

SAR HS 408/608

Mediterranean Diet: Food, Culture and Health

Instructor Name: Prof. Paula Quatromoni

Prof. Joan Salge Blake

Office Location: BU in Padua, via dei Savonarola 176

Contact Information: paulaq@bu.edu

salge@bu.edu

Course Dates: May/June

Course Time & Location: 9:30 – 12:30

Course Credits: 4 credits

Office Hours: Daily, after class

There is no TA/TF/Learning Assistant for this course

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 (for Undergraduates in HS 408)

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 video blog 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 video blog assignments each provide opportunity for this learning to be demonstrated.
- Students will **observe, identify, capture** (via digital photographs or videos) **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, video blogs, 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, video blogs, 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 and video blogs 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

In addition to **active participation** in class discussions and group activities, the following assignments are required in this course: Photo Voice assignments in response to specific prompts (6); written critique of an assigned research article (1); weekly reflections journal entries (3) plus a final promotional video (1).

Photo Voice	25%
Research Critique	25%
Reflections Journal w/ video	25%
Active Participation in all Activities and In-Class Presentations*	25%
*(MED diet food tastings and Resource Packet presentations)	

Resources/Support/How to Succeed in This Course

1. The Professors are 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 25% 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 by 9 a.m. on their due date. Late assignments will have grade deductions** and will only be accepted with prior approval, due by 9 a.m. on their negotiated extension date. All written 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 separate course schedule document posted on Blackboard.

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.

- (8) If you prefer to make this a collection of brief videos rather than ppt slides, you are free to apply these guidelines to a video format instead.

Ground Rules: All photos or video content must be tasteful and appropriate for use in class.

If you are photographing or videoing 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 if it is not possible to be discreet, inform them that you are a student and tell them that this is an assignment for a course.

Assignment Deliverables

Due Date	Category	Examples
Week 1	#1 Individual	Choose a gender and age group to photograph and comment on a skill, behavior, choice, etc
Week 2	#2 Family or Interpersonal	Your host family or others you observe interacting (families, couples, groups of students, children, adolescents, or adults in social settings, etc)
Week 2	#3 Marketplace	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
Week 3	#4 Policy or Environment	Local or national policies that affect food availability or access; dietary guidelines; policies re: food quality, authenticity, organics, agriculture, etc
Week 3	#5 Community	Public spaces, schools, parks, gyms, restaurants, bars, etc
Week 4	#6 Organizations & Institutions	Worksites, hospitals, food industry, schools, etc

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.

Points	Criteria
10	Photograph or video appropriately captures the spirit of each of 6 assignment themes
10	Narrative interpretation of facilitators/barriers to the Mediterranean lifestyle is articulate and thoughtful
5	Uses supporting information from lecture, readings and/or from on-line sources that is appropriately cited, if needed
25	Total Points

Weekly Reflections Journal Assignment – culminates with a Promotional Video

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. This activity will inform the creation of a promotional marketing video as described, below.

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. In the final week, students will work in small groups to collaborate on a promotional video.

Each journal entry will conclude with thoughts in response to these 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?*

Assignment Deliverables

Due Date	Journal Type	Content Prompts
Week 1	Double entry journal	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 new environment 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, culture and 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.
Week 2	Compare and contrast journal	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.
Week 3	Critical incident journal	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?
Week 4	Promotional video	Students will work in teams of 3 to produce a 30 second video addressing the following questions, informed by their collective reflections on their course experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What I learned about the culture, diet, lifestyle, or research in the Mediterranean region • What impressed or surprised me the most • What lifestyle changes I feel prepared to make based on what I learned in this course

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.

Points	Criteria
5	Includes responses to the key guiding questions within the weekly reflection journal type and content prompt
10	Narrative is well organized, well written, articulate and thoughtful
10	Video is engaging, well produced and addresses the salient themes
25	Total Points

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. Specific health outcomes we study will vary somewhat from year to year, depending on the collective interests of students in the course. The goal of this assignment 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
- Small groups of students will be assigned to lead the discussion on each paper. Everyone reads and participates in the discussion of all five articles, but you are only responsible for the write up for the **one** article you are assigned to lead. Each review team will have at least one graduate student serving in a leadership role.
- **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.

Category	Prompts
WHO	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?
WHAT	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 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 (this only applies to intervention studies)	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 (ie. 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 "red light, yellow light, green light" confidence criteria.
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 – each student is responsible for only one write-up, but five article discussions

Due Date	Article Topic
Week 1	Mediterranean diet and Mortality
Week 2	Mediterranean diet and Cardiovascular Disease
Week 3	Mediterranean diet and Metabolic Disease/Diabetes
Week 4	Mediterranean diet and Cancer
Week 4	Mediterranean diet and Alzheimer's Disease

Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric

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

Points	Criteria
10	Reads and comes to class prepared to actively lead and engage in the discussion
10	Completes the write-up with sufficient detail and accuracy, responding to prompts
5	Uses supporting information from lecture, readings and/or from on-line sources that is appropriately cited
25	Total Points

What is the Mediterranean Diet: Why are Certain Foods Emphasized and How Can We Eat Them? (Mediterranean Food Tastings)

Assignment Background and Rationale

This assignment is designed to take a deep dive into the components of the traditional Mediterranean Diet and the science behind these food choices.

Assignment Learning Objectives

This assignment will allow you to work in small groups to collectively create a presentation about the specific foods containing bioactive components that are basis for *the Traditional Mediterranean Diet*. Classroom time will be devoted to group work and to group presentations to share your findings with your class members.

This activity ties to the following **course objective**: to understand the characteristics, food/nutrient components of *Traditional Mediterranean Diet*.

Assignment Instructions

Students will form small working groups, each taking ownership for explaining the **What, Why, and How** format for each category:

1. **WHAT** foods are in each of the Traditional Mediterranean Diet categories?
2. **WHY** are these foods abundantly eaten in this region (ex: locally grown/sustainability, health implications)?
3. **HOW** can a person affordably enjoy these foods in their daily eating patterns once back in the United States?

Product: Each group will present their assigned food group information in 5 to 8 PowerPoint slides, including selected recipes that feature their assigned food/good group. These slides should be visually engaging, creative, properly referenced, and contain relevant weblinks embedded should someone want to take an even deeper dive on this food component. Each group will receive 20-euro to purchase ingredients in the marketplace to prepare a recipe for a tasting experience in class with their classmates.

Assignment Deliverables

Due Date	Category
Weeks 3 & 4	See the syllabus for presentation days assigned by food group

Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric

This assignment is not graded, however this activity will contribute to the grade awarded for in-class participation. Each working group will have at least one graduate student in a leadership role collaborating with undergraduate students.

Bring It Home: A Resource Packet

Assignment Background and Rationale

An important outcome of this course is to facilitate an action plan to bring aspects of the Mediterranean lifestyle back home, be that on campus at BU, in an urban setting like Boston, or anywhere around the globe that you call “home.” Now that you’ve “lived it” in Italy, how can you make components of the Mediterranean lifestyle sustainable when you return home?

Assignment Learning Objectives

This assignment will have you working in small groups to collectively create a Resource Packet. Classroom time will be devoted to group work and to group presentations (two days later) to share your resources with other group members. All resources will be made available on the course Blackboard site, accessible to all students in the course.

This activity ties to the following **course objective**: to compare and contrast the lifestyle, environmental, and behavioral characteristics of a Mediterranean culture and its food industry to the U.S. experience.

Assignment Instructions

Students will form small working groups, each taking ownership for one of the following five thematic areas:

1. Recipes – from books, magazines, on-line or print – celebrating Mediterranean cuisine
2. You-tube videos of **How To** prepare, cook, or make from scratch Mediterranean dishes on a cost-efficient (ie. student) budget
3. Restaurants (in and accessible from **Boston**) featuring Mediterranean cuisine
4. Markets in the Boston area where fresh foods/ingredients can be affordably purchased
5. Websites on the Mediterranean Diet/Lifestyle, for **consumers** who want more
6. Websites on the Mediterranean Diet/Lifestyle, for **health professionals** who want more

Product: A collection of powerpoint slides, one for each recommendation in your collection. Each group should strive to identify at least **8-10 items** in their assigned category. These slides should be visually engaging and creative, contain relevant weblinks (embedded, if possible; included as text, at a minimum), and a brief summary endorsing why you chose to feature this specific content and anything consumers would need to empower and entice them to “go check it out.” Consider **diversity** on many levels when making your selections, including diversity in culture, regional differences in the Mediterranean cuisine, and diversity in socio-economic status (ie. affordable ingredients, cooking and dining out on a budget, etc). For recipes and How To videos, consider accessibility to purchasing ingredients and, if relevant, identify “where to shop” for certain featured ingredients in the Boston area.

Assignment Deliverables

Due Date	Category
Week 4	Bring It Home: Resource Packet

Assignment Grading Criteria & Rubric

This assignment is not graded, however this activity will contribute to the grade awarded for in-class participation. Each working group will have at least one graduate student in a leadership role collaborating with undergraduate students.

SAR HS 408/608 Mediterranean Diet: Food, Culture & Health
 BU in Padova, Course Schedule for Summer 2025
Lecture/Discussion 9:30 a.m. SHARP - 12:30 p.m.
unless otherwise noted in Week 1

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

Week	Day	Instructional Topic	Class Activities	Assignments Due
Week 1	M 5/26	2:00 – 6:00 pm Getting to Know You Syllabus & Course Overview Social Media Networking Baseline self-assessments Photo Voice & Course Activities	9:30am – 10:30am Italian Language Practice with Prof. Lenci	Please read, for tomorrow's class: Willet, Am J Clin Nutr 1995 article posted on Blackboard
	Tu 5/27	2:00 – 6:00 pm U.S. Dietary Guidelines: Dietary patterns for health promotion (JSB) Mediterranean Diet over time (JSB) How to critically read nutrition research (PAQ)	Identify research article topics Sign up for Journal Club groups	Scavenger Hunt in the daily market, Piazza della Frutta
	W 5/28	2:00 – 6:00 pm Food, Culture, Conviviality & the Mediterranean Lifestyle (PAQ) Diet and Heart Disease: From research to recommendations (PAQ)	Pasta making and cooking session – Italian Food Lab activity	Photo Voice #1: Individual
	Th 5/29	What, really, is a sustainable diet and lifestyle? (JSB) Regional differences in the Mediterranean Diet (JSB) Introduction to the bioactive food components in the Mediterranean Diet (JSB)		Scavenger Hunt assignment due

	F 5/30	No class		<i>Weekly Reflections Journal #1 due</i>
Week 2	M 6/2	No class - National Holiday		Photo Voice #2: Family or Interpersonal
	Tu 6/3	<i>Food Sociology</i> Guest Speaker: Prof. Giulia Storato, Univ of Padua (9:30-10:30) <i>Evidence-based Research Journal Club Discussion #1: MED Diet & Mortality</i>	Form MED Diet Working Groups 3:30pm – 4:30pm Italian Language Practice with Prof. Senatore	
	W 6/4	ONSITE CLASS ACTIVITY Treviso area– Cheese tasting (1) & Olive oil tasting (2)	Latteria Perenzin & Oliveto Riva Jacur 9:15 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Photo Voice #3: Marketplace
	Th 6/5	Food: cultural and societal aspects. <i>An introduction to SLOW food.</i> Guest Speaker: Prof. Michele Bianco		
	F 6/6	<i>Sustainable agriculture & diet's environmental impact</i> Guest Speaker: Prof. Franco Tagliapietra <i>Evidence-based Research Journal Club Discussion #2: MED Diet & Health Outcome #2</i>		<i>Weekly Reflections Journal #2 due</i>
Week 3	M 6/9	Guest Speaker: Aslihan Koruyan Sabanci, author Gluten-free Mediterranean Gourmet Cuisine Explanation of Video Project (JSB)	Food Photography activity w/ Aslihan Form Resource Packet Groups	Photo Voice #4: Policy or Environment
	Tu 6/10	MED Diet Presentations & Tastings Group 1: Oils & olives Group 2: Nuts, seeds & legumes Group 3: Herbs & spices Group 4: Milk, yogurt & cheese Group 5: Fruits		

	W 6/11	<i>Feeding Italian School Children</i> Guest Speaker: Tatiana Trandev, MS, RD (10:15-11:45) <i>Evidence-based Research Journal Club Discussion #3:</i> MED Diet & Health Outcome #3	3:30pm – 4:30pm Italian Language Practice with Prof. Lenci	Photo Voice #5: Community
	Th 6/12	ONSITE CLASS ACTIVITY Euganean Hills – (1) Wine, (2) Agriturismo lunch, (3) Charcuterie, and (4) town of Este	Ca' Lustra (wine), Agriturismo Villa Alessi(lunch), Salumificio Fontana (Charcuterie), and Este	
	F 6/13	No Class	Saint Anthony's Feast (Holiday)	Weekly Reflections Journal #3 due
Week 4	M 6/16	Resource Packet group work – on your own, in your groups	Note: You do <u>not</u> have to be in class or in Padua this day; but it is a project-work-reading day	Photo Voice #6: Organizations & Institutions
	Tu 6/17	Photo Essay of School Lunch in Italy (PAQ) <i>Evidence-based Research Journal Club Discussion #4:</i> MED Diet & Health Outcome #4		
	W 6/18	MED Diet Presentations & Tastings Group 6: Vegetables Group 7: Whole & ancient grains Group 8: Rice & gluten-free grains Group 9: Poultry, meats & eggs Group 10: Fish & seafood		
	Th 6/19	<i>Evidence-based Research Journal Club Discussion #5:</i> MED Diet and Health Outcome #5		Submit Course Evaluations
	F 6/20	Final self-assessments Video presentations Resource Packet Presentations: Putting it all together to bring back to Boston		Final Reflection activity: Promotional Video due