



RUTGERS

School of Public Health



HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY

School of Health Sciences & Education
Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Food and Mediterranean Culture

May 29 to June 9, 2023

Athens, Nafplion and Kalamata, Greece

Food tells a unique story about people, places and perspectives. By understanding what drives people to eat the foods they do, we can gain insight into the broader factors that influence nutrition and health outcomes of populations around the world. The overarching aim of this course is to provide in-depth knowledge and analysis of food production and consumption in the Mediterranean region using a food systems approach. Students will learn about the components of the Mediterranean Diet pattern, its health, economic, social and environmental considerations and trade-offs, as well as how to measure its adherence. Through a combination of in-class lectures and experiential learning, students will gain a deep understanding of the historical, cultural and culinary aspects of food production and consumption in the Mediterranean region.

The summer school with the title "Food & Mediterranean Culture" will be held from May 29 to June 9, 2023 in Athens, Greece, with a field trip to Nafplion and Kalamata, in the area of Peloponnese. It is a joint effort between Harokopio University in Athens, Greece and Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA. By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical, cultural & culinary aspects of food consumption within the Mediterranean region
- Describe the Mediterranean Diet model and its health & environmental implications
- Measure & critically analyze adherence to the Mediterranean Diet model
- Analyze the ways in which local food systems can better support the production & sale of food resources in accordance to a Mediterranean lifestyle
- Formulate strategies to promote a Mediterranean lifestyle in both Greece & the United States

Some important facts about the course:

- ▶ A number of 32 graduate students will participate, 16 students from Rutgers University and 16 from Harokopio University.
- ▶ The course duration is 2 weeks, equivalent to 135 lecture hours, providing 3 US



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credits and 4.5 ECTS

- ▶ The first week of the course will be in the establishments of Harokopio University in Athens Greece and the second week will be a field trip to the area of Peloponnese.
- ▶ The Canvas application, hosted by Rutgers University, will be used by all participants as an electronic resource of e-learning.
- ▶ A grading scheme of 100pts will be applied for the evaluation of the students upon the class participation and performance.
- ▶ The course grades will be based on reflections, group work, a final paper and class participation
- ▶ All the students that successfully completed the course will receive a certificate signed by the legal representatives of the Rutgers School of Public Health and the Harokopio University School of Health Sciences & Education

The lectures of the course include the following thematics:

- The Mediterranean Diet pattern: A model constructed by scientists
- Measuring adherence to the Mediterranean Diet pattern
- Sustainability and the Mediterranean Diet pattern
- Environmental and cultural impacts of food consumption in the Mediterranean Food systems and the diet in Greece
- Foods of ancient times based on archeological findings
- Overview of the Mediterranean Diet pattern and health
- Overview of "value added" foods in Greece
- Alcohol and health
- Fats, oils and health
- Production practices and sustainability
- Culinary aspects of the Mediterranean Diet
- Food habits in the Mediterranean area. History and evolution

Group works will have the purpose to:

- Examine the food environment in Athens and in Peloponnese
- Compare and contrast med diet pyramid with US Dietary Guidelines
- Compare and contrast different med diet adherence tools
- Compare dietary and culinary patterns between countries in the Mediterranean region and other regions worldwide



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Tentative parallel activities include:

- ▶ Visit at the National Archaeological Museum (including a mini lecture on site)
- ▶ Visit at the Acropolis Museum in Athens
- ▶ Guided tour at the Museum of Olive and Olive oil in Sparta
- ▶ Visit at an olive oil processing plant
- ▶ Guided tour at a local winery (including a mini lecture)
- ▶ Visit at the Ancient theater and Asklepion at Epidaurus
- ▶ Visit at the medieval city of Mystras
- ▶ Culinary activities

Coordinators:

**School of Public Health, Rutgers
Biomedical & Health Sciences, Rutgers,
The State University of New Jersey,
New Jersey, USA**

Shauna Downs, Assistant Professor,
Department of Urban-Global Public Health
Marian Passannante, Associate Dean for
Educational Program Development;
Professor Department of Biostatistics and
Epidemiology

Joachim Sackey, Assistant Professor,
Department of Clinical and Preventive
Nutritional Sciences

Christine Oller, Global education programs
coordinator

**School of Health Sciences & Education,
Harokopio University, Athens, Attica,
Greece**

Antonia-Leda Matalas, Professor in
Nutrition Anthropology

Vaios Karathanos, Professor in Food
Engineering

George Boskou, Associate Professor in
Food Service Management & Organization

Tzortzis Nomikos, Associate Professor in
Biochemistry, Chairman of the coordination
committee for post-graduate studies

Eleni Sofou, Secretary for the post
graduate programs

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