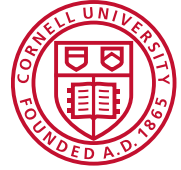


# Cornell Cooperative Extension Cornell Garden-Based Learning



## Online Horticulture Course FAQs

### General Questions

#### *Q 1: Is this course provided online?*

A: The course is offered fully online, yes. Students should have basic knowledge of how to use a computer. No previous experience with online courses is necessary. All assignments take place through an online interface, and all student work is uploaded there.

#### *Q 2: I live outside of the United States. Can I enroll in this course?*

A: Yes, we welcome students from around the world participate in our online courses. International students add a unique perspective to the course environment.

If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have specific questions not addressed in course description or syllabus, please contact the course instructor in advance of your registration.

#### *Q 3: Do you offer a scholarship or discounted prices for students, Cornell/CCE staff, etc?*

A: Thank you so much for asking about a scholarship. Here in Cornell Garden-Based Learning, everything we do is for the public good- all our curricula and resources are online and free. The exception is these distance learning courses, for which we must charge a fee, which we believe is reasonable for the considerable content and skills gained. We rely on the fees from these courses to support the rest of our programs, and as such, are not able to offer any reduced fees. We appreciate your inquiry.

#### *Q 4: Can I pay with my AmeriCorps Education Award?*

A: Maybe. Registration and enrollment is not through the traditional bursar approach but via credit card payment or check (more information on [Registration Details](#) page). We do not know the current AmeriCorps Education Award policy but in the past recipients needed to work through the Cornell University bursar. You may find that a [Cornell Financial Aid Advisor](#) might be able to help you use the award. You must contact the advisors yourself. Also note that making arrangements with the bursar does not automatically save you a spot in a course you must communicate with the course instructor regarding your registration.

#### *Q 5: Do I have to be accepted into Cornell University in order to join this course?*

A: You do not have to be accepted into Cornell University to participate in the course. The course is a non-accredited course designed for non-matriculated adult learners who wish to expand their knowledge of the topic, often for their own enrichment.

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.

**Q 6: Does this course count towards college credit?**

A: No, the course is a non-accredited course designed for adult learners who wish to expand their knowledge.

**Q 7: Can I access course content after the course is complete?**

A: No, much like a traditional classroom in which, once you leave the room, the course is over, when this course is finished, you are responsible for keeping any records you wish, since the course is 'cleared,' or re-set for the next group of participants.

**Q 8: Can I take the course on my iPad or iPhone?**

A: It is not recommended, since students have encountered difficulty doing so. In addition, it may be helpful to be aware that you will need a recent version of an internet browser, such as Firefox or Internet Explorer.; acrobat reader, so that you can read pdfs; and a working scanner, which you will use to scan your work, save it in jpg or pdf format, and upload to the interface.

**Q 9: Is there a refund policy if I enroll and then change my mind?**

A: Yes, you'll find our refund policy on the [Registration Details](#) page on the Horticulture distance learning website. It states: If you choose to withdraw any time prior to the end of the introductory period before the start of Lesson 1, you can receive a refund, less a \$150 processing fee. This fee applies to each course dropped.

**Q 10: I know that each course offers an opportunity for reflective writing and a student forum. Why?**

A: As John Dewey so famously said, we learn not just from our experience, but from reflecting on it. It is a requirement to engage in at least a full page of reflective writing weekly. While some students initially balk at this, most appreciate how, with time, the reflection helps to deepen their course experience.

The student forum is a way to share resources and get to know one another. Although sharing your work with others is not required, some students also appreciate the chance to offer their work for celebration and feedback from others.

## **Organic Gardening/Intro to Garden Design Classes**

**Q 1: I am also interested in the Organic Gardening course, which is being offered during the same weeks. Do you suggest taking both courses at the same time? Or one before the other? If so, which one first?**

A: We have had students take both courses concurrently, though that is uncommon because both courses take up a considerable amount of time. For Garden Design, students dedicate about 15 hours per week and for Organic Gardening it is 5-10 hours per week. Together it will be like having a full time job for 6 weeks! If you have that kind of time to put forth then you could take the courses at the same time.

If you would rather choose just one course, it depends on your goals. Are you hoping to learn more about organic gardening so that you can grow fruits and vegetables? In Organic Gardening the emphasis leans toward food gardening. Or are you hoping to redesign an area of your landscape? In Intro to Garden Design you will redesign an area of your landscape: from site assessment to plant selection to planting. Or are you a brand new gardener who doesn't quite know what their goal is? Then I'd start with Organic Gardening.

**Q 2: Is there a follow up class after the Introduction to Garden Design class?**

A: At this point in time we do not offer a more advanced garden design course.

Have you already taken the Introduction to Garden Design course? Our courses are designed for adult learners from all levels. Participants set their individual goals they would like to accomplish. Even if you have some garden design experience, the course could still help you develop new skills.

Or you might be interested in pursuing the suite of Permaculture course offerings as a way to deepen your design knowledge.

**Q 3: In the Organic Gardening course, are the students required to plot a spec of land and begin actual gardening as part of the course?**

A: I would say that having access to land is a key part of the course. If you do not have access, it is not a deal breaker but you may not get all that the course has to offer. We do several hands-on site assessment activities such as establishing soil texture and other key site characteristics. Other activities include creating a garden design and planting plan.

If you do not have access to your own plot of land, could you use a nearby park or community garden as your practice area? I have had students participate in the course that way. I'll also mention that last year I had a student from South Korea who focused on a container garden on her high-rise balcony. Though she wasn't able to fully participate in some aspects of site assessment, she still learned much from the course.

**Q 4: In Organic Gardening, I understand that I will be designing the garden and such, but am I planting?**

A: Participants develop designs and planting plans but do not have to actually plant as part of the Organic Gardening course. Participants tune in from all around the world, we recognize that students may be experiencing different seasons during the course and that planting may not be possible.

However, you would be doing different site assessment activities in the plot of land which requires some digging (to gather soil samples), measuring, and general observing of the landscape. These activities are in the first couple of weeks of the course.

We find that the hands-on and real-world design draft activities allow students to actually apply the course materials that they are reading and learning about.

**Q 5: Would I have better chances of getting a job with this certificate at a garden center?**

A: The course is non-accredited. You do receive a Certificate of Completion but it is not an official certification of any type. Though you will gain knowledge of organic gardening, I can't guarantee that it will be helpful in getting a job at a garden center. I encourage you to reach out to a garden center and ask what qualifications they expect employees to have.

## **Botanical Illustration Classes**

These progress from the first course for beginning drawing students, to a course for beginning watercolor students, and lastly, an advanced techniques course. The first two are highly supportive, with individualized guidance. The latter has those qualities, and at the same time, moves at a faster pace, through diverse media, focusing much more on scientific accuracy. Students leave the course with an electronic portfolio of their work.

**Q 1: I am already an advanced drawing student. Do I need your permission to take a different course?**

A: You may enter into this suite at any point you like! Some students take one, some take all three. It's your choice, based on your needs.

It may also be helpful to know that some advanced drawing students take the beginning drawing course, for the discipline, and as a refresher, to get back into the habit of drawing. This holds true for the beginning watercolor course, too. We encourage you to choose the course that most suits your needs and strive to individualize the experience for you.

## **Permaculture Design Classes**

**Q 1: Do I need to take the Permaculture Fundamentals course before Ecosystem Mimicry?**

A: No. You may choose an order that best suits your availability and interest. There are no prerequisite requirements for admission into these two courses in permaculture design. The prerequisite for the Permaculture Design Practicum course is that you must have taken either the Permaculture Fundamentals or Permaculture: Ecosystem Mimicry Course (or both) to register for the Practicum.

**Q 2: How do I get the Permaculture Design Certification through Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute?**

A: Participants who complete all lessons and assignments in the three Permaculture courses are eligible to submit a portfolio to Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute to receive the Permaculture Design Certification. This certification is recognized around the globe and would be a useful addition to any resume especially for those looking to complete international development work (e.g. Peace Corps) and enter the fields of ecological and landscape design or various land management and fieldwork positions. See the right sidebar on the [Permaculture courses pages](#) on the Horticulture distance learning website for the link to a PDF file that provides more details.

Learn More: <https://hort.cals.cornell.edu/extension-outreach/distance-learning/> Published: June 20, 2018.