



PUBH/NUTR 345:
**From Plate to Policy: The Mediterranean Approach to Diet,
Lifestyle, and Public Health**

Course Syllabus
Fall Semester 2025

Instructor: Professor Marta Parlanti Rahm, , RDN, M.Ed.

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: none

Class Meeting Days & Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:00-5:30 pm

Office Hours: by appointment after a class or via Zoom (see Moodle site)

Course Type: Course with Service Learning Component.

Course Fee: NONE

Course Description

This course offers students a deep dive into the Mediterranean Lifestyle (ML), exploring its health benefits, cultural significance, and practical applications. Using the literature provided, students will learn how to adapt key features of the Mediterranean Lifestyle, including its food habits, physical activity, and social practices, into their own lives to promote long-term health and well-being. Through critical comparisons, students will also examine the differences and similarities between the Mediterranean approach and American public health nutrition recommendations, with a focus on food habits, cooking techniques, and overall lifestyle choices.

As part of an on-going assignment for the course, students will be tasked with developing a detailed policy proposal aimed at reducing chronic disease risks, particularly obesity, heart disease, and Type 2 diabetes, by advocating for the adoption of the Mediterranean Diet and Lifestyle. This proposal will not only assess the scientific evidence supporting the diet but will also explore the cultural and environmental aspects that make the Mediterranean lifestyle a sustainable and effective health model.

Students will conduct in-depth, organized observations of community and global factors that threaten the preservation of the Mediterranean Diet, considering issues such as globalization, industrial agriculture, and urbanization. They will explore ways to raise awareness and promote actions that safeguard this UNESCO-recognized Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity for future generations.

The course will also offer hands-on learning, where students will prepare simple, and often Italian-inspired Mediterranean recipes, emphasizing the diet's nutritional values and principles of mindful eating. By integrating these practices, students will gain practical skills for cultivating a healthier lifestyle while honoring the rich cultural traditions that make the Mediterranean Lifestyle and associated diet a cornerstone of global wellness.

Learning Objectives

Below are the course's learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *Integrate* the literature provided, your personal experience in Perugia and the core dietary features of the Mediterranean Lifestyle into a personalized wellness plan (diet, physical activity, meal preparation and social engagement).
- *Compare and contrast* the Mediterranean Lifestyle's food habits, cooking, and cultural differences with global public health nutrition recommendations—with emphasis on USA guidelines.
- *Apply* public health principles and knowledge of epidemiological studies focusing on MD's chronic disease prevention to design ML inspired campaigns for diverse population groups and settings (e.g. urban and non-Mediterranean).
- *Perform* in-depth, organized observations of important cultural, social and environmental factors threatening the Mediterranean Lifestyle's health outcomes and promote global awareness to safeguard the benefits of this UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- *Communicate* research findings and personal observations through case studies, class roundtables/debates, and reflective writing on the global implications of the ML, particularly in light of globalization and contemporary health and environmental challenges.

Course Materials

Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course's Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

Assessment

Attendance	10%
One-On-One Prof Meeting	5%
Weekly Moodle Quizzes	20%
Course Reflective Journal	10%
In class assignments completion (in groups and individually)	25%
Final Projects - <i>Public Health Campaign and Personal Wellness Plan</i>	30%

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional Excellent
A-	90% - 92%	
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria.

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. If you attend all the meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance..

Weekly Online Quizzes (20%)

Students will be assigned a quiz every week, which will be due before class time and will not be reopened. The quiz will be on Moodle and it is not timed. Students can take the quiz as many times as they like, with the recorded grade being the average of the grades received each time. There will be a combination of *technical*, *methodological*, and *content questions*. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the readings. The technical questions will help students learn the class' policies and administrative procedures. The methodological questions will test on skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author's argument and assessing sources.

Reflective Journal (10%)

Students will need a notebook at the start of the semester, which they will use as a personal space through which to reflect on course material and ideas; alternately, they can use a Google doc or Word document for these entries. Journal entries are assigned on a weekly basis throughout the semester and the entries will be checked twice, once before the mid-semester break (Week 6) and again at the end of the course (Week 11). Each check is worth 5% of your grade, for a total of 10%. See the full prompt on Moodle for more information. The Reflective Journal must include at least three paragraphs about the main points of the assigned readings and/or videos for each week. It must also include entries (two paragraphs) that reflect upon ways you relate to the Perugia community, Italy, and its food culture, especially in relation to the Mediterranean Lifestyle. If you use a handwritten notebook be prepared to write in a legible and clear manner.

In class assignments completion (in groups and individually) (25%)

There will be several activities that will take place in class including: round table-reflections, group production of materials such as a Google docs, group role play consultations, quiz related to viewing a documentary, short-answers quiz at the end of the course. These activities are described in your syllabus and full instructions will be provided to you to make sure you are successful.

One-On-One Professor Meeting (5%)

Getting to know your professor makes you more comfortable with that person and therefore more likely to ask for help. It also might help for you to ask questions about the various assignments or discuss a paper idea. In this course, you get 5% of your grade for coming one time before Week 9 to office hours.

Final Project (30%)

The Public Health Campaign project and Personal Wellness Plan : These are practical projects that will engage your understanding of the course readings as well as your personal experience wrapped up in useful tools to promote the benefits of a Mediterranean Lifestyle both from a community (or global) perspective as well as on a personal level. *The Personal Wellness Plan* asks students to use the key features of the Mediterranean Lifestyle (ML) and prepare a three-day meal plan as well as a ML inspired physical activity and overall wellbeing plan. These projects are an exciting opportunity to put your knowledge and creativity to good use. Full prompts, as well as templates, and examples will be available on Moodle.

Extension & Submitting Late Work

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. This can be used for any assignment but the final project. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first two absences per course due to illness will be considered excused "sick days" and do not require medical

documentation. To receive additional excused absences due to illness, students are required to see a local physician or request a letter from an Institute-approved doctor documenting they should be excused from class for illness.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student's final course grade by 2% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower the students' grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness include death in the immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, and medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled.

Absences relating to illness may be excused by the Director, but only if a medical certification is provided.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually. Any student arriving up to 15 minutes late or leaving up to 15 minutes earlier than the scheduled class end time will be marked as tardy. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. However, should a student arrive more than 15 minutes late or depart more than 15 minutes before the conclusion of the class, it will be recorded as an absence.

Students are also expected to remain in class during the time of instruction except for a reasonable amount of time (no more than five minutes) to use the restroom. Students who leave class and do not return during the class session will receive an unexcused absence or late penalty.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism.

Should the Institute become aware of a student's use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Laptop & Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. As a general rule, the consumption of food in the classroom is not permitted. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the professor for specific cases, such as food tastings integral to the course content. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices (e.g., earbuds, smart watches) cannot be used during class lectures and discussions, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation. This policy also applies to earbuds and headsets.

As an instructor and minimally as a person, I need both my computer and my telephone to facilitate the accomplishment of some necessary tasks. That said: An ever-increasing body of research shows that open

laptops and telephones in the classroom create distraction (both visual and auditory) for those using them and those around them. You can type faster than you can write, and as a result you end up processing less when you're simply typing notes. For this reason, I have a physical notebook policy: I ask you to leave your computers in your bags and phones in your pockets and use a regular notebook. There are four exceptions: 1) if you have an accommodation; 2) if you're using a tablet to take notes, 3) if you make an office hours appointment with me to discuss the use of a computer; or 4) if we have an in-class tutorial about online research tools.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Introduction and Syllabus Review

Meeting 1: *Exploring your expectations for this course, getting to know each other and syllabus review. In Class Viewing and comments about:* Secrets of the Mediterranean Lifestyle. Laurent Amzallag. TEDTalk.

Meeting 2: *Mediterranean Lifestyle (ML) and the Mediterranean Diet (MD) as part of a broader lifestyle: physical activity, family, and social connections. Discuss the foods of the MD. What do you already know?*

Readings for the week: They will be included in Week 2 Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Amzallag, L. (Speaker). (2022, April 21). *Secrets of the Mediterranean lifestyle* [Video]. TEDxRockville. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3Uzo4G86sU> (16 min. - must view).

Diolintzi, A., Panagiotakos, D. B., & Sidossis, L. S. (2019). From Mediterranean Diet to Mediterranean Lifestyle: A Narrative Review. *Public Health Nutrition*, 22(14), (Pgs 2703–2713).

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. “Diet Review: Mediterranean Diet.” *The Nutrition Source*, 16 Jan. 2018, nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/healthy-weight/diet-reviews/mediterranean-diet/.

Recommended Reading and/or Viewing (optional)

Bond Brill, J. The Mediterranean Diet and Your Health. *The American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*. 2009;3(1): (Pgs 44-56).

Samaritan Health Services, & Teschner, C., RDN. (2022, February 21). *Mediterranean Diet 101*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPA9zgUUVc> (1 hour & 4 min.).

WEEK 2

Key aspects of the Mediterranean Lifestyle (ML) and Mediterranean Diet (MD).

Meeting 1: *Key components and foods of the MD. The class will discuss last week's readings on the different views of what ML is, and how to observe it and experience it in Perugia and in Italy. Students will be instructed on how to keep a Reflective Journal expanding on what is already described on the syllabus.*

Meeting 2: *Continue our discussion on the key components of the ML and diet such as regional differences, foods, political, economical, geographical, cultural, family, lifestyle realities. Become familiar with Old Ways Food Pyramid, History and Ancel Keys' studies. In class roundtable-reflection: what has been experienced so far in Perugia in relation to ML & MD. This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade.*

Readings for the week:

Bach-Faig, A., Berry, E. M., Lairon, D., Reguant, J., Trichopoulou, A., Dernini, S., ... & Serra-Majem, L. (2011). Mediterranean Diet Pyramid Today. Science and Cultural Updates. *Public Health Nutrition*, 14(12A), (Pgs 2274-2284).

Minelli, P., & Montinari, M. R. (2019). The Mediterranean Diet and Cardioprotection: Historical Overview and Current Research. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, 805-813.

Oldways. (2024, June 18). *Oldways Mediterranean Diet Pyramid - Oldways - Cultural Food Traditions*. Oldways-Cultural Food Traditions. (Reference).

Willett, W. C. (2006). The Mediterranean Diet: Science and Practice. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(1a), (Pgs 105-110).

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Recommended Reading and/or Viewing (optional)

Donini, Lorenzo M., Lluís Serra-Majem, Mònica Bulló, Àngel Gil, and Jordi Salas-Salvadó. "The Mediterranean Diet: Culture, Health and Science." *British Journal of Nutrition* 113, no. S2 (2015): (Pgs: S1-S3).

Houston Methodist, & Obeid, L., RDN.. (2024, August 14). *Mediterranean Diet: It's More Than a Diet, It's a Lifestyle*. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CS-emi_D-I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CS-emi_D-I;); (49 min. - optional viewing).

Visioli, F. (Presenter). (2021, February 1). *Living better, living longer: Healthy compounds found in a Mediterranean diet* [Video lecture]. Oregon State University Linus Pauling Institute. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KndWrss-QvI> (59 min. - optional viewing)

Serra-Majem, L., Tomaino, L., Dernini, S., Berry, E. M., Lairon, D., Ngo de la Cruz, J., Bach-Faig, A., Donini, L.

M., Medina, F. X., Belahsen, R., Piscopo, S., Capone, R., Aranceta-Bartrina, J., La Vecchia, C., & Trichopoulou, A. (2020). Updating the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid towards Sustainability: Focus on Environmental Concerns. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(23), 8758. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17238758>

WEEK 3

Social Connections and Mental Health: The Mediterranean Way. Holistic Benefits of the ML and MD with Simple Applications to Personal life.

Meeting 1: *What does a Holistic approach to health mean, and how does the ML fit in? How can you be the change you want to see in your community and be an advocate for overall health and wellness? In Class Experience: the healing function of nature in an urban setting.* Be prepared to add an entry on your Reflective Journal for this activity.

Meeting 2: *Lecture on cooking, typical meals, recipes, eating out and special occasions (shopping, meal preparation, meal time). Roundtable discussion on the readings for the week and reflections on the evidence for the holistic benefits of a ML and MD. Is it a sustainable, replicable model?*

Readings for the week:

- Christodoulou, E., Deligiannidou, G. E., Kontogiorgis, C., Giaginis, C., & Koutelidakis, A. E. (2024). Fostering Resilience and Wellness: The Synergy of Mindful Eating and the Mediterranean Lifestyle. *Applied Biosciences*, 3(1), 59-70).
- Ortega, R. M. (2006). Importance of Functional Foods in the Mediterranean Diet. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(8A), 1136-1140.
- Trichopoulou, A., Martínez-González, M. A., Tong, T. Y., Forouhi, N. G., Khandelwal, S., Prabhakaran, D., Mozaffarian, D., & de Lorgeril, M. (2014). Definitions and Potential Health Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet: Views from Experts Around the World. *BMC Medicine*, 1-16.

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry.. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Recommended Reading and/or Viewing (optional)

Olive Wellness Institute, & Dr. Marx, W. (2022, March 30). *Food and Mood: How the Mediterranean Diet and Extra Virgin Olive Oil Can Affect Mental Health*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoOMJAFdCvc> (1 hour & 10 min. - optional viewing).

WEEK 4

Epidemiology of the MD. Disease Specific Prevention using a ML and MD model. How to Disseminate these Findings to a Layperson.

Meeting 1: *We will discuss disease specific prevention using a ML and MD model and review key epidemiological studies including the Seven Countries Study, PREDIMED trial and MD's relationship with a variety of chronic diseases.*

Meeting 2: *We will continue our exploration of the health benefits of MD: weight, longevity, chronic diseases' prevention. Class will brainstorm on how to disseminate the ML and MD holistic health benefits based on readings and personal skills. In Class Group Activity: Students will create a google document and share their ideas. This activity contributes to your "In class assignments completion" grade.*

Readings for the week:

- Bifulco, M., & Caruso, M. G. (2007). From the Gastronomic Revolution to the New Globesity Epidemic. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 107(12), 2058–2060.
- Finicelli, M., Di Salle, A., Galderisi, U., & Peluso, G. (2022). The Mediterranean Diet: An Update of the Clinical Trials. *Nutrients*, 14(14), 2956. (Read only pages: 1-4; and pgs 15-16).
- Guasch-Ferré, M., & Willett, W. C. (2021). The Mediterranean Diet and Health: a Comprehensive Overview. *Journal of Internal Medicine*, 290(3), 549-563.
- Sofi, F., Macchi, C., Abbate, R., Gensini, G. F., & Casini, A. (2013). Mediterranean Diet and Health. *Biofactors*, 39(4), (pgs 1-7).

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry.. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Recommended Reading and/or Viewing (optional)

Western Region Public Health Training Center. (2015, March 5). *Updating Health Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet and Health: From the Hearth to the Earth*. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcNFrZLq8ZE> (50 min. - optional viewing).

WEEK 5

Public Health Approaches to Promoting the ML: an introduction.

Meeting 1: Discuss public health campaigns and the MD: effectiveness and challenges. In Class Group Activity: Students will continue working on the google document they created and share their ideas. This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade

Meeting 2: Focus on the role of nutrition education and policy in Mediterranean countries and globally. In Class Viewing and comments about: Mediterranean Diet, Our Legacy, Our Future. Elena Paravantes. TEDTalk. This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade.

Readings for the week:

- Belahsen, R., & Rguibi, M. (2006). Population health and Mediterranean diet in southern Mediterranean countries. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(8A), (Pgs 1130-1134).
- Degli Innocenti, P., Rosi, A., Bergamo, F., & Scazzina, F. (2024). Dietary and Lifestyle Intervention Strategies to Tackle Unhealthy Behaviours in the Mediterranean Countries. *International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition*, 75(5), 449-451.
- Dominguez, L. J., Di Bella, G., Veronese, N., & Barbagallo, M. (2021). Impact of Mediterranean Diet On Chronic Non-communicable Diseases and Longevity. *Nutrients*, 13(6), 2028. Read only pages: 1-10; 22-23.
- Echeverría, G., Tiboni, O., Berkowitz, L., Pinto, V., Samith, B., von Schultendorff, A., & Rigotti, A. (2020). Mediterranean Lifestyle to Promote Physical, Mental, and Environmental Health: the Case of Chile. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(22), 1-10.
- Paravantes, E. (Speaker). (2014, Aug 18). *Secrets of the Mediterranean lifestyle* [Video]. TEDxHeraklion.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Aoj4awQb9g> (17 min. - must view).
- Phull, S., Wills, W., & Dickinson, A. (2015). The Mediterranean Diet: Socio-Cultural Relevance For Contemporary Health Promotion. *The Open Public Health Journal*, 8, 35-38.

Assignments: Week’s reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

WEEK 6

Public Health Approaches to Promoting the ML: Designing Wellness Interventions Based on the Mediterranean Lifestyle

Meeting 1: We will talk about the role of nutrition policy and education in Italy and other Mediterranean countries and the barriers to adopting the Mediterranean Diet in other cultures. In Class Group Activity: Students will continue working on the google document they created and share their ideas. This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade.

Meeting 2: Creation of a public health campaign using a medium of choice (blogs, pamphlets, videos, etc.):

- Public health campaign to promote the Mediterranean Lifestyle in a non-Mediterranean country.
 - Public health campaign targeting a specific population (e.g., urban youth, seniors) promoting Mediterranean wellness practices.
- We will discuss details about this assignment. It is due on week 12 and will count as a final exam together with a Personal Wellness Plan (which will be assigned next week).

Readings for the week:

- CBS 17 News (Ed.). (2023, August 18). Mediterranean lifestyle study. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x3S-NJoaUY> (1 min. - must view).
- Dernini, S., & Capone, R. (Eds.). (2024). *Sustainable Food Systems Change of Route in the Mediterranean*. CIHEAM Bari. 100-107.
- Foscolou, A., Magriplis, E., Tyrovolas, S., Soulis, G., Bountziouka, V., Mariolis, A., & Panagiotakos, D. (2018). Lifestyle Determinants of Healthy Aging in a Mediterranean population: The multinational MEDIS study. *Experimental gerontology*, 1-7.
- Piscopo, S. (2009). The Mediterranean Diet as a Nutrition Education, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Tool. *Public Health Nutrition*, 12(9A), 1648-1654.
- Trichopoulou A. Mediterranean Diet, Traditional Foods, and Health: Evidence From the Greek EPIC Cohort. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*. 2007, 28(2): 236-240.

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Semester Break

WEEK 7

Compare the Mediterranean diet to US, European & World dietary guidelines; Compare US food habits and personal dietary habits to the Mediterranean diet.

Meeting 1 *We will explore how to evaluate and compare the MD with the dietary guidelines of the United States, European nations, and other global recommendations. We will compare Italian and U.S. food systems.*

Meeting 2: *Continue to investigate dietary guidelines and look at specific key components of the Americans guidelines as compared to their Italian equivalent. We will further investigate the cultural, nutritional, and practical aspects of the ML and MD, contrasting these with students' own dietary and holistic/general lifestyle. Students will be instructed on keeping a 3-day food, physical movement and general wellness journal/diary. All of the above will be instrumental for the completion of a Personal Wellness Plan which will be considered as the final exam equivalent together with the Public Health Campaign project.*

Readings for the week:

- Alexandratos, N. (2006). The Mediterranean Diet in a World Context. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(1a), 111–116.
- Bach-Faig, A., Berry, E. M., Lairon, D., Reguant, J., Trichopoulou, A., Dernini, S., ... & Serra-Majem, L. (2011). Mediterranean Diet Pyramid Today. Science and Cultural Updates. *Public Health Nutrition*, 14(12A), 2274-2282.
- Dernini, S., & Capone, R. (Eds.). (2024). *Sustainable Food Systems Change of Route in the Mediterranean*. CIHEAM Bari. (Read only pgs: 38-42; and pgs 148-154).
- Livemedia, & Kyriakides, T. Ph. D. (2021, November 11). *The US Food Industry: Spotlight On The Mediterranean Diet & Health Trends*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iuvEZuQsPQ> (22 min - must view).

Recommended Reading and/or Viewing (optional)

- Rossi, L., Canani, S. B., Censi, L., Gennaro, L., Leclercq, C., Scognamiglio, U., Sette, S., & Ghiselli, A. (2022). The 2018 Revision of Italian Dietary Guidelines: Development Process, Novelty, Main Recommendations, and Policy Implications. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 9.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020.(ix-x, 19-20, 142). Access at https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
- CrowdFarming. (2022, August 1). *What The Field?! Episode 8 - The power of the Mediterranean Diet - with Dr.Martínez-González*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxB2lrDlrZk&t=884s> (55 min - optional viewing).

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

WEEK 8

The Environmental and Cultural Factors Shaping the Mediterranean Lifestyle.

Meeting 1: *We will explore how globalization and modernization are altering traditional Mediterranean eating habits. What are your observations so far since you have been in Italy? In Class Viewing Activity and Quiz: Documentary viewing (one of Thomas Torelli's) followed by a related quiz. Quiz contributes to your "In class assignments completion" grade*

Meeting 2: *The "Americanization" of Mediterranean diets: processed foods and lifestyle changes.*

Readings for the week:

- Alberti-Fidanza, A., Fidanza, F. (2004). Mediterranean Adequacy Index of Italian Diets. *Public Health Nutrition*, 7(7), 937-941. (Reference, it will not be part of the Readings Quiz).
- Díaz-Méndez, C., & Gómez-Benito, C. (2010). Nutrition and the Mediterranean Diet. A Historical and Sociological Analysis of the Concept of a "Healthy Diet" in Spanish society. *Food Policy*, 35(5), 437-447.
- Reguant-Aleix, J., Arbore, M. R., Bach-Faig, A., & Serra-Majem, L. (2009). Mediterranean Heritage: An Intangible Cultural Heritage. *Public Health Nutrition*, 12(9A), (Pgs 1591–1593).
- Woodside, J., Young, I. S., & McKinley, M. C. (2022). Culturally Adapting the Mediterranean Diet

Pattern—A Way of Promoting More ‘Sustainable’ Dietary Change? *British Journal of Nutrition*, 128(4), 693-703.

Assignments: Week’s reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

Recommended but Optional

Future Food Institute. (2020, November 16). *Mediterranean Diet - Lifestyle for a Sustainable Future*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v684HJ1Mzzk> (59 min - optional viewing).

WEEK 9

Mediterranean Wellness in Practice – Beyond the Diet

Meeting 1: *We will address wellness holistically: sleep, mindfulness, relaxation, and stress reduction in Mediterranean cultures.*

Outdoors Activity: *Contact with nature the Italian way. Activity will vary according to the weather forecast. Be prepared to add an entry on your Reflective Journal for this activity.*

Meeting 2: No class (MPP & FSE Capstone Trips)

Readings for the week:

Chatzianagnostou, K., Del Turco, S., Pingitore, A., Sabatino, L., & Vassalle, C. (2015). The Mediterranean Lifestyle as a Non-Pharmacological and Natural Antioxidant for Healthy Aging. *Antioxidants*, 4(4), 719-729.

Lăcătușu, C. M., Grigorescu, E. D., Floria, M., Onofriescu, A., & Mihai, B. M. (2019). The Mediterranean Diet: From an Environment-driven Food Culture to An Emerging Medical Prescription. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(6), 942. 1-10.

Assignments: Week’s reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

WEEK 10

Physical Activity as an Integral Component of the ML.

Meeting 1: *We will look at the role of physical activity in maintaining health and vitality. We will focus on integrating movement into your daily life (e.g., walking, gardening, and other activities) inspired by a ML. Share your observations about the way Italians move in their daily activities and leisure moments.*

Assignment due at Meeting 2: *Design a short weekly physical activity plan for yourself or another person (friend, family member) inspired by the Mediterranean lifestyle. Guidelines on Moodle.*

Meeting 2: *Roundtable discussion about each student’s weekly physical activity plan.* Journal entry: students will write, in their own words, the main idea and/or argument of each article and be prepared for class discussion.

DUE: *Assignment from Meeting 1 (short weekly physical activity plan).*

Readings for the week:

Bellisle, F. (2009). Infrequently Asked Questions About the Mediterranean Diet. *Public Health Nutrition*, 12(9A), 1644–1647.

Bonofiglio, D. (2022). Mediterranean Diet and Physical Activity as Healthy Lifestyles For Human Health. *Nutrients*, 14(12), 2514. 1-3.

Chevalier, G., Sinatra, S. T., Oschman, J. L., Sokal, K., & Sokal, P. (2012). Earthing: Health Implications of Reconnecting the Human Body to the Earth’s Surface Electrons. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, 2012(1), 291541, 1-7.

Hsu, E. L. (2015). The Slow Food Movement and Time Shortage: Beyond the Dichotomy of Fast or Slow. *Journal of Sociology*, 51(3), 1-12.

Phull, S., Wills, W., & Dickinson, A. (2015). The Mediterranean Diet: Socio-cultural Relevance for Contemporary Health Promotion. *The Open Public Health Journal*, 8, 35-40.

Assignments: Week’s reflective journal entry due. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

DUE: *Assignment from Meeting 1 (short weekly physical activity plan).* This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade.

WEEK 11

Mediterranean (Italian Inspired) Meal Planning Based on OldWays Mediterranean Diet Pyramid and Italian Dietary Guidelines.

Meeting 1: We will further investigate the Italian Dietary Guidelines and OldWays diet pyramid. Regional differences of the MD's foods will be explored. Class Activity: In groups students will prepare a proposal for an Mediterranean inspired meal to share with family/friends/ social media or other venues they deem appropriate.

Meeting 2: No Class (Thanksgiving).

Readings for the week:

Medina, F. X., & Macbeth, H. (2021). *The Mediterranean Diet From Health to Lifestyle and Sustainable Future*. (Chapter 8, pgs 173-186).

Oldways. (2024, June 18). *Oldways Mediterranean Diet Pyramid - OLDWAYS - Cultural Food Traditions*. OLDWAYS - Cultural Food Traditions.

<https://oldwayspt.org/oldways-resources/oldways-mediterranean-diet-pyramid/> (Reference).

Dr. Anna Pleet. (2025, January 3). *Italy's Best Kept Secrets to Longevity [Mediterranean Diet Guide]*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHcCVPxF3MIC> (21 min - must view).

Rossi, L., Canani, S. B., Censi, L., Gennaro, L., Leclercq, C., Scognamiglio, U., Sette, S., & Ghiselli, A. (2022). The 2018 Revision of Italian Dietary Guidelines: Development Process, Novelities, Main Recommendations, and Policy Implications. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 9, 1-12. (Reference to use in class, not part of the Readings Quiz).

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

WEEK 12

Global Health: Mediterranean Lifestyle Beyond the Region and Adapting the Mediterranean Lifestyle in Diverse Contexts.

Meeting 1: We will discuss the spread of Mediterranean lifestyle practices and the potential for adopting Mediterranean-inspired lifestyles in different regions and cultures. In Class Group Activity: Students will reflect on their views of the ML looking back at the first day of class and now. What will change in their lives once back home? Full details will be provided in class. This activity contributes to your "In class assignments completion" grade.

Meeting 2: Brief discussion about public health interventions: challenges and opportunities. In Class Assignment: Answer specific questions in short paragraphs. Full details will be provided in class. This activity contributes to your "In class assignments completion" grade.

DUE: Submission of The Public Health Campaign and Personal Wellness Plan: both count as a final exam.

Readings for the week:

Burlingame, B., & Dernini, S. (2011). Sustainable Diets: The Mediterranean Diet As An Example. *Public Health Nutrition*, 14(12A), 2285-2286.

Caprara, G. (2021). Mediterranean-type Dietary Pattern and Physical Activity: The Winning Combination to Counteract the Rising Burden of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs). *Nutrients*, 13(2), 429. (Pgs 11-13).

Carvalho, G. P., Costa-Camilo, E., & Duarte, I. (2024). Advancing Health and Sustainability: A Holistic Approach to Food Production and Dietary Habits. *Foods*, 13(23), 3829. 1-10.

Martínez-González, M. A. (2016). Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet Beyond the Mediterranean Sea and Beyond Food Patterns. *BMC Medicine*, 14, 1-3.

Martínez-González, M. Á., Hershey, M. S., Zazpe, I., & Trichopoulou, A. (2017). Transferability of the Mediterranean Diet to Non-Mediterranean Countries. What Is and What Is Not the Mediterranean Diet. *Nutrients*, 9(11), 1226. (Pgs 7-9 only).

Phull, S., Wills, W., & Dickinson, A. (2015). The Mediterranean Diet: Socio-cultural Relevance For Contemporary Health Promotion. *The Open Public Health Journal*, 8, (35-38).

Woodside, J., Young, I. S., & McKinley, M. C. (2022). Culturally Adapting the Mediterranean Diet Pattern—A Way of Promoting More 'Sustainable' Dietary Change?. *British Journal of Nutrition*, 128(4), 696-700.

Assignments: Week's reflective journal entry due. Readings Quiz due on Moodle.

DUE: Submission of The Public Health Campaign and Personal Wellness Plan: both count as a final exam.

WEEK 13

Final Classes, Exams, & Special Academic Events

Meeting 1: In Class Group Activity: Prepare an “initial consultation” exploratory questionnaire for an imaginary client who needs a change in lifestyle due to various stressors in his/ her life. Full details and guidelines will be provided in class. This activity contributes to your “In class assignments completion” grade.

Group discussion about how to implement the ML utilizing key points from students' reflective journals. The focus will be on conviviality, social connectedness across the lifespan, purposeful living, a strong sense of community and family values, connection to nature and the environment, spirituality, local customs, resilience through adversity, and a sense of moderation in all aspects of life.

Meeting 2: Continue: group discussion about how to implement the ML utilizing key points from students' reflective journals. The focus will be on conviviality, social connectedness across the lifespan, purposeful living, a strong sense of community and family values, connection to nature and the environment, spirituality, local customs, resilience through adversity, and a sense of moderation in all aspects of life.

Course wrap up.

Readings for the week:

Lagom Holly, & Lagom, H. (2023, September 18). *Adopting A Mediterranean Mindset: Healthy Habits To Bring To Your Everyday*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iNW9hq-32A> (12 min - must view).

Medina, F. X. (2021). Looking for Commensality: on Culture, Health, Heritage, and the Mediterranean Diet. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(5), 2605. 1-7.