



## **CDAE /FS 321**

### **The Economics of Sustainable Food Systems**

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- Use email as primary means of contacting me
- I generally check email 2-3 times a day M-F 8am-4pm, and will try to respond within a few hours of those times
- Please do not expect responses other times
- Call only to inform me of missed assignment or absence from class, and *only if email is not possible*

Office hours: by appointment

### **Overview**

This course will present and use common economic tools, ideas and applications to analyze issues concerning the sustainability of food systems, using a combination of readings, lectures and discussions. Particular focus will be placed upon private (individual and collective) and public policy strategies and their impacts on sustainability across the production, consumption and distribution of food, and tradeoffs or ambiguities across goals and outcomes.

## **Objectives.**

Upon completion of this course, students will understand and apply basic economic concepts (e.g., utility and profit maximization, efficiency, market failures, property rights) to production, consumption and distribution issues, demonstrating how individual, collective and policy choices impact the sustainability of the US food system. Students will also be better able to read and critically interpret scholarly and popular writings on the topic of food systems with regards to issues of sustainability.

## **Format:**

The course will be based primarily on discussions based on readings, with supplementary lectures and multimedia. Students will be expected to lead discussions based on articles of interest as well as participate frequently (e.g., several times per class) in discussions

## **Grading (100 points total)**

Class participation and exercises: 20 points

Exams: 80 points (40 points each for midterm and final)

Students should regularly check Blackboard to ensure they are getting proper credit for each assignment. Any request for changes must be made within three weeks of assignment's due date.

**Attendance** : You are expected to attend every class session. I reserve the right to subtract one point from your final grade for every unexcused absence.

**Religious Holidays**: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester.

**Academic Honesty**: Students are expected to be familiar with the [UVM Code of Academic Integrity](#).

## **UVM Academic Integrity Standards:**

1. All ideas, arguments, and phrases, submitted without attribution to other sources, must be the creative product of the student. Thus, all text passages taken from the works of other authors must be properly cited. The same applies to paraphrased text, opinions, data, examples, illustrations, and all other creative work. Violations of this standard constitute **plagiarism**.

2. All experimental data, observations, interviews, statistical surveys, and other information collected and reported as part of academic work must be authentic. Any alteration, e.g., the removal of statistical outliers, must be clearly documented. Data must not be falsified in any way. Violations of this standard constitute **fabrication**.
3. Students may only collaborate within the limits prescribed by their instructors. Students may not complete any portion of an assignment, report, project, experiment or exam for another student. Students may not claim as their own work any portion of an assignment, report, project, experiment or exam that was completed by another student, even with that other student's knowledge and consent. Students may not provide information about an exam (or portions of an exam) to another student without the authorization of the instructor. Students may not seek or accept information provided about an exam (or portions of an exam) from another student without the authorization of the instructor. Violations of this standard constitute **collusion**.
4. Students must adhere to the guidelines provided by their instructors for completing coursework. For example, students must only use materials approved by their instructor when completing an assignment or exam. Students may not present the same (or substantially the same) work for more than one course without obtaining approval from the instructor of each course. Students must adhere to all course reserves regulations, including library course reserves, which are designed to allow students access to all course materials. Students will not intentionally deny others free and open access to any materials reserved for a course. Violations of this standard constitute **cheating**.

The principle objective of The University of Vermont policy on academic honesty is to promote an intellectual climate and support the academic integrity of The University of Vermont. Academic dishonesty or an offense against academic honesty includes acts which may subvert or compromise the integrity of the educational process at The University of Vermont. *Offenses against the Code of Academic Integrity are deemed serious and insult the integrity of the entire academic community. Any suspected deliberate violations of this code are taken very seriously and will be forwarded to the Center for Student Ethics & Standards for further investigation.*

### **General outline**

- Food Systems Definitions and Issues
- Economic Concepts
- Micro view: outcomes and impacts
- Macro view: outcomes and impacts
- Production
- Community and embeddedness
- Consumption
- Distribution
- Transaction Costs and Strategic Partnerships

- Farm to Institution
- Food Hubs
- Policy
- Finance, Metrics and Entrepreneurship