

Faculty mentor: Erika Szymanski, Department English, College of Liberal Arts
Erika.Szymanski@colostate.edu

Extension: Tony Koski, Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, College of Agricultural Sciences
tony.koski@colostate.edu
Alison Stoven O'Connor, Extension horticulture agent for Larimer County
Astoven@larimer.org
Emily Alligood, Larimer County Farmers' Market Coordinator
ealligood@larimer.org

Region: Larimer County

Goals, scope, and objectives

This internship project will investigate how community members value the Larimer County Farmers' Market, connecting to Extension programmatic areas in community development; food systems; individual, family, and community well-being; nutrition, food safety, and health. The intern will design and run a "pop-up" market stall where they will engage market visitors in object elicitation interviews, valuation experiments, directive drawing, sketch research, sensory prompts, and other participatory research exercises. They will gather multimodal data, including text, images, and sound. They will employ ethnographic methods, including participant ethnography as a market volunteer. If time allows, they may also conduct micro-interviews with businesses in Old Town near the market. With the faculty mentor, they will apply relational science and technology studies (STS) and valuation studies lenses to making sense of how visitors value the market.

The intern will gather data on several Saturday mornings in June and July. Before collecting data, they will work with the mentor team to design research interventions in line with market needs and constraints. During and after the data collection period, they will use qualitative coding techniques to identify themes and directions for further research. After the data collection period, they will synthesize results into a multimodal report and an executive summary for market stakeholders. The intern will be expected to identify and read relevant published research throughout the project to support their work.

This project was identified through collaborative discussion among the mentoring team, who observed that very little research has been conducted on the Larimer County Farmers' Market, and that a qualitative approach could help understand how the market functions as a community resource and community space.

Stakeholder groups: Community members who interact with the Larimer County Farmers Market, including market volunteers; market vendors; Larimer County Extension

Student learning outcomes: The intern will become familiar with designing qualitative participatory data collection exercises, coding and synthesizing qualitative data, and presenting results with stakeholder needs in mind. The internship will provide professional development opportunities in project design, networking, collaborative research with community members, and writing for multiple audiences.

Mentoring style: I adjust my mentoring style to be more or less hands-on depending on the needs of the mentee, but I always prefer to maintain an informal relationship in which mentees feel free to ask for help when they need it, share ideas, and take initiative.

Travel funds: Because the primary internship field location is in Old Town Fort Collins, minimal travel will be required.