***Tompkins Cortland Community College**

Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: ENVS 110 **Year: 2025-2026**

Course Title: Food Systems I: US Food Systems **Credit Hours: 3**

I. Course Description: What is a Food System? How does our U.S. Food System work? Who gets to eat the food produced each day and how does it get there? In this course these questions will be examined. We will evaluate the social, political, economic, and environmental impact and consequences associated with the way food is produced, distributed, and consumed. Topics include a brief history of food and the industrialization of agriculture, environmental and political influences on food production and its distribution, societal health and waste, and the complexities of these areas in relation to our human society. Through various class activities, students consider alternative approaches to our food system, including the farm-to-table and local food movement. Students will be introduced to systems thinking, valuable research, communication, and analytical methods. ENVS 110 fulfills the SUNY General Education Social Sciences requirement. Prerequisites: Prior completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, ENGL 100 and RDNG 116 if required by placement. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall semester.

II. Additional Course Information:

1. ENVS 110 is a required course in the Sustainable Farming and Food Systems and Culinary Arts A.A.S. degree programs, but is suitable for all students.
2. ENVS 110, ENVS 111, and ENVS 112 are recommended, but not required, to be taken in sequence.

III. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Assess costs and benefits of current food production and distribution in the US.
2. Explain the history of agriculture from early settlements to the current centralization of food systems in developed nations.
3. Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

IV. Tompkins Cortland Institutional Learning Outcomes; Program Learning Outcomes; SUNY General Education Outcomes

<u>Tompkins Cortland ILOs</u>

Students will:

☐ Communicate effectively, in oral and written forms, taking into consideration audience and purpose.

☐ Apply principles and methods of scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning appropriate to their discipline.

☒ Use information, critical thinking, and the creative process to solve problems and reach conclusions.

> **SLO #3:** Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

☐ Use technology appropriate to their discipline.

☒ Describe the ways in which social, economic, or environmental sustainability depends on their own and the collective contributions of a diversity of ideas and people.

SLO #3: Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

Program Learning Outcomes

Specify the Academic Program
3SFF Sustainable Farming & Food Systems AAS

PLO: Describe the structure of the current food system, the environmental, social, and economic dilemmas that exist within it, and describe the emerging alternatives to the dominant food system

SLO: Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

SUNY General Education Outcomes

☒ CRITICAL THINKING - Students will:

a. identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own or others' work; and
b. develop well-reasoned arguments.

SLO #3: Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

☒ INFORMATION MANAGEMENT - Students will:

a. perform the basic operations of personal computer use;
b. understand and use basic research techniques; and
c. locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

SLO #1: Assess costs and benefits of current food production and distribution in the US.

☒ GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY - Area(s): **Social Science**

Students will demonstrate understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of mathematical and interpretive analysis.

SLO #3: Develop a “systems thinking” framework to analyze social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the current food system and develop possible solutions to these problems.

V. Essential Topics/Themes

1. Introduction to Food Systems and “Systems Thinking”
2. History and Industrialization of Agriculture
3. Industrial vs Sustainable Agriculture and Introduction of Farm to Table Ideology/Localvorism
4. Climate Change
5. Food Processing
6. Nutrition, Hunger and Food Insecurity
7. Food Safety
8. Food Waste
9. Food Policy

VI. Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
1. Discussion and Participation	20-30%
2. Oral Presentations	15-40%
3. Term Paper	20-40%
4. Quizzes	15-30%
5. Exams	0-20%

VII. Texts – ☒ Required ☐ Recommended ☐ Used for more than one course (list courses)

1. Chase, Lisa and Vern Grubinger. *Food, Farms, and Community: Exploring Food Systems*. 2014, UNH Press.

Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.

VIII. Bibliography of Supplemental Materials

This list is for example only, and shows a sample of potential readings. Up-to-date readings will be assigned from the scientific literature and popular press.

1. Ackerman-Leist, Philip. *Rebuilding the Foodshed: How to Create Local, Sustainable, and Secure Food Systems.* 2013, Chelsea Green, White River Junction, VT.
2. Green, J and D. Hilchey. *Growing Home: A Guide to Reconnecting Agriculture, Food and Communities.* 2002. Chapter 1.
3. Guptill, Amy E., Copelton, Denise A., and Betsy Lucal. *Food & Society: Principles and Paradoxes*. 2013, Polity Press, Malden, MA.
4. Neff, Ron (Editor). *Introduction to the U.S. Food System: Public Health, Environment, and Equity*. 2015, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
5. Sullivan, Preston. *Applying the Principles of Sustainable Farming*. 2003, NCAT-ATTRA.
6. Winne, Mark. *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*
7. *Focus Theme: Food Systems and Public Health: Linkages to Achieve Healthier Diets and Healthier Communities*. Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, Volume 4 Issue 3 & 4. 2009.

Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.

IX. Other Learning Resources

Audiovisual: In Defense of Food, King Corn, A Place at the Table (available in college library)

Electronic: The Food System Primer, Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
http://www.foodsystemprimer.org/

Other: None specified

Attendance Policy: *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required*

to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.

Services for Students with Disabilities: *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for academic adjustments. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

Academic Integrity: *Every student at Tompkins Cortland Community College is expected to act in an academically honest fashion in all aspects of his or her academic work: in writing papers and reports, in taking examinations, in performing laboratory experiments and reporting the results, in clinical and cooperative learning experiences, and in attending to paperwork such as registration forms.*
Any written work submitted by a student must be his or her own. If the student uses the words or ideas of someone else, he or she must cite the source by such means as a footnote. Our guiding principle is that any honest evaluation of a student's performance must be based on that student's work. Any action taken by a student that would result in misrepresentation of someone else's work or actions as the student's own — such as cheating on a test, submitting for credit a paper written by another person, or forging an advisor's signature — is intellectually dishonest and deserving of censure.
Several degree programs offer student learning opportunities (such as internships, field work, and clinical experiences) outside the standard classroom setting. As part of the learning process, students must understand and engage in conduct that adheres to principles guiding employment within the professional workplace. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, accountability, reliability, respect, use of appropriate language and dress, civility, professional ethics, honesty, and trustworthiness. Disciplinary action may be initiated for inappropriate conduct occurring while participating in any course-related project or event.