

Syllabus

Instructors Information:		
Dr. Engil Pereira, Ph.D.		
Office: ESCNE 1.320	Phone: (956) 665-2220	Email: engil.pereira@utrgv.edu
Office Hours:	F 2:00-4:00 pm	
Dr. James Jihoon Kang, Ph.D.		
Office: ESCNE 2.618	Phone: (956) 665-3526	Email: jihoon.kang@utrgv.edu
Office Hours:	MWR 2:30-3:30	
Dr. Mirayda Torres-Avila, Ph.D.		
Office: ESCNE 1.306	Phone: (956) 665-2498	Email: mirayda.torresavila@utrgv.edu
Office Hours:	T 3:00 - 4:00 pm and W 11 am - noon or by appointment	

Lectures:				
Section	Time	Day	Building	Room
CESL 3301 - 02	10:40 am - 1:10 pm	F	MATHEMATICS & GEN CLASSROOMS	2.418

Community Partners
LUPE La Unión Del Pueblo Entero - 1601 US-83 BUS, San Juan, TX 78589 Founded by labor rights activist César Chávez & Dolores Huerta, LUPE builds stronger, healthier communities where colonia residents use the power of civic engagement for social change.

Course Description:
Community-engaged scholarship and learning (CESL) provides a rich and relevant context for exploration of socially and culturally relevant topics through experiential learning, critical thinking, empirical analysis, and reflective communication. This introductory seminar course is designed to enrich the experiences of first year students across all disciplines by embedding their learning in culturally and socially relevant issues that impact local communities (broadly-defined). Through this introduction, students will have the opportunity to work with the faculty instructor and local community partners to synthesize new understanding on specific topics that affect the local community.
Community-engaged course on 'Developing technologies for community gardens in the LRGV Colonias' - UTRGV's Office for Community Engagement and Assessment under the program 'Community Engaged Scholarship & Learning Experiences (CESL)' has created a mechanism to facilitate early engagement and culturally-relevant pedagogy allowing students to have a significant community impact by developing solutions for local issues. In collaboration with community centers located in low-income periurban neighborhoods, locally known as 'Colonias', we will engage students to develop and improve organic vegetable gardens. Community leaders have previously expressed that due to the lack of gardening knowledge and technologies adapted to the available resources, their existing gardens have not been successful to the point of compromising local food and nutritional security initiatives. Drs. Pereira, Kang, and Dr. Torres-Avila and students will develop planting, fertilization, and irrigation systems for communal gardens integrating the needs and resources available. The community members will be encouraged and guided in experimentation to gain experiences in a range of technologies needed not only in the community center gardens but also in their own gardens.

Course Learning Objectives (CLOs):
In the community-engagement course, students apply the skills they have acquired from class and other experiential learning to address food security issues existing in the Rio Grande Valley. Measures of interest generated and overall impact include student enrollment and community attendance, as well as the numbers of optimized community gardens.
Students are expected to
(1) develop an appreciation for the meanings of community and the needs within those communities
(2) develop an understanding of difference between community engaged scholarship and other (non-engaged) scholarly initiatives
(3) develop understanding of the meaning of social responsibility through reflection on community-engaged research, problem solving and learning.
(4) demonstrate comprehension of information from a variety of sources such as but not limited to journal articles, texts, media, data, art, archives, personal observations, interviews, experiences, etc. (5)
demonstrate their ability to communicate with fellow students (peers), faculty and community members through their participation in varied community interactions. (6)
understand their role in community engagement which requires collaboration between students, faculty, university, and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

Students Learning Objectives (SLOs):
At the end of the course, students will/should be able to
(1) Identify soil science principles for setting up a community garden.
(2) Describe the basics of weed biology and ecology.
(3) Explain different irrigation methods and be able to choose correct method depending on target crop and region.
(4) Describe organic soil amendment options (e.g., compost and/or biochar) for setting up a community garden.

Course Topics
Module 1: Garden setup and irrigation
a. Irrigation
b. Choosing the crops
c. Planting
d. Weeds
Module 2: Fertilization, composting and amendments (biochar)
a. Making compost
b. Alternative amendments (e.g., biochar)
c. Fertilization management

Course Grading:			
Assessments / Exercise / Activity	Percentage	CLOs	SLOs
Reflections - Four Discussion Boards	25%	1,2,3,4,5,6	
Engaged Participation	25%	1,2,3	
Community Presentation	25%	5	1,2,3,4
Informative Brochure for the Community	25%	5	
Course Final grade	100%		

Grade Scale:				
100% > A ≥ 90%	90% > B ≥ 80%	80% > C ≥ 70%	70% > D ≥ 60%	60% > F > 0%

Tentative Class Schedule			
Week		Location - Lecture (L) / Community C	Reflections - Discussion Boards
Jan. 18	Introduction to the course and focus group organization.	L	
Jan. 25	Problem Discussion and Community	C	DB1 - Where you stand in the Social & Community Problem as a professional leader?
Feb. 1	Planning (Focus group meeting)	L	
Feb. 8	Organic gardening	L	
Feb. 15	Drip irrigation	L	
Feb. 22	Planning (Mentor and Focus group meeting)	L	DB2 - The technical and economic feasibility of the different irrigation systems
Mar. 1	Presentation	C	
Mar. 8	Field Day	C	
Mar. 22	Field Day	C	
Mar. 29	Field Day	C	DB3-Raised bed construction and soil amendment
Apr. 5	Planning Flyer (Focus group meeting)	L	
Apr. 12	Planning Flyer (Mentor and Focus group meeting)	L	
Apr. 26	Community Follow Up	C	x - Course Reflexion and how you see your self as a professional and leader in your community?

UTRGV Policy Statements						
<p>STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:</p> <p>Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.</p>						
<p>Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations</p> <p>Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services for additional information and to request accommodations.</p>						
<p>Student Accessibility Services:</p> <p>Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.</p>						
<p>MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:</p> <p>Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available on or about:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Module 1</td> <td>February 13 – 19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Module 2</td> <td>April 10 – 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full Spring Semester</td> <td>April 10 – May 1</td> </tr> </table>	Module 1	February 13 – 19	Module 2	April 10 – 16	Full Spring Semester	April 10 – May 1
Module 1	February 13 – 19					
Module 2	April 10 – 16					
Full Spring Semester	April 10 – May 1					
<p>ATTENDANCE:</p> <p>Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV's attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.</p>						
<p>SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:</p> <p>As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.</p>						
<p>SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:</p> <p>In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a "Responsible Employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student's time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination. If students, faculty, or staff would like confidential assistance, or have questions, they can contact OVAVP (Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention) at 665-8287, 882-8282, or OVAVP@utrgv.edu.</p>						

UTRGV Policy Statements (Cont.)**COURSE DROPS:**

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the "3-peat rule" and the "6-drop" rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

STUDENT SERVICES:

Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor's office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

Learning center: BSTUN 2.10 (Brownsville) or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg)

Writing center: BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg)

Advising center: BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg)

Career center: BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg)

Electronic Communication

Electronic communication should be through VaqueroMail as UTRGV policy. In the subject area include your course and section number.

Important days

Include in this section a table or list that provides information for students regarding important dates, assignments or activities. The UTRGV academic calendar can be found at <https://my.utrgv.edu/home> at the bottom of the screen, prior to login. Some important dates for spring 2019 include:

14-Jan	First day of classes
17-Jan	Last day to add a course or register for spring 2019
21-Jan	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO classes
Mar.11 – Mar.16	Spring Break. No classes.
10-Apr	Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule
April 19-20	Easter Holiday – NO classes
2-May	Study Day – NO classes
May 3-9	Final Exams
May 10-11	Commencement Exercises

***This syllabus is is subject to change by the instructor according to students' needs or course delays.**



