

FS 101, NFS 113:

Food Policy and Politics University of Vermont

Monday and Wednesdays 3:30pm- 4:45pm

3 credits

Location: 101 Stafford Hall

Instructor

Dr. Terence Bradshaw tbradsha@uvm.edu

802-656-0972

Office Hours, 210 Jeffords:

Monday and Wednesday 1:00-3:00 PM, Tuesday
8:30-9:30 am, or by appointment

*Unless circumstances change, I am happy to meet
in-person or via Teams.*

Teaching Assistant (grading)

Kate Breimann Catherine.Breimann@uvm.edu

Course Overview:

The food system contains a complex mix of relationships, stakeholders, and feedbacks that operate across a diversity of goals. For example, farmers and agricultural systems may aim to maximize productivity and minimize costs while consumers seek to purchase food with minimal environmental impacts and maximum health benefits. Vice versa, many consumers lack the capacity to purchase or access food, which may be at odds with farmer goals of accessing high-end, niche markets with specialty products.

These complexities are intertwined with sweeping sets of policies that influence the food system across many attributes from food safety to environmental conservation to nutrition. These policies affect the food system across many different scales of government from local to federal to global. To have a clear understanding of the global food system across many sectors it is crucial to also connect these sectors and actors to the policies that influence their decision-making and behaviors. This enables us to analyze how food system stakeholders influence and drive the policy process.

This is a systems course that will focus on understanding the food policy process, the policymakers, stakeholders, issues, goals and feedbacks at the interface of food policy and politics. Students will learn through a variety of experiential and hands-on methods and approaches including course games and exercises, policy analysis, direct policy engagement, and case studies. The course is designed so that students will have a clear understanding of the policy and regulatory process in the United States and across other policy systems globally and for students to critically assess the relationships between policymakers, policies and food system stakeholders.

Course Modality:

This course will be delivered in an *In-Person, Synchronous* format. Students are expected to attend all class meetings, and the material will be delivered to the audience in the classroom. We will stream and record each class on MS Teams, but those are intended to be archives for later revisiting, or a resource for students with an excused absence, and not the standard way to engage with course meetings.

Course Goals and Objectives:

This course will provide students with a systems perspective on food policies and politics across the entire food system. Often food policy courses focus on one particular aspect- either nutrition or agricultural policy- this course will provide overview of all aspects of food policy.

Students will achieve the following learning objectives:

- Define the policy process and policymakers for creating, implementing and enforcing state, federal and international laws, regulations and policies (The Food Policy Process)

- Identify multiple food system stakeholders and how they interact in policy systems to affect the food system (The People in the Food Policy Process)
- Describe the issues facing the food system and their potential policy interventions (The Problems the Food Policy Process Attempts to Change)
- Demonstrate through critical policy analysis how policy interventions may affect multiple components of the food system (The Feedbacks in the Food Policy Process)
- Participate in the policy process through public comment, regulatory or legislative avenues (The Politics of the Food Policy Process)

Course Reading and Materials:

- Food Policy in the United States: An Introduction. 2018. Park Wilde. (Required reading; available online through UVM Library: <http://voyager.uvm.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=5229421>).
- Food Politics. (2013 edition). Marion Nestle. (On reserve at Howe Library; readings will be posted online)
- Food Politics. 2018. Robert Paarlberg. (On reserve at Howe Library; readings will be posted online)

The course readings will be made available on the blackboard site, with the exception of the Food Policy in the United States book, which is the required textbook. It is available for download from the library, and hard copies can be purchased online including at the following:

- Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1138204005/ref=db_a_def_rwt_bibl_vppi_i1
- Half.com: <https://www.ebay.com/itm/FOOD-POLICY-IN-THE-UNITED-STATES/332674898337?epid=242728227&hash=item4d74f819a1:g:60wAAOSwru9bFV82>

News and Blogs:

Food policy is happening all the time. For this reason we will start every class with an open discussion of current news in food policy. These discussions are part of your expected participation. To stay up to date you may want to browse some blogs on current agriculture and food policy topics. These include:

- Politico [Morning Agriculture](http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture) (blog of Politico, one of the leading newspapers on Capitol Hill) (<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture>)
- Marion Nestle's blog [Food Politics](http://www.foodpolitics.com/) (she's a nutrition professor) (<http://www.foodpolitics.com/>)
- Jason Lusk's [blog](http://jaysonlusk.com/) (he's a food and agriculture economics professor) (<http://jaysonlusk.com/>)
- Park Wilde's [US Food Policy blog](http://usfoodpolicy.blogspot.com/) (he's an economist/food policy professor) (<http://usfoodpolicy.blogspot.com/>)
- Marc Bellemare's [blog](http://marcfbellemare.com/wordpress/) (he's an agricultural economics professor) (<http://marcfbellemare.com/wordpress/>)

Course Expectations and Evaluation

In Class Expectations

This is an interactive, hands-on and engaged course. Students are expected to be active learners and will participate in many activities both within and out of class that give you an understanding of our policy systems and politics in action. As a result, active engagement in class is required to be a successful learner.

Attendance Policy and Classroom Environment Expectations:

All students are expected to attend class and participate in discussion. Students are specifically expected to attend, arrive on time, and show respect for guest speakers who are often volunteering their time. Tardiness

and absences will affect the professionalism component of your grade.

- Of course, we will be flexible around any COVID-related health or quarantine issues. However, the pandemic may not be used as a blanket excuse for poor participation.
- If you are ill and missing only one day of classes, you can contact class professor by e-mail directly and leave a clear message including your name, and that you are ill and will be missing the class.
- If you are ill for 2 or more classes or experiencing a personal problem that will cause you to miss more than a day of classes, you must contact Whitney Northrop in the CALS Student Services Office or Student Services in your college. They will notify the instructors for you, but you will also need to work with your instructors to discuss their expectations in reference to your absence.
- It is important that you as the student (not your advisor and not your parent) contact Student Services directly if at all possible. By doing so, we will have a very clear understanding of the nature of the illness or problem and how we can best help you.

This is a political course, which means that people will be expressing their political opinions through debate, class discussions, MS Teams polls, and in other ways. To facilitate a learning experience, which includes understanding diverse perspectives, it is crucial that we first and foremost respect a difference of opinion. I am deeply committed to creating a learning environment in which a diversity of political opinions is welcome and accepted as part of a learning experience. To achieve that, all students are expected to respect their peers, Dr. Bradshaw and their TA by listening to different perspectives even if they do not hold the same opinion or belief. Debate is a natural part of politics, but debate will always be conducted with respect in this class.

Out of Class Expectations

Politics and policy can be a very formal process with a high degree of professionalism. In this class it is highly likely that you will be engaging with policymakers and other professionals working within the policy system or working to influence the policy system. It is expected that you represent yourself, our course and UVM with the highest level of professionalism in these instances. Furthermore, please consider these aspects when interacting with Dr. Bradshaw, TAs and others in email exchanges.

Citing Appropriate Sources

For your assignments you will be expected to use proper citations and scientific and research sources appropriate to the policy topic that you choose. While some aspects of the assignment may provide an opportunity for you to give your opinion on a topic, much of the assignment requires research and sources that should be properly cited. Please use the APA citation style for all assignments (see: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>)

Student Learning Accommodations:

The primary goal for this course is for students to achieve learning objectives, not to meet deadlines and complete assignments. That said, the framework provided by the coursework and due dates is important to help us achieve that goal. It is important for students to complete readings and assignments on-time and to be prepared for class discussions. However, I understand that not every student learns the same way, and we all come into this course with other responsibilities that don't go away when we walk through the classroom door. If a short-term accommodation or adjustment to an assignment or deadline will improve your success in this course, by all means please speak to me about it. *This does not mean that I will reward laziness. Flexibility is not a replacement for you completing the coursework and maintaining the trajectory of the course.*

If you have a more substantial need than a minor adjustment to course requirements, and in keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact SAS, the office of Disability Services on campus. SAS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations, which are communicated to faculty in an

accommodation letter. All students are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty to discuss the accommodations they plan to use in each course. A student's accommodation letter lists those accommodations that will not be implemented until the student meets with their faculty to create a plan.

Contact SAS:

A170 Living/Learning Center

802-656-7753;

access@uvm.edu

www.uvm.edu/access

Blackboard and other electronic communications:

Students are expected to pay attention in class and to not use electronic communications for non-course purposes. However, we are well-into the 21st century and computers and phones are critically important methods for acquiring and sharing information. We will use MS Teams polls during class meetings to provide input on certain topics, so the ability to contribute in real-time will be valuable. Please bring your laptops or phones to use for these purposes. Cell phones should always be muted in class, and thumbs should not be idly scrolling screens. Please read this technology check list to make sure you are ready for classes. <https://www.uvm.edu/it/kb/student-technology-resources/>. Students should contact the Helpline (802-656-2604) for support with technical issues.

This course uses three digital platforms. UVM Blackboard (BB) is the primary tool for course management and all materials will be posted, assignments submitted, and grading conducted via that system. Assignments should not be turned in as paper copies unless otherwise stated. *Assignments will not be accepted via cloud services such as Google Docs. Please read that again.*

All course meetings will be streamed to the MS Teams NFS113A U S Food Policy and Politics channel. We may also use Teams for breakout sessions and group small collaboration. Our class sessions will be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back to, and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the chat feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.

Finally, we will use Yellowdig (YD) in lieu of bb Discussion Board for asynchronous discussions and community-building. YD should be accessed from within BB.

Guest Speakers:

The inclusion of guest speakers provides a seminar component to this course, and introduces students to people who are involved in agriculture and agriculture policy that you might not otherwise have access to. Guest speakers are donating their time to this course. Please show them respect, and plan to be in-class by 3:30 on guest lecturer days.

Paid Note-taking

Students: There are third-party websites that offer class notes for payment. You have the right to buy these notes. However, please know that these third-party websites are not affiliated with UVM, this course, or Dr. Bradshaw. As such, Dr. Bradshaw cannot attest to their quality or accuracy. Further, Dr. Bradshaw knows that many students have limited resources and some students have extremely limited resources, which is why

you do not have to pay any additional money to take my class and be successful. I offer FREE textbooks at the library, suggest discount options for buying textbooks, and post FREE study guides, worksheets, and every power point slideshow on Black Board. Dr. Bradshaw and your TA offer office hours every single week. If you come to class regularly, take your own notes, and utilize the free/cheap resources, you shouldn't need to pay for anything in the course beyond UVM tuition.

Paid-Note Takers: As a paid note taker for a third-party site, you are within your rights to do this. However, you should know that there are limits of your enterprise at UVM. Please read the linked policies to learn more about what this means and the potential consequences. It is against [UVM's technology policy](#) for you to market your services to other students using any UVM network (email, Black Board, etc). In addition, [UVM's Intellectual Property policy](#) states that you are not permitted to share materials that are considered the professor's intellectual property. These kinds of actions could result in potential for judicial action at UVM. *Dr. Bradshaw DOES NOT give you permission to share his intellectual property, including, but not limited to power point shows, syllabi, professor written notes, worksheets, quizzes, exams, assignments, or study guides. You MAY share your personal handwritten or typed notes based on his lecture or your reading.*

Course Evaluation

Component	Percent of Grade	Total Points	Due Date
In-Class Participation (including attendance, activities, MS Teams polls, discussion board, and unannounced quizzes)	10%	150	
In-Class Policy Debate	15%	150	(See additional information)
Policy Memo	10%	100	Due September 26
Midterm	20%	200	Wednesday October 20
Direct Policy Participation Assignment	3% (Prospectus) 12% (Full assignment)	150	Prospectus Due October 3. Full assignment due November 28
Final Exam	20%	250	Tuesday December 14 4:30pm- 7:15pm in Stafford 101.

Specific evaluation components

In Class Participation

You are expected to attend class; however, I do not formally take attendance. Instead, your participation will be determined by your participation in class in the following ways: 1) your presence and participation if you are called on directly in class; 2) MS Teams polls; 3) your participation in discussion during class of current news events related to politics and 4) your participation in class activities and quizzes, which will be mostly unannounced. Other activities in class may be announced or unannounced ahead of time. If you are not in class and have not previously alerted me to your absence you will not be given credit for these assignments. In some instances it may be necessary to miss class including for student athletes, religious holidays or because you are sick. These instances require either medical documentation (in the case of your illness) or prior discussion with the instructor. If you know you will miss class for religious holidays or athletic travel you must notify Dr. Bradshaw by the end of second week of class.

In Class Policy Debate and Activities

We will frequently have in class activities and all of you will be participating in an in-class debate on a specific

food policy issue once in the semester. Your debate position will be assigned to you and you will be required to argue points from that perspective, regardless of whether it is your own opinion. You will be given a number of articles or other sources to consider in writing your perspective. A written overview of the position will be turned in prior to class and you along with others who have the same position to argue will debate against those with an alternative perspective in class and help facilitate a class discussion. There will be five total debates, and students will be assigned to their respective debates during the second week of class.

Policy Memo

Understanding the policy process of how a bill becomes a law, and the many steps in between, is critical for success in this class. To facilitate that, your first assignment will be to choose a current U.S. Congressional bill, research the bill and its intentions, and to develop a policy memo on the bill and its potential path to becoming a law. Additional details will be given out prior to the due date.

Direct Policy Participation Assignment

It's hard to understand the policy process or politics without experiencing it. You will be required to participate in the policy process in some way during this course and to document your experience from the beginning to the end. The options for policy participation are varied- they could involve writing a public comment, attending a hearing and testifying, meeting with a legislator or regulator or their staff to discuss your concerns on a food policy issue or others as we can determine together. Through this assignment you will actually experience what it is like to be involved in the process itself, rather than a bystander. It is important to know that you will not be graded on your perspective that you wish to express in this process, but rather, your engagement in doing so. In other words- your politics are your own and you can express what you want that reflects your own political views. You will be graded on your participation, documentation and reflection on the process- not your politics. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangement with the Instructor. You will turn in a one page prospectus at the end of September for approval. This is to help you plan your activity for participation early on in the semester; many of these potential options require significant planning and coordination.

Exams

A mid-term exam will be given halfway through the course and a comprehensive final exam will be given in the course that will assess your understanding of the course objectives and assignments and the materials we learned and discussed in class. The final exam date for this course is Tuesday December 14 from 4:30pm until 7:15pm in Stafford 101. Note that final exam dates are NOT flexible. These dates are set by the Office of the Registrar and cannot be changed.

Grading policies

Specific rubrics will be given out prior to the Policy Memo, debates, and the direct policy participation assignment so that you are aware of the grading process.

- ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE EACH SUNDAY BY midnight.
- All grading will be completed on Blackboard. Grading rubrics for assignments will be available and viewable.
- Late assignments: As an iterative and reflection-driven course, it is important to keep up with the assignments. Assignments will automatically be deducted 10% of the total grade for each day late. No assignments will be accepted after five days unless the absence has been approved by CALS Student Services. *Please read that again.*
- This course uses the standard Blackboard grading schema to convert numeric to letter grades. Numeric grades are not rounded to the next highest integer: an 89.99 is not a 90.

GRADING SCHEMA USED FOR THIS COURSE

	minus (-)		plus(+)
A	90-93.9	94-96.9	97-100
B	80-83.9	84-86.9	87-89.9
C	70-73.9	74-76.9	77-79.9
D	60-63.9	64-66.9	67-69.9
F		<60	

- As a rule, I do not negotiate with students over minor grade corrections on assignments. For every student who feels they received a subjectively low grade on an assignment, there are multiple students who likely received a subjectively high grade. If you feel like there was an egregious grading error on any given assignment, by all means discuss it with me, but it is highly unlikely that the grade will change unless a strong and compelling case is made. In my experience after assigning hundreds of course grades, any student can achieve a high grade in my courses by simply staying up on readings, attending and participating in class, and completing assignments on-time and according to the instructions. *Please read that again.*
- If you would like to contest a grade, please follow the procedures outlined in this policy: <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/gradeappeals.pdf>.
- For information on grading and GPA calculation, go to <https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/grades>.

Additional UVM Policies and Resources

Academic Integrity

The policy addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating.

<https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

University Grading Policy

For information on grading and GPA calculation, go to www.uvm.edu/academics/catalogue and click on Policies for an A-Z listing.

UVM Writing Center

The University provides a Writing Center in 105 Bailey/Howe Library. The center can help make writing less stressful by providing students with a tutor and writing resources.

Make _____ an _____ appointment:
<http://www.uvm.edu/wid/writingcenter/?Page=tutorsandschedule.html&SM=submenu5.html> Resources for writing: <http://www.uvm.edu/wid/writingcenter/tutortips/scienceproftips.html>

Final exam policy

The University final exam policy outlines expectations during final exams and explains timing and process of examination period. <http://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/academicinfo/examsandgrading/>

Code of Student Conduct:

<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/studentcode.pdf>

FERPA Rights Disclosure:

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the rights of students regarding access to, and privacy of their student educational records as provided for in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974.

<http://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/academicinfo/ferparightsdisclosure/>

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to complete an evaluation⁷ of the course at its conclusion. Evaluations will be

anonymous and confidential, and that the information gained, including constructive criticisms, will be used to improve the course.

COVID 19 Policy

General statement regarding potential changes during the semester:

<http://catalogue.uvm.edu/>

The University of Vermont reserves the right to make changes in the course offerings, mode of delivery, degree requirements, charges, regulations, and procedures contained herein as educational, financial, and health, safety, and welfare considerations require, or as necessary to be compliant with governmental, accreditation, or public health directives.

Green and Gold Promise:

The [Green and Gold Promise](#) clearly articulates the expectations that UVM has for students, faculty, and staff to remain compliant with all COVID-19 recommendations from the federal CDC, the State of Vermont, and the City of Burlington.

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines policies related to violations of the Green and Gold Promise. Sanctions for violations include fines, educational sanctions, parent notification, probation, and suspension.

Religious Holidays:

Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. If you need to miss class to observe a religious holiday, please submit the dates of your absence to me in writing by the end of the second full week of classes. You will be permitted to make up work within a mutually agreed-upon time.

<https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/religious-holidays>

Promoting Health & Safety:

The University of Vermont's number one priority is to support a healthy and safe community. Resources that may be helpful include:

UVM CALS Student Services

<https://www.uvm.edu/cals/student-services>

Center for Health and Wellbeing:

<https://www.uvm.edu/health>

Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS)

<https://www.uvm.edu/health/CAPS>

Phone: (802) 656-3340

C.A.R.E.

If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380). If you would like to remain anonymous, you can report your concerns online by visiting the Dean of Students website at

<https://www.uvm.edu/studentaffairs>