SAR HS 408
Mediterranean Diet: Food, Culture and Health

Instructor Name: Paula Quatromoni, DSc, RD
Office Location: BU in Padua, via Demisse
Contact Information: paulaq@bu.edu
Office Hours: Daily, after class

Course Dates: June 2020
Course Time & Location: 9:00 – 12:30
Course Credits: 4 credits

Course Description
This course is a four-week, 4 credit summer study abroad course taught by Boston University faculty at the BU in Italy study abroad program in Padua, Italy. How does the Mediterranean region offer unique opportunities to introduce students to the Mediterranean lifestyle and its relationship to culture, society, promotion of health, and prevention of disease? Students will be exposed to food and eating patterns within the Italian way of life and aspects of Italian culture, agriculture, the food industry, and public health resources. The course will culminate with an immersion in the scientific evidence demonstrating the benefits of the Mediterranean eating pattern to prevent chronic health conditions including diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and cancer. Classroom experiences will be combined with hands-on workshops and activities in the local community where students will explore local resources in and around the city of Padua along with immersion experiences in the homes of host families.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the characteristics, food/nutrient components, and regional/global variations of the Mediterranean Diet.
- To experience the Mediterranean diet and its associated lifestyle through cultural immersion in the city of Padua in the Veneto region of Italy; and to compare and contrast the lifestyle, environmental, and behavioral characteristics of a Mediterranean culture and its food industry to the U.S. experience.
- To apply critical thinking skills to reading published nutrition research evaluating the effects of the Mediterranean diet on selected health outcomes (specifically cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, cancer and Alzheimer’s disease).

Hub Learning Outcomes

Individual in the Community

Learning Outcome 1: Students will analyze the cultural dimensions of experience that inform their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies.
- Students will **articulate** their preconceived notion of the Mediterranean diet before taking this course, and **describe** how their understanding changes as they experience the lifestyle once immersed in a home stay with a host family in the community of Padua, as they learn about regional variations across Mediterranean countries, and as they travel throughout the region and
experience different kinds of communities (urban, suburban, farming, coastal, etc) during the program. This practice will begin in the first week of the course and will constitute the first entry in the reflections journal, a journal that students will continue to add to weekly throughout the course.

- Students will compare and contrast their personal belief systems and their own experiences of health, wellness, lifestyle, behavior, and food choices shaped by their own culture and personal up-bringing in relation to their new cultural context they experience and observe in the Mediterranean region. The reflections journal, Photo Voice and blog post assignments each provide opportunity for this learning to be demonstrated.

Learning Outcome 2: Students will participate respectfully in different communities during the study abroad experience and will recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those communities.

- Students will participate in a wide variety of cultural activities (including family meals in their home stay, culinary workshops, food industry and agricultural/farming field trips, hikes in the mountains, etc) in this international setting and will have multiple opportunities to reflect on the issues relevant to health promotion outcomes for individuals in different communities. The reflections journal, Photo Voice and blog post assignments each provide opportunity for this learning to be demonstrated.

- Students will observe, identify, capture (via digital photographs) and illustrate factors in the Italian community that represent facilitators or obstacles to adherence to the health-promoting Mediterranean lifestyle. Narrative interpretations will accompany each digital photo. The series of six Photo Voice assignments collectively addresses factors at the level of the Individual, Family, Marketplace, Community, Organizations & Institutions, and Policy or Environment that students are prompted and required to respond to.

Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy

Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate, through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in at least two different cultures or societies (their home culture/society; their BU culture/society, and the Mediterranean culture/society).

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of global diversity by comparing and contrasting the U.S. way of life to the Mediterranean lifestyle in their weekly reflections journal.

- Students will analyze and reflect upon the cultural differences between their own personal lifestyle behaviors that influence health and wellness (specifically diet and physical activity) in the context of their home family environment where they were raised and also (if different) their experience as a college student living in a major U.S. city (Boston), in relation to the Mediterranean lifestyle.

Learning Outcome 2: Students will demonstrate a detailed understanding of at least two cultural contexts through this study abroad course. This course will involve reflection on the challenges and pleasures students discover in orienting themselves in new and unfamiliar cultures.

- Immersion in a home stay in Padua, Italy for a month-long study abroad experience presents students with both challenges and pleasures in a new and unfamiliar culture. This experience allows students to develop and demonstrate, through reflective writing and guided in-class
discussion activities, an understanding of cultural contexts of diet and other personal behaviors that influence health (namely physical activity, sustainable agriculture, zero kilometer procurement of food, conviviality, and religious influences on food traditions, as experienced in the Jewish ghettos of Padua and Venice).

Creativity/Innovation

Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate understanding of creativity as a learnable, iterative process of imagining new possibilities that involves risk-taking, use of multiple strategies, and reconceiving in response to feedback, and will be able to identify individual and institutional factors that promote and inhibit creativity.

- Creativity will be expressed predominantly through food as students will engage in several hands-on culinary workshops where they prepare foods from scratch, like pasta and pizza, using whole food ingredients native to the Mediterranean region. Student will be guided by professional chefs and will have several mentored opportunities that build on themselves during the course to try different techniques, equipment, tools and ingredients. Learning will be assessed via participation, blog posts, and/or the reflections journal.
- Students will be guided through several sensory evaluation experiences, for example, evaluating a variety of cheeses, meats, ancient grains, olives, olive oils and wine from the Veneto region of Italy. Students will be encouraged to try foods that are unfamiliar to them and/or foods that may not be a part of their personal eating pattern. Guided sensory evaluation exercises will build new skills that support mindful eating by teaching students to be present in the food experience, to fully experience the color, texture, shape, form, aroma, flavor, mouthfeel and personal reaction to each food they experience. Learning will be assessed via participation, blog posts, and/or the reflections journal.
- Students will learn and practice new techniques for planning, selecting, preparing and enjoying foods that are staples in the Mediterranean diet. Collectively, these course activities will provide students with a creative learning experience as well as sustainable life skills that they will bring home with them for personal and/or professional use. Students will learn and practice new methods of food preparation during their time abroad, in class, through workshops and in the home stay. Students will document these experiences and creative ideas in their weekly reflections journal.

Learning Outcome 2: Students will be able to exercise their own potential for engaging in creative activity by conceiving and executing original work either alone or as part of a team.

- Students will engage in in-class discussions and will document ideas in their weekly reflections journal where they will be challenged to creatively envision how to bring key aspects of the Mediterranean lifestyle back to the U.S. to creatively imagine new strategies for sustaining the health-promoting aspects of the Mediterranean lifestyle outside of the Mediterranean region. Examples of strategies will relate to personal food choice, nutrition education/communication, food preparation, food access, marketing, affordability, sustainability, and/or lifestyle factors like daily physical activity and conviviality. These strategies may be promoted and applied at the personal level, or they may be applied to individuals, families, communities, organizations,
environments, or policies in the setting of health promotion interventions, programs, communications and campaigns.

**Other Outcomes (e.g., School, Department, and/or Program Outcomes)**

This course is approved as a Public Health elective for the Public Health minor at Boston University.

**Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning**

This course uses a variety of instructional formats including lecture, in-class discussion, guest speakers, field trips, and experiential learning. Traditional assessment of knowledge gained is assessed using quizzes. A variety of course assignments build students’ skills and are used to assess learning outcomes more comprehensively including the creation of digital media, written blog posts to practice mass communications, and student-led research critiques to enhance public speaking, teaching and presentation skills. The use of a weekly reflections journal will demonstrate social-emotional and cultural learning outcomes in addition to cognitive learning that has occurred over the course of the study abroad experience.

**Books and Other Course Materials**

There is no textbook for this course. A collection of articles will be assigned for Required Readings, posted to the Blackboard site.

**Courseware**

A course website is accessible on Blackboard Learn.

**Assignments and Grading**

The following assignments are required in this course: Quizzes (2), Photo Voice assignments in response to specific prompts (6); written critique of an assigned research article; assigned blog post; weekly reflections journal.

- Quiz Average  25%
- Photo Voice  25%
- Research Critique  20%
- Blog Post  15%
- Reflections Journal  10%
- Class Participation   5%

**Resources/Support/How to Succeed in This Course**

1. The Professor is available to meet with students daily, before and after class. There is no TA and no tutor available for this course. The program directors and staff of BU in Padua are also available to assist students, particularly with issues related to tech support, general information, travel, safety, home stays and other logistics of the study abroad experience.

2. **Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at (617) 353-3658 or access@bu.edu to coordinate any reasonable
accommodation requests. ODS is located at 25 Buick Street. For more information, please visit: http://www.bu.edu/disability

Community of Learning: Class and University Policies

1. Faculty, guest speakers, tour hosts and students are responsible for ensuring a positive learning environment through active and respectful participation in all class-related activities, lectures, discussions, field trips and events. Students are responsible for leading the in-class discussions in the final week of the course when they are assigned in small groups to critique a scientific research article and lead a case presentation following standardized guidelines. Class participation contributes to 5% of the final grade in this course.

2. Attendance & Absences: Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trips required for the class. Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty when determining final grades. Please notice that weekend trips and family visits are not acceptable reasons for either lateness or absence.

3. Policy on Religious Observance: Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states, ‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’ See Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Assignment Completion & Late Work. Students will submit assignments through the Blackboard Learn site unless otherwise instructed. In the international setting, it is understood that some students do not have access to printers in their home stays and occasionally, technological issues arise. The faculty and staff in BU in Padua can assist when students respectfully make their needs known in a timely manner and ask for help. All assignments must be posted to the course Blackboard site on their due date or handed in in class. Late assignments will only be accepted with prior approval, and are due by 4:00 on their negotiated due date. All work is to be done independently. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are not group projects. Written assignments should be typed, well-organized, and professionally prepared.

Academic Conduct Statement: Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another’s work and presenting it as you own. Dictionary definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as ‘theft’ or ‘steal’. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University’s Academic Conduct Code: https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/

Outline of Class Meetings: Date, Topic, Readings Due, Assignments Due – See below
SAR HS 408 Mediterranean Diet: Food, Culture & Health

Boston University in Padova, Summer 2019
Lecture/Discussion 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Readings are customized each semester and are posted on the Blackboard Learn course website, organized into folders identified by lecture date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Instructional Topic</th>
<th>Class Activities</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Student Welcome, greeted by faculty and BU Padua directors</td>
<td>Arrival at BU Italy and placement with host families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|        | Tu  | All-day orientation with lunch provided by BU                                          | *Tour of Padua*  
Dr. Lorenzo Tognato  
4:30 pm                                           |                                                      |
|        | W   | Syllabus review & course overview; discussion of *Photo Voice* and course assignments.  
Food Culture, Conviviality & the Mediterranean Lifestyle | *Afternoon Italian Language Activity 1*:  
«Ciao! Mi chiamo…»  
2:30-3:15 pm                                      |                                                      |
|        | Th  | Diet and Heart Disease: the research behind the recommendations                        | *Scavenger Hunt*  
in the daily market, *Piazza della Frutta* | *Photo Voice #1*: Individual                       |
|        | F   | US Dietary Guidelines: Dietary patterns for health promotion                          | Visit *Ecor Natura Si* marketplace in Padova city center                           | *Weekly Reflections Journal*                         |
|        | Sa  | *Guided sensory food experience #1*: cheese, olives and wine                           | 3:50 pm meet @BU to  
*Tour of the University of Padua Historical Site, Palazzo BO*  
(entrance at 4:30 pm) |                                                      |
|        | M   | Food: cultural and societal aspects.  
*An introduction to SLOW food.*  
*Guest Speaker:* Prof. Michele Bianco            | *Program Welcome Trip*                                                                 | *Photo Voice #2*: Family or Interpersonal            |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>An Italian food industry’s commitment to locally-grown, responsible and sustainable agriculture. <strong>Guest Speakers:</strong> Prof. Michele Bianco and Ecor’s VP of Marketing</td>
<td><a href="#">Field Trip &amp; Class</a>: Ecor Natura Si Headquarters with lunch offered by BU at Ariele, Ecor’s flagship restaurant</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Regional differences in the Mediterranean Diet; Bioactive food components in the Mediterranean Diet</td>
<td><a href="#">Afternoon Italian Language Activity 2</a>: «Al caffe» 2:30-3:15 pm</td>
<td><a href="#">Photo Voice #3</a>: Marketplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Sustainable agriculture &amp; diet’s environmental impact</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Prof. Franco Tagliapietra, in Legnaro</td>
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<td><strong>Field Trip to</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Legnaro Agricultural Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>Long weekend planned to allow travel</td>
<td><a href="#">Weekly Reflections Journal</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Wine and polyphenols; Fats, oils, olives, nuts and seeds</td>
<td><a href="#">Visit the Museum of Medicine</a></td>
<td><a href="#">Photo Voice #4</a>: Policy or Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Fruits, vegetables and herbs; Carbs, Whole Grains, Ancient Grains: Beyond Pasta</td>
<td><a href="#">Culinary Workshop &amp; Cultural Experience</a>: Pasta making &amp; dinner 7:00 pm</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Proteins: animal, marine &amp; plant; Dairy and cheese in the Italian diet; Guidelines for Critical Reading of Nutrition Research.</td>
<td><a href="#">Afternoon Italian Language Activity 3</a>: order your coffee/meal 4:30 pm</td>
<td><a href="#">Photo Voice #5</a>: Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th</td>
<td>School Lunch and Italy’s Gaining Health Initiative</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Gisele Flores, Dietitian, Verona School District</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td><strong>Guided sensory food experience #2:</strong> foods from a Malga/Agriturismo</td>
<td><a href="#">Field Trip to the Dolomites</a>: Physical Activity (hiking in the mountains)</td>
<td><a href="#">Weekly Reflections Journal</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Week 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quiz 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;Guided sensory food experience #3: salads made with several ancient grains; Preparation for upcoming research article critiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tu</strong></td>
<td>Evidence-based Research: MED Diet &amp; Mortality Evidence-based Research: MED Diet &amp; CVD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W</strong></td>
<td>Exporting the Italian way of life through Eataly: its products, educational mission, and skills-building workshops&lt;br&gt;<strong>Field Trip to FICO</strong>&lt;br&gt;World in Bologna, Hands-on Culinary Workshop: Pizza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Th</strong></td>
<td>Evidence-based Research: MED Diet &amp; Diabetes Evidence-based Research: MED Diet &amp; Alzheimer’s Ds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>Course Closure &amp; Course Evaluations&lt;br&gt;End of Program Celebration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Photo Voice #6:** Organizations & Institutions

**In-class student presentations and research article critiques due**
Photo Voice Assignment

Assignment Background and Rationale
Photo Voice is a communication tool that we, as outsiders, can use to understand the context of the Mediterranean lifestyle in the local community of Padua and the culture characteristic of the many regions of Italy. Photo Voice gives us the ability to be astute observers of the new culture as we immerse ourselves in it, and to narrate a story through the use of digital, visual images.

The Mediterranean lifestyle and the Italian culture are quite different from the U.S. lifestyle and American culture. Yet certainly, there are some similarities. Some circumstances make the Mediterranean lifestyle easy to embrace; others introduce challenges. Some barriers create problems in the community or introduce obstacles to population health promotion or personal wellness. Yet there are positive forces that act as facilitators of health-promoting behaviors that make implementation and sustained adherence to the Mediterranean lifestyle possible.

Assignment Learning Objectives
The Photo Voice assignment ties to the following course objectives: to understand the characteristics, food/nutrient components, and regional/global variations of the Mediterranean Diet; to experience the Mediterranean diet and its associated lifestyle through cultural immersion in the city of Padua in the Veneto region of Italy; and to compare and contrast the lifestyle, environmental, and behavioral characteristics of a Mediterranean culture and its food industry to the U.S. experience.

This assignment relates to the two Individual in the Community learning outcomes stated on the course syllabus. LO 1: Students will analyze the cultural dimensions of experience that inform their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies. LO 2: Students will participate respectfully in different communities during the study abroad experience and will recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those communities.

Assignment Instructions
In this assignment, you will do the following,

1. take photos within specific categories (see table, below) to illustrate either obstacles or facilitators to components of the Mediterranean lifestyle that you observe in Italy
2. import your photo into a power point slide
3. make a title that indicates the “category” for your photo; also, include your name!
4. write a brief narrative paragraph (a guideline for length might be 4-6 sentences) to describe the meaning of your photo, discussing how what you captured represents a problem, barrier, facilitator or solution with regards to either promoting or adopting one or more of the guiding tenets of the Mediterranean lifestyle
5. cite the source of any information that you had to look up (ie. on a website) if it is not your own content or reflection
6. upload it to the course Blackboard Learn website in the Blog section, under the appropriate Photo Voice category (#1 - #6, see table below) and be prepared to share in class
7. in your narrative and/or in your discussion in class, feel free to comment on how what you observed and identified either compares or contrasts to your experiences in the U.S. if this is a relevant theme.

Ground Rules: All photos must be tasteful and appropriate for use in class.
If you are photographing an individual or group of people in a specific setting (ie. anyone who is not a fellow student in this course, but not folks who are simply in the background of your photo), please ask their permission, inform them that you are a student and tell them that this is an assignment for a course.

**Assignment Deliverables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, Thursday</td>
<td>#1 Individual</td>
<td>Choose a sex and age group to photograph and comment on a skill, behavior, choice, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2, Monday</td>
<td>#2 Family or Interpersonal</td>
<td>Your host family or others you observe interacting (families, couples, groups of students, children, adolescents, or adults in social settings, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2, Wednesday</td>
<td>#3 Marketplace</td>
<td>Anywhere food is sold, consumed, marketed; this could certainly include food industry (manufacturer) observations or point-of-purchase in the marketplace, grocery store, corner store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3, Monday</td>
<td>#4 Policy or Environment</td>
<td>Local or national policies that affect food availability or access; dietary guidelines; policies re: food quality, authenticity, organics, agriculture, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3, Wednesday</td>
<td>#5 Community</td>
<td>Public spaces, schools, parks, gyms, restaurants, bars, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Monday</td>
<td>#6 Organizations &amp; Institutions</td>
<td>Worksites, hospitals, food industry, schools, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric**
The instructor will grade the series of six Photo Voice Assignments using the rubric, below. There will be no opportunity to revise and late assignments will not be accepted without prior negotiation with the faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Follows the instructions in response to each of the six prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Photograph appropriately captures the spirit of the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Narrative interpretation of facilitators/barriers to the Mediterranean lifestyle is articulate and thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Uses supporting information from lecture, readings and/or from on-line sources that is appropriately cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Total Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blog Post Assignment

Assignment Background and Rationale

Course blogs are often thought of as a way to provide an authentic learning experience. In Using Blogs in a College Classroom: What’s Authenticity Got To Do With It? author Sarah Lohnes, a doctoral candidate at the Teachers College of Columbia University cites the following “necessary ingredients” for creating effective class blogs:

1. Blog posts should be original, “well-crafted” and “well-informed.”
2. [There should be] an authentic purpose for maintaining the blog.
3. A blog should offer a window into the author’s identity and community affiliations.
4. A blog should take advantage of the medium to offer a sense of immediacy and intimacy.

Number one is a given, as all students are responsible for creating original work that is high quality and well-articulated. Our immersion in Padua and the experiential learning we are exposed to every day during our time in Italy provides us with an authentic purpose of sharing the Mediterranean way of life with others. Your blog post will reflect your personality as you will chose to write about things and experiences, people or observations that are most meaningful to you. The objective is to capture the essence of the community in which you are living for the month. Share something personal, insightful, important, touching or empowering about your in-the-moment experience of the Mediterranean lifestyle, region, people, culture or cuisine.

Assignment Learning Objectives

The Blog Post assignment ties to the following course objectives: to understand the characteristics, food/nutrient components, and regional/global variations of the Mediterranean Diet; to experience the Mediterranean diet and its associated lifestyle through cultural immersion in the city of Padua in the Veneto region of Italy; and to compare and contrast the lifestyle, environmental, and behavioral characteristics of a Mediterranean culture and its food industry to the U.S. experience.

This assignment relates to the two Individual in the Community learning outcomes stated on the course syllabus. LO 1: Students will analyze the cultural dimensions of experience that inform their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies. LO 2: Students will participate respectfully in different communities during the study abroad experience and will recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those communities. It also relates to the first of two Creativity/Innovation learning outcomes. LO 1: Students will demonstrate understanding of creativity as a learnable, iterative process of imagining new possibilities that involves risk-taking, use of multiple strategies, and reconceiving in response to feedback, and will be able to identify individual and institutional factors that promote and inhibit creativity.

Assignment Instructions

You get to choose your topic and your format for your blog post. Keep it simple, or get super creative. Start percolating on it in the first week of the course and work on it throughout, pacing yourself in relation to the other course assignments and due dates.

Length: Blogs should range in length between 600 – 1,000 words. This is just a guideline! Say what you want and need to say and worry less about word count. This should not be a 5 page paper! Nor should it be one paragraph. On average, 900-1,500 words is common for a blog post.
There are many different types of Blog Posts you may choose from:

- **Reflection** – deep thoughts and self-reflection; a sort of “putting it all out there” to articulate what you are experiencing on this adventure.
- **Journal/Diary** – great for describing field trips, new experiences, or just “a day in the life” of a college student studying abroad in Italy.
- **Interview** – write up and publish a Q&A transcript of an interview with someone you encounter on this trip (preferably a local individual, an elder, student, host, business owner, farmer, etc). Provide an introduction and summary of the main points of the interview.
- **Controversial/Debate/Editorial** – taking a stance on an issue, making sure to back up thoughts with facts and proof. This may be a venue for a “compare and contrast” what you are seeing and experiencing in Italy vs. the U.S. lifestyle, food scene, marketplace, community, etc.
- **FAQ** – write ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ and answers on a topic.
- **How-to** – the classic ‘How-to’ essay is way better when it includes pictures or a short video clip. this may be well suited for a simple food prep or cooking demo.

There are several common formats of blog posts you may choose from:

- **Informal** – short paragraphs; this style doesn’t always follow academic writing standards
- **Listicle** – you know these well – “5 ways to...” or “top 10 things...”
- **Slideshows** – sometimes done as an alternative form of a listicle
- **Photo Posts** – centered around a single key image
- **Video ‘Vlogs’** – embedded video clip with a blog narrative

**Assignment Deliverables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Friday</td>
<td>Blog Post</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric**
The instructor will grade the Blog Post assignments using the rubric, below. There will be no opportunity to revise and late assignments will not be accepted without prior negotiation with the faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Follows the instructions for the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Demonstrates creativity in choosing an appropriate topic and format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Narrative is nicely organized and well written; uses proper grammar and professional writing tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Content is engaging, thoughtful, accurate and impactful for mass health communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Uses photographs to augment the narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Uses supporting information from lecture, readings and/or from on-line sources that is accurate and appropriately cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Total Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence-based Research Article Critique Assignment

Assignment Background and Rationale
Learn to critically evaluate and discuss the research behind the health claims associated with a diet plan, like the Mediterranean diet, or a set of dietary guidelines is a required skill of a nutrition professional. Students will be guided to read emerging research on the associations between the Mediterranean diet and several chronic disease health outcomes. The goal is to familiarize students with methods used in nutrition research, common presentation of data and statistical tests applied to test hypotheses of diet-disease relationships, and strategies to evaluate the strength of the evidence presented and conclusions drawn in the context of the larger, existing literature on the topic.

Assignment Learning Objectives
The Research Critique assignment ties to the following course objective: to apply critical thinking skills to reading published nutrition research evaluating the effects of the Mediterranean diet on selected health outcomes (specifically cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, cancer and Alzheimer’s disease).

This assignment builds knowledge and skills in scientific inquiry and critical thinking but does not fulfill any specific HUB unit learning outcomes approved for this course.

Assignment Instructions
Articles will be selected by the Instructor and will be posted on the Blackboard Learn website. Students will choose their preferred topic for the article assignment in the first week of class.

- Read the assigned research articles and bring them to class with you
- Two to three students will be assigned to lead the discussion on each paper. Everyone reads and participates in the discussion of all four articles, but you are only responsible for the write up for the one article you are assigned to lead.
- For your one assigned article: please type a brief summary of the research using the guiding questions and prompts in the table below. Bullet point responses are recommended; no need for full sentences.
- You are allowed to work on this assignment with your group member(s) but you each must produce your own independent write-up to pass in for grading. The in-class discussion should be coordinated with your partner(s).
- Be prepared to lead the discussion of your assigned article with your group member(s), sharing your thoughts and questions in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>Who were the subjects? How many subject groups were there? How many subjects were there per group? How were they recruited into the study? Were there any exclusion criteria or restrictions on participation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT</td>
<td>What study design was used? Mention any unique features of the design. What was the main hypothesis that was tested? What was the exposure of interest, and how was it measured? What was the main outcome variable (ie. what health condition or disease state was expected to be influenced by the exposure), and how was it measured? Was body weight, BMI or other anthropometry measured? Was physical</td>
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activity measured? Were biomarkers measured (blood or urinary indicators of nutritional status)?

WHEN
- When did the study take place? What was the duration of the study? When was the outcome variable measured?

WHERE
- Where did the study take place? Was the study conducted in a clinical, inpatient setting, in an outpatient setting, in the community, or at the population level?

HOW
- How was the intervention designed (what were the various treatment groups)? How was the intervention delivered? What happened to the participants during the time that they were in the study (i.e., what were they asked to do; what was done to them)? Did the intervention provide foods, supplements, or nutrition education/behavioral counseling? How was dietary intake or compliance with the intervention determined?

WHAT
- What were the main results found in this study? Be sure you comment on the key findings for the primary and secondary outcomes, as well as any subgroup analyses that are important and/or featured in the author’s conclusions.

CONFIDENCE
- Briefly mention any strengths (that give you confidence) or limitations (that give you concern) in this study. Apply the “red light, yellow light, green light” criteria discussed in class.

IMPLICATIONS
- What are the main implications of this study for population-based health promotion? Who do these findings and conclusions apply to?

QUESTION
- Draft one question for in-class discussion purposes; this can be about something you didn’t understand, have never seen before and need to be walked through it to understand, want to know more about, are confused about, etc.

Assignment Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Article Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Tuesday</td>
<td>Mediterranean diet and Mortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Tuesday</td>
<td>Mediterranean diet and Cardiovascular Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Thursday</td>
<td>Mediterranean diet and Metabolic Disease/Diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4, Thursday</td>
<td>Mediterranean diet and Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
</tr>
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Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric

The instructor will grade the Evidence-based Research Article Critiques using the rubric, below. There will be no opportunity to revise and late assignments will not be accepted without prior negotiation with the faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Follows the instructions for the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reads and comes to class prepared to actively lead and engage in the discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Completes the write-up with sufficient detail and accuracy, responding to prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Uses supporting information from lecture, readings and/or from on-line sources that is appropriately cited</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Total Points</td>
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Weekly Reflections Journal Assignment

Assignment Background and Rationale
The weekly Reflections Journal allows students to process all aspects of their study abroad experience in
the context of culture, community, global citizenship and creativity through their own personal lens.

Assignment Learning Objectives
The weekly Reflection Journal assignment ties to the following course objectives: to understand the
characteristics, food/nutrient components, and regional/global variations of the Mediterranean Diet; to
experience the Mediterranean diet and its associated lifestyle through cultural immersion in the city of
Padua in the Veneto region of Italy; and to compare and contrast the lifestyle, environmental, and
behavioral characteristics of a Mediterranean culture and its food industry to the U.S. experience.

This assignment relates to all six of the HUB learning outcomes approved for this course:

**Individual in the Community** learning outcomes, **LO 1**: Students will analyze the cultural
dimensions of experience that inform their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other
individuals and societies. **LO 2**: Students will participate respectfully in different communities
during the study abroad experience and will recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those
communities.

**Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy** learning outcomes, **LO 1**: Students will demonstrate,
through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in at least two
different cultures or societies (their home culture/society; their BU culture/society, and the
Mediterranean culture/society). **LO 2**: Students will demonstrate a detailed understanding of at
least two cultural contexts through this study abroad course. This course will involve reflection on
the challenges and pleasures students discover in orienting themselves in new and unfamiliar
cultures.

**Creativity/Innovation** learning outcomes, **LO 1**: Students will demonstrate understanding of
creativity as a learnable, iterative process of imagining new possibilities that involves risk-taking,
use of multiple strategies, and reconceiving in response to feedback, and will be able to identify
individual and institutional factors that promote and inhibit creativity. **LO 2**: Students will be able
to exercise their own potential for engaging in creative activity by conceiving and executing
original work either alone or as part of a team.

Assignment Instructions
Students will maintain an electronic journal that will contain, at a minimum, one weekly reflection posted
in the first three weeks of the course. Journal prompts for each week are detailed in the table below.

Each journal entry will conclude with thoughts in response to these key guiding questions:
- What, from this new knowledge and new cultural experience, is transportable back to the U.S. (for
  me, personally, or in relation to the kind of work I will do in my chosen career path)?
- Who would benefit and how?
- What would be required to make it work and be sustainable in the U.S.?
- What are some potential obstacles or barriers?
Students will be encouraged to write a short reflection at the end of each day, but will be allowed to post only longer reflection at the end of the week based on personal preference. For completeness of the experience, they will be encouraged to continue the journal through the fourth week of the course, but given the major writing assignments that are due in week 4, the final week’s journal is not required and it will not be reviewed by the instructor or graded.

Assignment Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Journal Type</th>
<th>Content Prompts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, Friday by 10 pm</td>
<td>Double entry journal</td>
<td>On day one of the course, students will journal about their preconceived notion of the Mediterranean diet before arriving in Padua. As they settle into their home stay in the first week of the course, experience life in Padua, and begin to learn about the Mediterranean diet through course activities, they will describe how their understanding begins to broaden, deepen and shift as they experience the lifestyle once immersed in the culture and the community. As they learn about regional variations across Mediterranean countries, and as they travel throughout the region and experience different kinds of communities (urban, suburban, farming, coastal, etc) they will continue to add to this journal chapter during weeks 2 and 3 of the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2, Friday by 10 pm</td>
<td>Compare and contrast journal</td>
<td>Students will compare and contrast their personal belief systems and their own experiences of health, wellness, lifestyle, behavior, and food choices shaped by their own culture and personal up-bringing in relation to the new cultural context they experience and observe in the Mediterranean region. Students may choose to include journal entries that describe the challenges and the pleasures associated with immersion in a foreign culture living in Italy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3, Friday by 10 pm</td>
<td>Critical incident journal</td>
<td>This journal includes a set of prompts that ask students to consider their thoughts and reactions and articulate the action they plan to take in the future: Describe a significant event that occurred as part of the cultural or community experience in Padua or on a class field trip/activity/culinary workshop. Why was this event significant to you? What did you learn from this experience? How will this incident influence your future behavior (personally and as a professional in your career)? What new action steps will you put into place in your life or in your career as a result of this experience?</td>
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Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric

The instructor will grade the weekly Reflection Journals using the rubric, below. There will be no opportunity to revise and late assignments will not be accepted without prior negotiation with the faculty.

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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Follows the instructions in response to each weekly prompt</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Includes responses to the key guiding questions within the weekly reflection journal type and content prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Narrative is well organized, well written, articulate and thoughtful</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Total Points</td>
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