Advanced Academic Programs
Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences
Johns Hopkins University

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Sustainable Food Systems
Fall 2016

Instructor

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Office Hours: by appointment via Skype, FaceTime, Adobe Connect, or telephone

Note: All emails from me to you and back will use the JHU system. If you use a different email system, be sure to forward your JHU account to that other address. During the week I will do my best to respond to your email inquiries within 24-36 hours; on weekends and when I am travelling (which I will inform you of) it may take up to 48 hours for a response.

Course description

This course will consider the environmental and social challenges of providing a sustainable global food system. We will investigate the geographic patterns of agricultural and food production systems, emphasizing contemporary patterns and how these came to be. Attention will be given to agricultural systems from the local to the global scale and we will consider the global distribution of production and consumption of agricultural products. The impacts of global change issues such as climate change, energy crops, population growth, and urbanization on food production will be also be part of the course.

Course prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

Course format

This course will consist of weekly lessons that will include short presentations, narrated PowerPoints, readings, multi-media presentations, quizzes, and threaded discussions, which help integrate material that you are learning. The course will engage videos and external websites and other media that discuss sustainable food practices as appropriate. We will have a virtual field excursion to a Shenandoah Valley farm that practices sustainable agricultural practices and works with consumers as a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm. There will not be a synchronous event in this course. I have designed this course so that you will become aware of the many facets of a sustainable food system at the global, regional and local scales. Each student will be asked to focus on a particular crop throughout the semester as a way of focusing and integrating material and will present their research as a short Lightning-style talk using Voice Thread at the end of the semester. At least one simulated contribution to the JHENS blog will be an expected as part of the course. Students are encouraged to be alert to any sustainable food related news items they encounter as there will be mechanisms available in the class to share these with others.
Course Learning Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1) Describe and explain the spatial and temporal dimensions of food production;
2) Identify the environmental impacts of the prevailing global food system on natural and human resources;
3) Summarize and explain future trends in the global food system, particularly the impacts of global environmental change on agricultural systems, and the changes in human societies on food consumption;
4) Describe and assess personal values associated with food choice;
5) Communicate about agricultural and food systems in written formats by writing concise summaries, syntheses, and critical evaluations of academic and popular media accounts about food;
6) Explain the components of a sustainable food system; and
7) Construct possible solutions to environmental challenges inherent in the food system.

Course materials

This course uses the following textbooks. Both are available via the JHU bookstore as well as through online sources or your favorite bookstore. An e-version of either book is perfectly acceptable.


Additional weekly readings will be assigned and made available through the Blackboard course site in .PDF format. Readings not from the textbook are found in the e-Reserves section of Blackboard. Other assigned readings will be made available as soon as possible but no later than one week before they are required.

Stream all of “Food Inc.” (movie)

Video clips on YouTube.com – creative commons and public domain, vimeo.com

VoiceThread (free software) needed for Crop Presentation (provided via Blackboard)

Specific Technology Requirements & Skills for this Course

Learning online requires some basic knowledge of computer technology. At a minimum, you need to be able to:

- Navigate in and use Blackboard; the Blackboard Student Orientation course on your “My Institution” page
- Create and save MS Word documents; see MS Word tutorials for PC users (all versions); Word Help for Mac users
- Find basic resources on Internet; see Internet Tutorials
- Create and organize files & folders on your computer
- Send, receive, and manage email
Course etiquette

I expect students to behave professionally in this course and to be respectful of the learning process that occurs as the course progresses. Communication in discussion threads with classmates, any communication with the instructor, and any guest discussion leaders should be conducted in a professional manner being cognizant of the medium in which it occurs (see more on Netiquette below). Email with the course instructor and a classmate is not the same as sending text messages to your friends. Please follow proper format (salutation, text with proper grammar and capitalization, and closure) in all course correspondence. I do not respond to messages that are in texting format. Please put the course number in the subject line of any email communication.

Netiquette

This is an online course so please remember that discussion posts and other writings submitted to the course should be well-written, professional, courteous, thoughtful, and useful. Under no circumstances will uncivil discussions be tolerated. Should you feel uncomfortable with anything that someone else writes, please let me know privately and I will take appropriate action. Some guidelines:

1. Check the discussion frequently and post responses appropriately.
2. In each of your posts, focus on one subject. Use additional posts if necessary. Use the subject titles appropriately.
3. Since your classmates cannot see your face, think carefully about how your words might be read. Sometimes subtle humor in a post reads in unintended ways. Be careful and thoughtful before you post.
4. If you are posting an exceptionally long response, please warn the participants at the beginning of the post. It is better if you can think through your ideas and keep them cogent and to the point.

Assessments and Grading Policy

Course requirements

Your performance in this course will be evaluated through a variety of assessments, including participation in threaded discussions, reports, a blog contribution, quizzes, a policy memo, and a Lightning-style presentation delivered using VoiceThread. Details on how to complete each assignment will be provided. I will provide feedback on all graded assignments within 7 days and results will be posted to the ‘My Grades’ section of the Bb site for the course.

A. Participation in threaded discussions

I will initiate a weekly threaded discussion related to the topic of the week and I expect you to participate in a meaningful way usually at least twice per week (there are few that are just once) with entries of 50 – 300 words of original content and a follow-up contribution. By meaningful I mean making an original and thoughtful contribution to the thread(s) and in any responses not simply agreeing with previous comments but crafting a thought-through response. Note: Unlike many other online courses in the ESP program I do not rely as heavily on threaded discussions, and although I do initiate them and participate, I do so only lightly as I expect them to be mostly a dialogue between students. N.B. postings to the discussions may NOT be made up as these are to be ‘in the moment’ as they unfold. Realize that I will drop your lowest score (I count only 12 of 13 opportunities to contribute to the discussion), so this means that you need not participate for a week of your choice during the semester.
B. Reports
Reports are short exercises that ask you to find materials, review reading materials, or to otherwise engage course material. The exact format of these will vary on a weekly basis but they should be no longer than 2 pages in length (single-spaced) and need to be submitted via Blackboard or sometimes part of it as a wiki or via VoiceThread (or both).

C. Blog entry
One assignment in the course requires you to write a simulated entry to the JHU Environment, Energy, and Climate News (JHEECN) blog. The focus should be on an environmental issue related to food production. Whether or not you actually submit to the JHEECN blog is up to you.

D. Quizzes
Quizzes will consist of a mixture of objective questions and short answer questions. These will be open book but timed. More information about the quizzes will be provided during the week preceding it and specific dates for the quizzes are provided in the course schedule.

A note on cheating: I consider cheating to be the copying of other student’s answers and/or assisting others when an assessment should be completed individually. I do NOT tolerate cheating. Cheating will result in a failed grade for the course.

Quiz make-up policy: A make-up quiz will be offered ONLY to those who have made previous arrangements with me. Should a life circumstance occur at quiz time, you need to contact me by email or telephone to let me know you will miss and need a make-up AS SOON AS YOU CAN BUT NO LATER THAN 24 hrs AFTER THE QUIZ WAS AVAILABLE.

E. Crop Presentation
This is a semester-length project that culminates in a Lightning-style talk (or Pecha-Kucha or Ignite), a short, tight, presentation of about 6 minutes, with limited PowerPoint slides, on a particular crop (e.g. where it was domesticated, how it was/is used, where it grows today, how it is used, how much of it is produced and how, who eats it, and especially its sustainability and any environmental issues associated with its production). I use assignments throughout the semester to help you gather parts of the material for the presentation so that you are working on it throughout the semester. Complete details are provided in the Crop Project and presentation assignment description. It is highly recommended that you use JHU library resources, including a consultation with a librarian, for the completion of this report.

F. Food Policy Memo
This assignment asks you to prepare a policy brief on food policy, specific topic of your choice. Specific and complete instructions will be provided in the assignment, which will be made available several weeks before it is due so that you can work ahead.

Course grading
Assignment and activity due dates are listed in this syllabus and the weekly checklists. Assignment due dates can also be found within the Assignment Guidelines area of the course Bb site. The instructor will announce any changes via an announcement in Blackboard. Note: Unless arranged prior to assignment due date, 1 point per day will be deducted if an assignment is submitted late, and participation in the threaded discussions cannot be ‘made-up’ or completed late as these need to be completed while ‘in the moment’ of the course. This will be specified in the individual assignment guidelines.
Your grade will be calculated using the following point system:

- Personal introduction via VoiceThread: 05 points
- Crop selection wiki: 02 points
- Websites relevant to the course wiki: 02 points
- AAP plagiarism module completion: 04 points
- Participation in threaded discussions (12@3 points per week available): 36 points
- Reports (1@6 pts; 3 @10 pts; 2@15 pts): 66 points
- Simulated JHEECN blog entry: 15 points
- Quizzes (4@10 pts ea): 40 points
- Policy memo: 15 points
- Lightning-style presentation about your crop: 15 points

Total: 200 points

The following grading scale will be used in this class (the JHU-AAP grading scale):

- 98–100% A+
- 94–97.9% A
- 90–93.9% A-
- 88–89.9% B+
- 84–87.9% B
- 80–83.9% B-
- 70–79.9% C
- <70% F

Extra credit will not be available.

Course Protocols

How will I know about changes to the course?
Any changes to the course are posted via Announcements in Bb. Please check announcements every time that you log into the Bb.

How should I communicate with others in this course?
You should communicate often with your classmates and with your instructor. The majority of communication will take place within the Discussion forums. When you have a question about an assignment or a question about the course, please contact your instructor, or post your question in the course’s ‘Syllabus & Assignment Question’ forum.

Are there any requirements for sending email messages?
When you send an email message to the instructor or to another participant in the course, please observe the following guidelines:

- Include the title of the course in the subject field (e.g., Sustainable Food Systems).
- Keep messages concise, and check spelling and grammar.
- Send longer messages as attachments.
- Sign your full name (the sender’s email is not always obvious).

University Policies

General
This course adheres to all University policies described in the academic catalog. A few to pay close attention to are noted below.

JHU Ethics Statement: The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the use of other people’s work presented as one’s own, without proper attribution. Note: The cutting and pasting of text from sources (print or electronic) without proper attribution is a form of plagiarism and is not acceptable. Also realize that even with proper attribution cutting and pasting long pieces of text is not the same as your own writing and synthesizing the material, so please be sure to synthesize and cite referenced material. Do not just provide a list of quoted text. Also be careful with the use of images found on the internet, ALWAYS reference its source even if from a ‘commons’ source such as ‘Creative Commons.’ You would not want someone using your photos without noting that they came from you, so think about that as you find images on the web. Lastly ‘using’ or ‘borrowing’ other people’s PowerPoint presentations without acknowledging its source this is also a form of plagiarism.

If you are unsure of how to properly attribute references, please be sure to consult the JHU library guide or contact the course instructor. As part of this course you are required to complete a JHU-AAP module on plagiarism during Week 2, it is worth 4 points. Please pay attention to what it demonstrates; don’t just click through it.

I do NOT tolerate plagiarism and anyone who plagiarizes either an entire paper, website, or parts thereof will be subject to a FAILED grade for the course. I expect your knowledge and adherence to the JHU Code of Conduct note especially the existing policy on plagiarism.
Dropping the Course

You are responsible for understanding the university's policies and procedures regarding withdrawing from courses. And you should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information on deadlines is available on the AAP Academic Calendar. Note that this semester's Drop/Switch to Audit deadline in November 4, 2016. After that time you will be graded for the course. Although I am open to Incompletes, I am open to them only if there is an emergent issue at the very end of the course and you cannot complete the Crop Presentation or Quiz 4. If you cannot keep up with the course then you should drop it as an incomplete is not appropriate for making up numerous weeks of the course.

Students with Disabilities

Johns Hopkins University is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities should contact the coordinator listed on the Disability Accommodations page. Further information and a link to the Student Request for Accommodation form can also be found on the Disability Accommodations page.

Requesting accommodations before the semester is preferable, but not required. The student should submit the Request for Accommodation Form prior to the beginning of each semester (s)he is registered to ensure that accommodations continue for that semester. Depending on the accommodation, there may be a time delay before accommodations can be implemented. For further questions please contact aapdisability@jhu.edu.

Getting Help

You have a variety of methods to get help on Blackboard. Please consult the help resources listed in the online classroom for additional information.

Important Note: If you encounter technical difficulty in completing or submitting any online assessment, immediately contact the 24-hour Help Desk. Also, contact your instructor at the email address listed atop this syllabus.

Course Topics, Activities, and Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be provided via an Announcement and within the Lesson as necessary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Assessments and Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/29-9/4</td>
<td>Introduction to the course and each other</td>
<td>• Sage, Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;• Foley, J. 2014. <em>A Five-Step Plan to Feed the World</em>, <em>National Geographic Magazine</em>, May.&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins video intro to the class.&lt;br&gt;• Jon Foley's TED talk, October 2010.</td>
<td>• Student self-introduction via VoiceThread (5 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Report #1 (6 pts) [Websites and crop]&lt;br&gt;• Crop Selection wiki (2 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Websites for Course wiki (2 pts)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9/5-9/11</td>
<td>What is a Sustainable Food System? Unpacking the terminology</td>
<td>• Sage, Chapter 2&lt;br&gt;• Review two videos about Michael Pollan’s new Food Rules&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s video&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt</td>
<td>• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Report #2 (10 pts) [Exploring the FAO website]&lt;br&gt;• Completion of AAP plagiarism module (4 pts)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9/12-9/18</td>
<td>Resources for agriculture: What needed to grow food?</td>
<td>• Sage, Ch. 3.4 (only section 4 of this chapter)&lt;br&gt;• Read and learn about soil health on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) website.&lt;br&gt;• Climate distribution around the world website&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s video&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt</td>
<td>• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Quiz #1 (10 pts) [Covers material from weeks 1-3]</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/19-9/25</td>
<td>Types of agricultural systems around the world</td>
<td>• Sage, Ch. 3 (all except section 3.4)&lt;br&gt;• Millstone and Lang, pgs. 50-53&lt;br&gt;• Turner, B.L. and S. Brush. 1987. Ch 2 – The Nature of Farming Systems and Views of their Change, in <em>Comparative Farming Systems</em>, pp. 11-48. The Guilford Press: New York (in e-reserves)&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s video&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt</td>
<td>• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Report #3 (10 pts) [Conditions for your crop]</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10/3-10/9</td>
<td>Industrial Ag/Green Revolution/ GMOs</td>
<td>• Millstone and Lang, pgs. 42-49&lt;br&gt;• Snapp, S.S., et al. 2013. Biodiversity Can Support a Greener Revolution in Africa. <em>Proceedings of the National Academies</em> DOI 10.1073/pnas.1007199107&lt;br&gt;• The Economist 2013, Farming as Rocket Science: Why American Agriculture is Different from the European Variety. 9/7/2013 print edition.&lt;br&gt;• Pimentel, D. et al. 2008. Reducing Energy Inputs in the US Food System. <em>Human Ecology</em> 36: 459-471.&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s video&lt;br&gt;• Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt</td>
<td>• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Quiz #2 (10 pts) [Covers material from weeks 4-6]</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/10-10/16</td>
<td>The Corporatization of Food</td>
<td>• Sage, Refresh Ch. 2&lt;br&gt;• Millstone and Lang, pgs. 36-39; 84-87; 90-91&lt;br&gt;• Pollan, M. 2016. Big Food Strikes Back. <em>New York Times Magazine</em>, October 9.&lt;br&gt;• Stream the <em>Food Inc.</em> movie</td>
<td>• Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)&lt;br&gt;• Simulated JHEECN Blog Entry (15 pts)</td>
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<td>10/17-10/23</td>
<td>Challenges in Global Food Production</td>
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<td>- Sage, Chapters 4 and 6.5 (section 5 ONLY)</td>
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<td>- Millstone and Lang, pgs. 23-25; 62-63</td>
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<td>- Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated powerpoint</td>
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<td>- Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)</td>
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<td>- Report #5 (15 pts) [Climate change]</td>
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<td>10/24-10/30</td>
<td>Food Security in an Urban World</td>
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<td>- Sage, Ch. 7 (pgs. 280-282 ONLY)</td>
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<td>- Millstone and Lang, pgs. 54-55, Urban Farming</td>
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<td>- Dr. WinklerPrins’s video</td>
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<td>- Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt</td>
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<td>- Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)</td>
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|    |             | - Quiz #3 (10 pts) [
|    |             | Covers material from weeks 7-9] |
| 10 | 10/31-11/6  | The Local Food Movement |
|    |             | - Sage, Ch 5, Ch 6.7 (section 7 only) |
|    |             | - Dr. WinklerPrins’s video |
|    |             | - Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated ppt |
|    |             | - View the virtual field trip to the Sinclair CSA farm |
|    |             | - Short oral report using VoiceThread (3 pts) |
|    |             | - Report #6 written summary (15 pts) [
|    |             | Visiting a Farmer’s Market] |
| 11 | 11/7-11/13  | Food Policy |
|    |             | - US Farm Bill ("Agricultural Act of 2014"), summary |
|    |             | - Millstone and Lang, pgs. 60-61; 65-77; 88-89 |
|    |             | - Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts) |
|    |             | - Start Food Policy Briefing Memo |
| 12 | 11/14-11/20 | Towards a Sustainable Food System | Sage, Ch. 6 (remainder), Ch. 7  
Millstone and Lang, pgs. 82-83  
Dr. WinklerPrins’s video  
Dr. WinklerPrins’s narrated powerpoint | Contributions to the threaded discussion (3 pts)  
Submit Food Policy Briefing Memo (15 pts) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 11/21-11/27 | Thanksgiving - Enjoy the eating! | Quiz #4 (10 pts)  
[Covers material from weeks 10-12] |
| 14 | 11/28-12/4 | Crop presentations | Dr. WinklerPrins’s Lightning-style presentation about the food for Thanksgiving  
Prepare and deliver a lightning-style presentation about your crop recorded in VoiceThread (15 pts) |
| 15 | 12/5-12/11 | Listening to and commenting on each other’s presentations | Reaction classmates crop reports within VoiceThread  
[acts like threaded discussion] (3 pts) |