

SUST 215 → Food Systems

Course held at: [Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College](#)
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Overall Course Goal: In Food Systems we examine food production, distribution, and utilization through the lenses of economics, policy, sociology, and human health. We utilize first-hand experiences through field trips, speakers, and volunteer opportunities to delve into issues surrounding food processing, packaging, distribution, consumption, and waste. We consider how morals, ethics, and/or spiritual beliefs influence decision making as well as how we can organize and take action towards a just and equitable food system.

Course Learning Objectives: During this course we will...

1. Conduct field trips and interact with guest speakers involved in the processing, packaging, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food
2. Investigate the past and present of agricultural policy in America, its effects on the people and the landscape, and the central institutions, agencies, and stakeholders that have brought (and continue to bring) about these changes
3. “Pull back the curtain” surrounding the American Food System to gain a first hand account
4. Work hand-in-hand with professionals and organizations to gain a deeper and more nuanced view of food access and social/environmental justice and how it relates to food
5. Explore the motivations and beliefs that underlie decision making for diverse participants in the food system
6. Intentionally reflect on our own personal food ethic

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course students will be able to...

1. Construct a cohesive and persuasive argument to advocate for change in the food system to local, regional, or state policy makers as well as corporate or local business entities
2. Generate a personal manifesto that reflects their own nuanced understanding of the food system and their relation to it and it's varied parts
3. Identify [leverage points](#) where effective change can realistically be implemented.
4. Extract and articulate insights from experiences in the food system through intentional reflection and writing
5. Develop skills in critical thinking, leadership, team building, and problem solving through directly applying skills in a real world context

Prerequisites: This course is intentionally taught from an experiential and field-based perspective to welcome learners from multiple disciplines from multiple institutions. While no specific content knowledge is expected prior to this course, any coursework in chemistry, ecology, or sociology is useful.

Required Materials and Readings: Readings will be posted regularly online on the [Course Schedule](#). These will come from textbooks, popular books, research papers, extension documents, non-profits, and governmental agencies

Assignments

Assignments	5@25 pts	125 pts
Reflection Journal	2@30 pts	60 pts
Political Action	1@50 pts	50 pts
Student Roundtable	1@30 pts	30 pts
Lunch & Learn Report	1@30 pts	30 pts
Exam	1@100 pts	100 pts

TOTAL 395 pts

Grading:

Final percentages equate to the following letter grades:

		A	94-100%	A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%	B	84-86%	B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%	C	74-76%	C-	69-73%
D	60-68%	F	<60%		

Course Schedule: The course schedule can be found [here](#), it will evolve throughout the semester