necessarily* differ substantially from the sequence you plan for, both because of the many unknowns, and because of the value of engaging the team's creativity and the community's participation and input. But defining a reasonable set of tasks and outcomes over 11 weeks that will work for you and the students will help the chances of success and satisfaction all around. Check the schedule at the end of this document to get a clear sense of the time frame and what's to come.

Team Process and Community Skills

While it's important to help the team and its members stay on track, it's best to *support the team's own development and sharing of leadership*, rather than simply being the leader/taskmaster and telling them exactly what to do. By inviting student input and creativity you not only get a new perspective on your work and its challenges, but you also create student's ownership of their work with you, and increase their dedication to the tasks. If they feel like they have no input or their creativity is not valued, their motivation is decreased.

Please encourage team members (and I will, too) to be conscious of how they are handling leadership, roles, tasks, communication, and accountability. They will use team and project skills they already have, and will build on what we are practicing in class. For example, if some are putting in a lot more time than others, or different leadership or work styles are clashing, a frank and friendly discussion early on could make a big difference - if they have the support and the feedback skills to do it reasonably well. We are actively practicing communication and feedback skills early in the course.

We also focus on cultural competency early on in the course, so draw out and discuss the social challenges occurring in our community, such as cultural, racial, class, gender and generational issues. Greater cultural competency and community identity and outreach skills are important student outcomes of the more successful projects. At the same time this skill development should enhance their effectiveness in working with you, other staff, and the people you serve and/or collaborate with

Orienting Students to the Project

Your first meeting with students on September 13th will be an opportunity for you to orient them to the people, places and tasks that they will be engaged with this semester. In past years, Project Guides have found it helpful at the outset to orient students by having them experience a part of the community that they may not be familiar with, and/or the setting of the project or agency and how it works. You can share any orientation experience you like (video, field trip, staff or community meeting, etc.). Students will be more motivated and effective if they understand and feel allegiance to the group, mission and people they will be working with and supporting.

Staying Organized

1. Meeting with Teams In order to keep students on track and productively engaged, we ask that, if at all possible, you meet regularly with your team *for an hour or two every week (some exceptions are OK and it's also fine to have someone else substitute)*. **Thursdays between 9:25 and 12:05** are easiest for the students because they have no other scheduled activities at that time, but any day and time you come up with together is fine.

This contact time can help assure that the team and team members stay on task, get authentic and constructive feedback from you, learn together what changes to make to move the project forward, and build their community and cultural competency skills. With good prep and strong team members, you may not need to meet for very long every week. It's very situational. I recommend taking plenty of time at the beginning to carefully orient students to your group and the task, as well the neighborhood and people you work with, as appropriate. The modules in the classroom at the beginning of the semester will have hopefully generated a strong foundation for their work with you.

2. Organizational Documents We have prepared a few organizational documents, online and in paper form, to help you and the students stay organized and connected. These are all "Google docs" and will require you to create a Google account. Google docs are easy to navigate and allow you and

the students to be seeing the same thing without having to email back and forth as things change. (For instructions on how to create a Google account, if you don't already have one, see below.)

- Project Page – There is one Project page that lists all the Tasks for the Project, descriptions of the actions steps required, the student assigned to each task, as well as any essential information for each task, such as contact information for people or directions to location. It will also show the deadlines for each action. The Project Page is set up so that Project Guides can add information and students can view but not alter.
- Project Calendar – The Calendar page shows all projects and actions with deadlines for the duration of the course. It can also show details of events, addresses, contact information, etc. for any calendar item. The Calendar is controlled by the Project Guide, but accessible to students.
- Student Personal Pages – Each student will have their own Personal page to keep track of their work on the project. This page will include a description of each task as well as deadlines. The student will be expected to log in each day that they work to report what was done that day. There is also space for students' questions and your own comments. These pages will be reviewed each week at the Weekly Team meeting. Both students and Project Guide can add to the Student Personal Page.

Accountability

Here are a few suggestions for helping students stay engaged and accountable.

- Engage students' creativity and insights, and ask for their feedback.
- Each student will sign a Contract outlining the expectations of the course.
- Create clear and firm deadlines for each task, and communicate with students if they miss a deadline. Communicate with me if they are consistently missing deadlines.
- Create clear goals for the project and expectations of students, and communicate these to the students at the beginning of the project. Students appreciate knowing what the bigger purpose of their work is and what difference it will make to the organization or community.
- Make sure students have a clear idea of what success and excellence look like.
- Give students one major task at a time. You may want or need to interrupt that task/project to have them to focus on another priority, but giving them a wide range of things to do can lead to frustration and incompleteness. On the other hand, I understand that students may very well be doing organizational capacity building while also providing ongoing services, rather than doing these tasks in a sequence
- Students will report after each work day about what they accomplished, in person, by email, or on the Personal page google doc (as agreed between you and them).

- Regular, honest communication about both what you are happy with and where you would like to see improvement helps students feel more accountable to you personally.

Staying in Touch

Give me feedback on how your group is doing, and on individuals having difficulties, in order to ensure team & project success. This will allow me to support and lighten up your load, as well as to notice common patterns that need adjusting for the class as a whole. I can discuss these issues in class and/or also meet with individual students, or strategize with you about individual students that are having difficulties. Also, see evaluation information at the end of this document.

Readings

If appropriate, at the beginning of the project give students some general background reading or videos in your project area to give them some context and orient them to the work they will be doing. I will cover copy costs, if necessary.

Presentations at the End of the Project

There will be several opportunities during the semester for the students in your team to present their work to the other students in the class. These presentations will help to inform the class on the current progress of the project and the students' involvement in the community. Students will also be asked to prepare one 15 minute "**Project Presentation**" during the 2nd half of the semester prior to the "**Final Project Presentation**" in the last week of classes. The project presentations challenge the group to summarize and synthesize their accomplishments and are also intended to help students sharpen their skills in public outreach and community education. I encourage students to be as creative as they like, yet also effective in communicating with the particular group they are presenting to.

The 20-40 min presentation at the end of the course, *assuming it's appropriate to your project*, will ideally be given first to the class for rehearsal, feedback and mutual education and then to the constituency the project is most relevant to (neighborhood group, a city agency, etc.). These presentations will take place in the first two weeks of December (a little before or after if needed). I will help students with the logistics of this (e.g. food and drinks, etc.). In some cases, it's helpful to do an early presentation with the constituency to be served in order to get their engagement, input and feedback early on. It will create a better outcome if students rehearse with you before doing their public presentation.

Presentations should include a participatory component that draws out resources, feedback and creative suggestions from the participants. PowerPoint or Prezi is helpful but *not* required, but some form of visuals and/or hands-on experience is recommended.

Final Project Report /Portfolio ("Deliverables")

I will support the students in putting together a Final report &/or portfolio ("deliverables"), which can be closely integrated with their presentation. The report should include project **Goals, Methods,**

Steps, Challenges, Successes and Outcomes, Lessons learned (about the community; the organization; the people they worked with; cultural differences; race and class issues; and how they related to all this), and **Recommendations** for project improvement. ***It should read like a user-friendly handbook, in language, style, and format, relevant for community members, local organizations, and agencies, and/or future volunteer teams that will build on the work already done.*** The Project Report is a team collaboration intended to be of value to your organization as feedback for future project development and volunteer engagement. It should also be adaptable as **outreach, orientation** and/or **education** for other volunteers, interns, and campus departments and professors (e.g. through agency and IC websites), making it easy for the next group of IC or CU volunteers or professors (such as students in Amy Frith's Spring 2013 Community Nutrition course) to pick up the essentials of the project and have a sense of what they may be building upon. It does not have to read like a formal academic document though it should **demonstrate depth of learning and reflection.**

As Project Guide, you will be asked to read the rough draft of this report and give the students feedback. My and your evaluation of it will be based on its utility for the project and the community, as well as future faculty and student contributors. It could be in the form of a handbook, brochure, CD/DVD, website, program module, etc.. ***I am working towards co-creating semester projects that are steps in a multi-semester, multi-year process, so how they get summarized and transmitted to the participants in the next phase is very important.*** Your help is, of course, appreciated, but I don't expect the main burden of this to be on you. More about this later in the semester.

Students will also be asked to submit portfolio materials related to the "capacity building" work that they do with you. **PORTFOLIO MATERIALS** (or "deliverables") are reports on surveys or other research, curriculum modules, brochures, posters, videos, website pages, etc. - anything that supports your organization's "capacity" to serve the community. They vary widely with each project, but will be the evidence of the work that students have done to help you organizationally. *Some may have been submitted and revised at different points in the semester.* If they haven't already been submitted, the **Final drafts** are due the same day as Final report Draft final report , **Friday, Dec 7 midnight.** You as Project Guide and myself as Instructor will give the students **feedback by Tuesday Dec 11, 5PM,** and they will be asked to submit the revised **final versions by Friday Dec 14 by midnight .**

Feedback/Evaluation

Please write up and send **short evaluations (2-5 sentences each) for the students by** (see criteria below) . There are no exams or final papers, so your short evaluations are an important part of the course. I also encourage you to give the group and the individual members direct, focused feedback (and get feedback from them!) early in the semester, in any way you wish, so there is ample time for useful changes to happen.

The areas we usually focus on are:

(Quantitative 1 worst - 5 best, for each area and Qualitative- one sentence for each area is enough.)

- 1) Reliability/accountability/consistency/completeness
- 2) Quality/rigor/depth/innovation/creativity
- 3) Initiative/leadership/taking charge
- 4) Teamwork/collaboration/effective communication
- 5) Cultural competency and sensitivity

Fall 2012 Class Schedule

Thu Aug 29 Intro Class 1

Tue Sept 4 Class 2

Thu Sept 6 Class 3 , including Project presentations by guides (20 min)

Tue Sept 11 Class 4

Thu Sept 13 Project Session 1

Tue Sept 18 Field Trip 1

Thu Sept 20 Project Session 2

Sat Sept 22 Food Justice Summit

Tue Sept 25 Class 5

Thu Sept 27 Project Session 3

Tue Oct 2 Class 6

Thu Oct 4 Project Session 4

Tue Oct 9 Class 7

Thu Oct 11 Project Session 5

Tue Oct 16 Field Trip 2

Wed Oct 17 First Evaluation of students by guides due

Thu Oct 18 No project session Fall Break

Tue Oct 23 Class 8

Wed October 24 Mid-Term Grades Due (online) 10:00 p.m.

Thu Oct 25 Project Session 6

Tue Oct 30 Class 9

Thu Nov 1 Project Session 7

Tue Nov 6 Class 10

Thu Nov 8 Project Session 8

Tue Nov 13 Class 11

Thu Nov 15 Project Session 9

Nov. 17-25 Thanksgiving Break

Tue Nov 27 Class 12

Thu Nov 29 Project session 10

Tue Dec 4 Class 13

Thu Dec 6 Project Session 11

Fri Dec 7 Draft Team Project Report and Deliverables due by 12AM Sat

Tue Dec 11 Class 14: Project Presentations to classmates I

Tue Dec 11 Feedback from guide on draft final report & deliverables due by 5 PM

Thu Dec 13 Class 15 : Project Presentations to classmates II

Fri Dec 14 Final Team Project Report and deliverables due by 12 AM Sat

Mon Dec 17 Final "Exam" >>Closing reflection, celebration & feast. Required.

Wed Dec 22 Final Evaluation of students by guides due

Google Docs

If you are not familiar with Google docs and Google calendar, here is how to get started:

Go to www.google.com

In the upper right hand corner you will see a little box that says "Sign in." Click on it.

On the left hand side under "Accounts" there is a blue link to "create an account for free."

Click on it

It will ask you to create your Google account by providing your first and last name, choosing a username and password, putting in your birthday and your current email address.

Google will then send you a confirmation message to your regular email address, with a link to your new Google account.

Now any time you go to Google.com you can sign in to your Google account.

In Google, when you click on "Documents" in the header, you will be taken to a "Home - Google Docs" page.

I will already have posted your Project Page and a Personal Page for each of your students, and you should see them there.

The Project Page is set up as a spreadsheet, with categories across the top for you to fill in for your project.

Back at the Google main page (not in Google Docs) you will see a tab in the header that says "Calendar." Your Project Calendar will appear when you click here.

See above for explanations of each of these Google pages.

(When I initially had trouble with this I asked a 17 year old! A 14 year old would probably work as well. Or you can call me and I can walk you through it. Anne Rhodes 844-9550)