
Instructor: Zach Conrad, PhD, MPH

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Adair Hall 303B

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Office hours: by appointment

Course description: This course presents the fundamental concepts that link food policy with human nutrition at the population level. The main areas of emphases are: how national-level food policies are created and implemented, the effects of these policies on the health of large populations, and epidemiologic approaches to collecting and analyzing nutrition data.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe how food policy is developed
- Describe the effects of food policy on human nutrition
- Explain how nutrition data are collected from large populations
- Explain how food policy is informed by epidemiologic nutrition research

Required text: Wilde, Parke. Food Policy in the United States: An Introduction. 2nd Edition. Routledge. Available at the William & Mary bookstore.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

COLL 200 designations

This course is anchored in the Cultures, Societies, and the Individual (CSI) domain, but reaches out to the Natural World and Quantitative Reasoning (NQR) domain for at least 10% of its content. The primary emphasis of this course is the means by which cultural-political factors influence the development and implementation of food policy, which places it squarely within the CSI domain. Additional emphasis is placed on the effects of this cultural decision-making (i.e. food policy) on health and disease outcomes among large populations, including the nutritional etiology of disease, which reaches out to the NQR domain. Students will also learn how nutrition research contributes to food policy formation and resultant disease prevalence/incidence, which reaches out to both domains.

Cultures, Societies, and the Individual (CSI): Courses in this domain examine the realm of human cultures, societies, and individuals through their development, organization, and interaction. Some courses employ mathematical modeling, statistical analysis, and scientific experimentation; some, the analysis of artifacts and texts; and others, observation, inference, and extrapolation. Students learn to describe, theorize, and explain human cultures, societies, and individuals in their variety over time and space.

Natural World and Quantitative Reasoning (NQR): Courses in this domain examine the natural world and physical universe and the means by which humans observe, measure, model, and interpret it. Courses explore the process of scientific discovery,

including the methods required to gather and assess empirical data, investigate the predictions of existing theories, and develop experimentally testable hypotheses. Courses may also focus on mathematical or computational methods as applied to these investigations. Students develop their understanding not only of the foundations, implications, and uses of scientific knowledge but also how scientific approaches can be used to create tangible products.

Add/drop deadline: February 4, 2022

Withdraw deadline: March 28, 2022

Grading:

| Assignment/test | Points | Due/completion date |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| Assignments (×5) | 25 | 2/8, 2/24, 3/24, 4/14, 5/3 |
| Section tests (×4) | 60 | 2/15, 3/3, 3/31, 4/21 |
| Final exam (not cumulative) | 15 | 5/17, 2-5pm |
| Total | 100 | |

Grading system: This course grades on a 100 point scale, and each 10 point increment represents a threshold for a distinct letter grade. Within each letter grade, minus (-) is awarded for up to 2.5 points above the lower threshold, and plus (+) is awarded for up to 2.5 points below the upper threshold. All grades are rounded to the first decimal place. For example, B- is 80 to 82.4, B is 82.5 to 87.4, and B+ is 87.5-89.9 points. 92.5-100 is an A.

Description of activities/assignments/assessments:

Assignments: Near the end of each section you are asked to submit a single question about anything related to nutrition that you want an answer to. Questions can include (but are not at all limited to) clarifications of material that we've covered, questions about material that we won't cover, media coverage of certain topics, my opinions about certain topics, etc. I will answer as many questions as possible during the subsequent class in an **AMA session**. Importantly, any questions that I answer can be included on the next test. You will receive full points if you submit a genuine, thought-provoking question; and you will receive zero points if your question is clearly not intended to elicit a thoughtful response (e.g., "what do you think about nutrition?"). 20 percentage points will be deducted if submitted within 24 hours after the due date, and an additional 20 percentage points will be deducted for each additional late day (20 percentage points is equivalent to 1 out of 5 points on the assignment). You will submit your questions via Blackboard by 11:59pm on the due date. Five submissions are worth 5% each, totaling 25% of your final grade.

Section tests are designed to assess depth of knowledge of each section. These typically include 20-30 multiple-choice and true/false questions, and each question is worth the same number of points. All tests are open note and open slides, but do not use the textbook or any other material (including online sources). 10 percentage points will be deducted if submitted within 24 hours after the due date, and an additional 10 percentage points will be deducted for each additional late day (including weekends). Tests submitted after five late days will not be accepted and will be graded as 0%. All tests will be completed on Blackboard. Tests will open

at 12:01am and will be due by 11:59pm on the due date, you will have two hours to complete the test once you begin, and it will auto-submit at the two-hour mark. Four tests are worth 15% each, totaling 60% of your final grade.

The **Final exam** is designed to assess depth of knowledge of the final section in the course (it is not cumulative). It will include 20-30 multiple-choice and true/false questions, and each question is worth the same number of points. The final exam is open note and open slides, but do not use the textbook or any other material (including online sources). It will be completed on Blackboard and will be due by the date and time specified in this syllabus, and is worth 15% of your final grade.

Course schedule:

| Date | Topic | Readings (ranges are inclusive) | Due/completion dates |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Introduction to course | | | |
| 1/27 | Introduction to course | | |
| Section 1: Drivers of Food Policy | | | |
| 2/1 | Food systems | Posted readings | |
| 2/3 | Making food policy | Chapter 1 | |
| 2/8 | U.S. Farm Bill | Chapter 8.6.1 and Posted readings | Assignment #1 |
| 2/10 | AMA #1 | | |
| 2/15 | Test | | Test: Section 1 |
| Section 2: Farm Policy and Food Prices | | | |
| 2/17 | Genetic engineering and sustainability | Chapter 3 | |
| 2/22 | Farm subsidies and labor | Chapter 2 | |
| 2/24 | Food prices | Posted readings | Assignment #2 |
| 3/1 | AMA #2 | | |
| 3/3 | Test | | Test: Section 2 |
| Section 3: Regulating the Food Chain | | | |
| 3/8 | Trade and processing | Chapters 4 & 5 | |
| 3/10 | Retail and restaurants | Chapter 6 | |
| 3/22 | Labeling and advertising | Chapter 9 | |
| 3/24 | Food safety | Chapter 7 | Assignment #3 |
| 3/29 | AMA #3 | | |
| 3/31 | Test | | Test: Section 3 |
| Section 4: Nutrition Assistance Programs | | | |
| 4/5 | Food security | Chapter 10 | |
| 4/7 | Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) | Chapter 10 | |

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|--|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4/12 | Nutrition assistance programs for children | Chapter 11 | |
| 4/14 | International humanitarian assistance | Posted readings | Assignment #4 |
| 4/19 | AMA #4 | | |
| 4/21 | Test | | Test: Section 4 |
| Section 5: Turning Research into Policy | | | |
| 4/26 | Nutritional epidemiology | Posted readings | |
| 4/28 | Making dietary guidance | Chapter 8 | |
| 5/3 | Nutrition disparities | Posted readings | Assignment #5 |
| 5/5 | AMA #5 | | |
| 5/17 | Final exam | | Final exam: Section 5 (15%) 2-5pm |

Laptop and phone policy: If you bring your laptop/tablet to class I expect that you are using it to take notes. The problem with using your laptop for non-class activities is that it is distracting to other students who can see your screen (and to yourself) – and it can also be distracting to me! The same goes for your phone – please don’t use it at all during class. If there is an emergency during class and you need to use your phone, please step outside of the classroom so others aren’t distracted.

Attendance: This semester, the world will enter its third year with COVID. As we experience a fifth surge of pandemic with the highly transmissible omicron variant, it is reasonable to expect significant levels of infection at W&M. As an academic community based on faculty and students *convening*, spring 2022 courses will largely consist of in-person instruction. All of us will follow W&M requirements - vaccinations and boosters, indoor masking, as well as quarantine and isolation when ill. That last part is really important: for those who have tested positive, W&M’s requirements must be fulfilled before class can be attended in person; and, out of an abundance of caution, anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID – even if they don’t have a positive test – should not come to class.

Please note that testing positive for COVID or any other temporary illness is not considered a disability as defined by ADA guidelines and is not under the purview of W&M’s Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Thus, any questions should be addressed via email to the instructor.

To address student absences, students will be encouraged to post their class notes on Blackboard under the “Class notes” section. To address instructor absences, the instructor will post recorded lectures under the “Recorded lectures” section on Blackboard. These protocols will be implemented on an as-needed basis and will not necessarily be implemented throughout the entire semester. All assignments and tests will be submitted on Blackboard and will be completed remotely throughout the semester, regardless of COVID protocols. But if you are not able to complete a test due to illness please contact the instructor before the test opens to request an accommodation.

Mental health can pose significant challenges to student success at W&M, both in and outside of the classroom environment. The Kinesiology Department wants students to flourish during their time at W&M. If you are struggling with concerns, including, but not limited to, relationships, anxiety, alcohol or drug use, feeling down, trouble concentrating and/or lack of motivation, we hope you will reach out to campus resources, such as the Counseling Center, which is available for walk-ins during business hours and by phone after hours (757-221-3620). You can learn more about their services via this link <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/counselingcenter/>.

Accommodations: It is the policy of William & Mary to accommodate students with disabilities and qualifying diagnosed conditions in accordance with federal and state laws. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact the [Student Accessibility Services](#) staff at 757-221-2512 or at sas@wm.edu. SAS staff will work with you to determine if accommodations are warranted and, if so, to help you obtain an official letter of accommodation.

Late submissions: If you will not be able to turn in an assignment or complete a test for any reason, you must notify me by email at least two days before your planned absence. Accommodations will be granted on a case-by-case basis. See the description of assignments/tests above for additional information on late penalties.

Communications: All emails should include “KINE 361” somewhere in the subject line, that way I can prioritize your email. If you are requesting an accommodation, you must do so by email.

Diversity Mission Statement: To make the Department of Health Sciences a place where all are welcome and thrive, irrespective of their age, cultural identity, ethnicity, gender, faith, neurological make-up, geographic background, military (veterans) and economic status. We also seek to expand the definition of diversity to include differences in physical ability and physiologic capacity and to provide leadership across campus in understanding those differences. This includes students, faculty and staff.

The College Honor System: The College of William & Mary has had an honor code since at least 1779. Academic integrity is at the heart of the College, and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led honor system is responsible for resolving any suspected violations of the Honor Code, and I will report all suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the honor system. The Student Handbook (www.wm.edu/studenthandbook) includes your responsibilities as a student and the full Code. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected. To read the Honor Code, see www.wm.edu/honor.

This syllabus is subject to change.