

**\* Notice: The contents of Syllabus are subject to change as necessary.**

**UST 493/593: Food Policy and Food Systems**  
Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs  
Levin College of Public Affairs and Education  
Cleveland State University, Cleveland Ohio  
Fall 2023

Instructor: B.J. Fletcher, Ph.D.  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs  
Office: UR 312  
Phone: 216.687.5262  
Email: [b.j.fletcher@csuohio.edu](mailto:b.j.fletcher@csuohio.edu)  
Pronouns: He/Him/His

**Class Hours and Classrooms:**

Monday and Wednesday – 2:00PM – 3:15PM; UR 0241.

**Office Hours:**

Tuesday & Thursday: 12pm – 4pm  
By Appointment: Please contact me in advance (at least 48 hours before) via email providing when you would like to set the meeting.

**Course Format:**

This course is offered as an in-person format. Course content will be delivered via the Blackboard course management system. The instructor will communicate with students outside of class using a variety of interactive tools including discussions, announcements, and email. A computer and access to the internet are required.

**Course Description**

This course is focused on gaining a working knowledge of food policy and food systems, with an emphasis on the United States and Global context. Public policies relating to food issues are incredibly diverse and complex. This course will help students establish a basic understanding of food systems and give them the critical thinking skills to assess research and policy that impacts food.

Course content is designed to provoke thought about these types of questions:

How do we understand the food system as a whole?

What are the major components that must be considered when creating, implementing, and evaluating food policy and related food systems issues?

Weekly discussion questions and blog entries based on readings, a semester project – policy portfolio consisting of a policy brief, field research journal, policy analysis outline, and a policy memo, and a policy presentation will be the primary means of learning. Students are required to complete weekly reading to gain insights into the topics, approaches, and methods used in addressing urban sustainability. Active participation in the class is a key component of this course and will enhance the students' learning and peer-to-peer interactions. The semester project is designed to enhance learning by doing, and will help the students apply their knowledge to topics of their interest.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Required Textbook:**

Neff, R. (2015). *Introduction to the U.S. Food System: Public Health, Environment, and Equity*. Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 9781118913055.

**\*\*A digital copy should be available on Blackboard via the BryteWave Course Materials (BCM) link under the files tab.\*\***

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/clevelandstate-ebooks/detail.action?docID=7104219>

Portney, K.E. (2015). *Sustainability*. Random House Publishing Services. ISBN: 9780262528504

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/clevelandstate-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4397950>

Mulligan, M. (2018). *An Introduction to Sustainability: Environmental, Social and Personal Perspectives*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Routledge Publications. ISBN: 9781138698307

**\*\*A PDF copy available on Blackboard in the additional readings folder.\*\***

**Course Objectives:**

At the end of this semester, students should:

- Develop an in-depth knowledge of the main facets of the food system and food policy;
- Understanding of how food systems and public policy are intertwined;
- Understand the city and region as a system and its function as habitat for food systems;
- Understand the integral nature of ecological systems, the built environment, the human system, and the environment including economics, as these generate sustainable cities;
- Understand the relationship between ecological conditions and human settlements and how human activities affect food systems;
- Understand the values and frameworks of sustainability and environmental policy on the food system;
- Understand some of the methods and techniques to mitigate human impacts on the environment, restore and sustain ecological integrity, and human quality of life in an urban setting and urban food systems;
- Be able to communicate effectively and efficiently while presenting complex policy narrative and discourse on topics of food, sustainability, and environmental policy.

**Course Conduct:**

Students are expected to be respectful to one another and the opinions of their peers. This course will cover some topics which people will feel passionate about; we will not all share the same views on these topics. We want to come from a place grounded in facts to guide our understanding of the topics, being able to critically evaluate facts and positions is an important component of higher education development, we are here as a learning community. When responding to a peer's point it is acceptable to offer questions and varying points and counter arguments on a given topic, in so doing this helps us all better understand the nuances of the topics we will cover. It is not acceptable to attack a peer because of their position or understanding of a topic.

**Contact Rules:**

As a general rule I can be reached by email; I will do my best to respond to emails no later than 24 hours after they are sent. In extreme cases no later than 48 hours, in the event I am away for a conference, or it is over the weekend.

## Grading Criteria:

For this course, there will be **300 total possible points (500 total possible points for graduate students)**. There will be weekly discussion questions and blog entries designed to help students apply concepts from the readings. There will also be one writing assignment the semester project, where students will be asked to produce a policy portfolio focusing on the development of “workable” policy writing and research focused on students’ primary area of study or interest focused on sustainability or environmental policy. There will also be a policy presentation where students will present their policy topic. Please see course assignments section for more details. Students taking this course as UST 593 will also complete a book review.

Weekly Discussion Questions and Blog Entries	100 points
Semester Project – Sustainability/Environmental Policy Portfolio	180 points
➔ Section A – Policy Brief	30 points
➔ Section B – Field Research Journal	60 points
➔ Section C – Policy Analysis Outline	60 points
➔ Section D – Policy Memo	30 points
Policy Presentation	20 points
Book Review (Graduate Students)	200 points
<b>Total:</b>	<b>300 points</b>
<b>*Graduate Students Total:</b>	<b>500 points</b>

Final grades will be determined based upon the percentage of total points accumulated:

A: 95-100%	B: 83 – 86.9%	C: 70 – 76.9%
A-: 90 – 94.9%	B-: 80 – 82.9%	D: 60 – 69.9%
B+: 87 – 89.9%	C+: 77 – 79.9%	F: Below 60*

\*A failing course grade also will be assigned to students who:

Fail to receive grade points in three or more weekly discussion sessions without making arrangements for absence with the professor in advance;

Fail to complete either of the projects according to the syllabus schedule or receive a grade of F on either project.

CSU policy regarding grades of “I” and “X” dictates the following conditions:

“I” – An incomplete (“I”) grade may be given when the work in a course has been generally passing, but some specifically required task has not been completed through no fault of the student. An “I” grade can be assigned by the instructor when all three of the following conditions are met:

1. Student is regularly attending/participating in the class and has the potential to pass the course,
2. Student has not completed all assignments and has stopped attending/participating for reasons deemed justified by the instructor, and
3. Student notified the instructor prior to the end of grading period.

“X” – The grade of “X” can be assigned by the instructor when an attending/participating student has stopped attending /participating without notification and has not completed all assignments for reasons that cannot be determined by the end of the grading period. An “X” automatically becomes an “F” if not resolved by the last day of instruction of the following semester. An “X” grade will be assigned by the University Registrar when no grade is submitted by an instructor.

Students may drop or withdraw from the class by the dates stipulated in the CSU Academic Calendar. Additional information on adding, dropping, withdrawal, and incomplete grades can be found on-line at: <http://www.csuohio.edu/enrollment/services/registrar>

### **Course Assignments:**

#### Weekly Discussion Questions and Blog Entries (100 points)

Each week, students may be assigned a chapter or chapters from the text for reading or articles from outside the text (which will be uploaded to Blackboard under the files tab in the course readings folder). The instructor will post questions relating to the assigned readings in the discussion board section on Blackboard. These questions are designed to help guide students reading of the text. While all material covered in an assigned text chapter or chapters are important, the review questions will help students focus their time and readings. Students are required to read the assigned chapters, write answers to the questions in the week's discussion board, answers should be posted by **Wednesday at 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time [EST]**. The responses to the review questions do not have to be long (quality is more important than quantity, approximately 4-7 sentences per questions (a minimum of a least 300 words total for each blog), built points are acceptable where appropriate), students should articulate responses succinctly, succinct writing is another vital skill to develop during one's academic career; it is important the responses to the review questions are succinct but also fully developed.

Following the posting of their answers, students will then be required to comment on at least two other student's answers by **Sunday at 11:59pm EST** of that week. Comments will be posted as a "reply" message on the Discussion Board. Students should pick two to three review questions to reply too and should be no less than three sentences minimum, addressing a key idea, providing a critique, or furthering the discussion with connections to topics from the assigned readings. Be sure to select "Save & Publish" when posting answers and comments on Blackboard. The instructor will periodically review and post comments on the class discussion, to provide additional points of view or clarification where needed.

Each weekly discussion question and blog entries, including the answers and comments, will be graded for completion, students will have to option to complete ten (10) of the twelve (13) total **totaling 100 points** for the semester. While the discussion questions and blog entries will be graded for completion, this does not mean they should not be taken seriously, as a reminder these **will be graded on quality not quantity**, please take them seriously. Superficial and superfluous responses to the questions and any corresponding replies will receive a lower grade based on the quality of the response. Any late or incomplete assignments and/or postings will be penalized accordingly.

**\*\*Assignments must be submitted in a word format, do not submit PDF files\*\***

#### Semester Project – Food Policy/Systems Portfolio (200 points)

For this assignment think of yourself as a policy expert who has been hired to as a staffer for a policymaker. Your boss, the policymaker, has asked you to research a sustainability/environmental policy issue for an upcoming meeting. Describe the policy issue a policymaker, who is faced with a possible decision or upcoming meeting with a constituent or policy leader (Speaker of the House, Mayor, etc.). Presume the policymaker has no knowledge of the issue, explain what the policymaker needs to know about the issue). Students will learn to communicate effectively and efficiently around a complex policy topic, and present the information in a concise structure.

In this assignment students will individually explore an urban food policy/systems topic of interest. The policy topic should relate directly to class themes and subjects. Student will construct a "policy portfolio"

over the course of the semester which will consist of various policy documents, that relate to the chosen policy topic. The objective for the assignment is to identify an urban food policy/systems issue, research and identify existing policies, processes, actions or mechanisms that contribute to the problem and then identify recommendations and solutions based on balancing principles of environmental, economics, and equity – that will address the issue. The policy documents should be oriented toward implementable actions, not merely research about the topic. The final paper should address the following aspects of the topic:

1. Present and explain the topic & related problems (including all 3 E's),
2. Describe previous and current policy actions related to the problem (what have cities, state and national governments, and other institutions done to improve this area of food policy/systems?),
3. Analyze results of these actions in terms of effectiveness, change in conditions they brought about, remaining challenges, etc. (what are the strengths and weaknesses of previous/current policy?),
4. Recommend alternative approaches that incorporate the principles covered in this course, consider the practical and political feasibility of suggested alternatives (e.g., using examples from places that are excelling in sustainable approaches relative to your topic).

Helpful links:

<https://www.clevelandohio.gov/CityofCleveland/Home/Government/CityAgencies/OfficeOfSustainability>  
<https://www.sustainablecleveland.org/>  
<https://nifa.usda.gov/program/sustainable-agriculture-program>  
<https://www.fao.org/home/en>  
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

### **Section A – Policy Brief** (1 – 2 pages – 5 points for draft + 25 points for final draft = 30 points)

The brief should be objective and present all sides of an issue.

“A policy brief presents a concise summary of information that can help readers understand, and likely make decisions about, government policies.” <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/policy-briefs/>

Write a 1 – 2-page policy brief.

Describe your food policy/system issue objectively for a policymaker, group of advocates, public and nonprofit leadership, or community audience. Your policy brief should inform them of what the policy issue is, it's importance, impact, work being done, approaches to address the issue, etc. Provide the context of the policy issue as if the policymaker is faced with a possible decision or upcoming meeting with constituents or policy leader (Mayor, Governor, Director of Sustainability Department/EPA, Speaker of the House, Senate Leader Mayor, etc.). Presume the reader has limited knowledge of the issue, explain what the policymaker needs to know to be informed about the policy issue.

Important aspects to discuss:

- The Issue
- People: Which policymakers, interest groups, constituents are involved, at risk, etc.
- Problem: Conflict, need, problem at hand (Be sure to include all sides.)
- Current or Proposed solutions/related policies/rules/regs/lawsuits/programs. Be specific.
- History of the policy issue: How the issue came to be, what is driving the issue

- Consequences/risk: What is at stake (risk); the consequences, and for who? (For constituents, the city/county/ state/country, the policymaker)
- Are other governments – cities, states, federal, international – experiencing the issue, what are they doing to address the issue, is it effective, limited or widely adopted, facing challenges, etc.

\*Note: Emerging policy issues may not yet have evaluations or research to draw from, and instead may have legal writings and briefs as main sources. Look for ones that encompass all the legal angles, rather than appearing to support one perspective, or find a couple of legal writings that provide different viewpoints.

Include a reference page in APA style format for 6 (or more) sources:

- At least 2/3 of the total references need to be peer-reviewed journal articles or other academic sources (books, particularly edited volumes). May include legal briefs and writings – be careful of bias.
- The remaining 1/3 of references can be research reports from university centers, non-partisan think tanks, government (like GAO), News articles (need to report on the issue directly, not as commentary), etc. Visuals such as graphics, tables or other data from these sources may be used as well.

Most sources should come from this first list, then you can consider adding:

- Advocacy organization materials may be used, as long as multiple points of view are demonstrated.
  - Advocacy organization sources may be used for the brief – but must present balanced sides of the policy issue.
  - News articles may be used in addition to sources for context/information.

**Section B – Field Research Journal** (3 – 4 pages – 5 points for draft + 55 points for final draft = 60 points)

Field Research Observations: The assignments require students to take a closer look at their food policy/system topic of interest, as identified in the student’s policy brief.

Student’s field research journal should consist of a closer scholarly assessment of phenomena in the urban environment as it relates to a food policy/systems issue. These field research journals are deemed experiential because they take students beyond the printed page and into the urban environment. You are asked to employ field research methodologies to systematically examine your food policy/systems issue related to any programs aimed at addressing the issue.

The requirement for the journal assignment is that you observe and analyze the food policy/systems issue and corresponding program or phenomena. You should document your experience and interaction with and in the urban environment related principles – balancing environmental, economics and equity, and the core objectives:

1. Present and explain the topic & related problems (including all 3 E’s),
2. Describe previous and current policy actions related to the problem (what have cities, state and national governments, and other institutions done to improve this area of food policy/systems?),

3. Analyze results of these actions in terms of effectiveness, change in conditions they brought about, remaining challenges, etc. (what are the strengths and weaknesses of previous/current policy?),
4. Recommend alternative approaches that incorporate the principles, consider the practical and political feasibility of suggested alternatives (e.g., using examples from places that are excelling in approaches relative to your topic).

You should identify any theoretical perspective on the topic or phenomena from course readings and tie them to your experience and the topic area you have chosen to address. The primary aim of these journals is to provide students with the ability to identify and relate concepts from the course to everyday interactions with urban systems.

Field research methods include, but are not limited to, interviews, surveys, personal observations, recordings and photographs. There is a defined research approach for each field study approach. For the purposes of these journals, students will most likely employ interviews, personal observations, and photographs. Be sure you review these and incorporate them in your paper.

Keep in mind, you want your field research in be objective and systematic. The information should highlight the context, importance, impact of your chosen food policy/systems topic. The research should inform your reader of the key information they need to be able to make decision about the policy topic. The information (“data”) you collect from your field research must ultimately support the conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) you make to the policymaker. This will relate back to the information you provide in your “policy brief”, in that the information you collect in your field research will be “on the ground” actions being taken to address the food policy/systems issue via so program that is likely in place at some level.

Journals should be between three and four (3-4) pages in length. Questions regarding journal assignments can be addressed before or after class, e-mailed to me any time or an appointment can be arranged. Additional resources will be made available on Blackboard, and the following list of Journals can be utilized to help future develop the personal journal assignments. Please review the rubrics for these assignments for more details.

**Section C – Policy Analysis Outline** (3 – 4 pages – 5 points for draft + 55 points for final draft = 60 points)

Many policy papers are written as a white paper, they often offer an authoritative perspective on or solutions to a policy problem or issue. White papers are common to policy, law, politics, business, and technical fields. From a policy perspective, white papers aim to guide decision makers with expert opinions, recommendations, and analytical research. In business, white papers are often used as a marketing or sales tool where the product is pitched as the “solution” to a perceived need within a particular market.

Policy analysis is a process of identifying potential policy options to address a problem or issue, then comparing possible “policy options” to choose the most effective, efficient, and feasible one. Conducting a policy analysis ensure a systematic process has been followed to choose the policy option that may be best for situation, problem, issue, etc.

Policy analysis typically provides a decision maker with an overview of an issue, problem, etc., targeted analysis, and, often, actionable recommendations. Analysis is often accompanying an oral briefing or presentation that highlights key context, findings, recommendations, conclusions, etc. The policymaker

will refer to the extended paper for the deep analysis that supports the core context, findings, recommendations, conclusions, etc.

Who should be involved in a policy analysis –

Individuals who can provide and/or interpret information about the policy, problem, issue, etc.

These include but not limited to:

- Subject matter experts – field experts, scientists, academics, etc.
- Economists
- Community Partners – nonprofits, NGOs, government agencies, businesses, etc.
- Analysts
- Community members

How may they contribute:

- Provide and interpret information needed for the policy analysis

Individuals affected by the policy problem, situation, issue, etc.

These include but not limited to:

Individuals whose jobs or lives might be affected by the policy:

- Community members
- Community partners
- Local decision makers

How they can contribute:

- Provide contextual knowledge, such as potential social, educational, and cultural perspectives

Individuals who administer resources related to the policy:

These include but not limited to:

- Public officials and administrators
- Nonprofits
- Private organizations
- Universities
- Government agencies
- Advocacy groups

How they can contribute:

- Include these stakeholders during the policy analysis process to help understand the potential economic and/or budgetary impacts of the policy options being considered.
- They can also help understand the legal landscape around the potential policies.

Fundamental Components:



Policy analysis relies on the authority of the analyst over the deep research that is conducted on the issue, problem, situation, etc. The analyst should pay close attention to the audience, the professional expectations, and the jargon of the targeted policymaker, decision makers, audience, etc., and the structure and flow of the argument(s), context, conclusion(s), recommendation(s). The following are some general components for the structure of the analysis for most policy analysis:

- Define the problem or issue – highlight the urgency and state significant findings for the problem based on the data. Be sure to objectively state the information – resist the urge to overstate.
    - Provide the context of the policy problem, issue, situation, etc.
  - Analyze, not merely present, the data – show how you arrived at the finding(s), conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) through analysis of qualitative or quantitative data.
    - Carefully state conclusion(s) that make sense of the data and do not misrepresent the data. Data should be replicable.
  - Summarize the finding(s), conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) – be sure to provide specific recommendation(s) or finding(s) in response to specific problems or issues, avoid generalizations.
  - Generate criteria for evaluating data – explain the key assumptions and methodology underlying the analysis, be clear about the criteria used in the evaluation or analysis to assess evidence and how the criteria are prioritized.
  - When providing recommendation(s), develop a theory of change, analyze the options and tradeoffs according to criteria you established as the methodology to assess feasibility.
    - What are the pros and cons?
    - What is feasible?
    - What are the predictable outcomes?
    - Develop a logic model to guide your analysis and support your assertions with relevant data.
  - Be clear about both sides of the policy problem, issue, situation, etc. Address, and when appropriate rebut:
    - Counterarguments
    - Caveats
    - Alternative interpretations
    - Reservations to your findings or recommendations.
- \*\*A policy analyst's credibility relies on their ability to locate and account for counterargument.  
 \*\*Be especially sensitive to the likely counterarguments that a decision-maker would face in implementing or acting on the recommendation(s) or finding(s).
- Suggest next steps and any implications of the finding(s) and recommendation(s) – briefly address the feasibility of next steps or explore the implications of the analysis, if appropriate.
  - Distill conclusion(s) succinctly and remind the decision-maker of the “big picture”:
    - Any important context of the problem, issue, situation, etc.
    - The overall goal(s)
    - Why the investigation is necessary
    - The urgency for action

**\*\*This answers the “who cares” or “so what” questions. Reminding the reader of the value of the analysis, and conclusion(s), finding(s), and recommendation(s).**

**\*\*When targeting a decision-maker, be sure to reflect the decision-maker’s primary concerns.**

How to conduct a policy analysis –

1. Research and identify possible policy options:

This is often achieved by reviewing research literature, conducting an environmental scan, and surveying best practices to understand what other communities, governments (local, state, federal, international), nonprofits, organizations, etc., are doing.

- **Literature Review** – an examination of the current body of research about the policy problem, issue, situation, etc., (can include possible policy options). A literature review can help identify what is already known about the policy options as well as current gaps in research.
- **Environmental Scan** – a proactive, systematic collection of information about events, trends, and expectations of what might be encountered during the policy process.

2. Describe the possible policy options:

During the policy analysis process, pay attention to the **impact of the issue, problem, situation, etc., cost of implementation**, and **feasibility of each option**. To describe these three factors, think about questions such as:

- What population(s) will be affected by each policy option? By how much? And when?
- What is the context around the possible policy options, including political history, environment, and policy debate?
- What are the costs and benefits associated with each policy option from a budgetary perspective?

When assessing feasibility, it is important to identify any barriers that could prevent a policy from being developed, enacted, or implemented.

**\*\*A policy might be more feasible in one city or at a certain time, but not others. It is possible (and sometime likely) to find that as circumstances change, what is considered affordable or publicly acceptable may change with them.**

3. Rank the possible policy options and pick the one best fits the context, timing, situation, needs, and information from parts 1 and 2 here:

- Compare the policy options for impact, economic and budgetary impact, and feasibility.
- Next, rank each one based on those criteria.
  - Stakeholders can provide guidance on how to do this. Rankings will always be partially subjective, so it helps to systematically document rationale.
- In some cases, reviews may reveal a clear winner — a policy that is:
  - a) feasible
  - b) has a strong, positive impact
  - c) is economically and fiscally viable

**\*\*In other cases, ranking the options may be more complicated and involve assessing trade-offs.**

How do you know you have successfully completed your policy analysis –

- Researched and identified possible policy options with a literature review, environmental scans, and surveys of best practices
- Described possible policy options, including each one's health impact, cost of implementation, and feasibility
- Ranked each policy option based on health impact, economic and budgetary impact, and feasibility—and then chose the one you think is best for your situation

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/policy/index.html>

<https://www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/White-Papers-Guidelines.pdf>

#### **Section D – Policy Memo (1 – 2 pages – 5 points for draft + 25 points for final draft = 30 points)**

Memoranda (Memos) are a common form of correspondence sent within organizations. Memos are concise, audience specific, focused examples of persuasive writing, which, typically present a particular course of action. Professional memos distill the most important information about a case, policy, decision, problem, or issue. Memos should be analytical, answer all questions, and not contain superfluous information. They should display a critical analysis of the main issue, not a summary of the issue.

A policy memo provides analysis and/or recommendations for a particular audience regarding a particular situation, problem, or issue. A well-written policy memo reflects attention to purpose; it is well organized; and has a clear, concise style. Typically, the writer – you – will know the audience for work because they have been hired by an individual or organization.

The difference between a policy memo and a policy brief is that the memo provides “... the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or specific course of action. In this sense, most policy memos possess a component of advocacy and policy advice ...” <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/policymemo>

For this section of the policy portfolio, think carefully about the needs and expectations of your “boss” and the audience they will be communicating with about the sustainability/environmental policy topic or issue. Remember your boss is a policymaker and they are seeking analysis on a highly technical matter – your policy topic area or issue.

For your memo, outline the sustainability/environmental policy issue you have chosen. You will need to:

- Present and explain the topic & related problems – define the sustainability/environmental policy issue
- Provide enough background about the issue you are discussing that “lay” audience can grasp your arguments.
- List previous and current policy actions related to the problem
- Define technical terms (as needed)
- Provide recommendations on alternative approaches that incorporate the principles of sustainability, consider the practical and political feasibility of suggested alternatives.

## Organizing an effective policy memo:

### Introduction –

One distinguishing characteristic of a policy memo is that a summary of the document's conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) is placed at the beginning of the memo.

**\*\*Conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) need to be specific and actionable\*\***

Remember the purpose of the document is to provide your audience advice about a particular decision, project, or policy stance. Open the memo by summarizing the problem, situation, issue, etc., which you are writing, and providing a very brief summary of the conclusions/recommendations you have reached during your analysis. The rest of the memo is designed to support the conclusions or recommendations you present.

### Background –

Keeping in mind that different audiences need different amounts of background information, follow your introduction with a concise summary of any historical or technical information that your audience needs to understand the arguments you are building (provide the context your reader will need to understand the issue at hand).

### Supporting arguments or analysis –

Once you have provided the needed context for your audience, show how this information leads logically to the conclusion(s)/recommendation(s) you have provided.

### Style and format –

Your ideas will be no more meaningful to the reader of your memo than you are able to make them, that is to say, is not just embellished by style; rather, the two must function together. Unclear, ambiguous, superficial, superfluous, writing reflects hazy thinking. The writing should be simple, clear, and easy to read; you will confuse, not impress, your readers with overly technical vocabulary. The reader should be able to describe the conclusion(s)/recommendation(s) and the general arguments you used to reach them after only one reading of your memo.

### Length –

The length of your policy memo should be 1 – 2 pages. **\*\*Do not exceed this length limit.\*\***

I am enforcing this rule for several reasons:

- You will likely continue to write persuasive documents for clients and/or colleagues in the future. Like you, most of these people are busy. They rarely have time to review lengthy documents; these generally wind up unread.
- I am hoping to help you craft documents that are concise and of use to your clients or colleagues. A practical skill you will find useful in your academic and career endeavors.
- Confining your writing to a page limit encourages careful editing, establishing priorities, and paring your arguments down. These practices also improve the flow and impact of your writing.
- Tightly written policy memos have a much better chance of influencing others toward a particular point of view.

Tips on achieving an effective writing style:

- Focus on simplicity. When discussing technical information, avoid heavy use of jargon – or at least define terms clearly.
- Use “active” language and sentence structure – avoid phrases such as “there are” or “it is.”
- Use one paragraph to develop one idea or argument. Make that idea or argument explicit within the first one or two sentences of the paragraph.
- **Proofread** – do not distract the readers from the content of the memo with poor spelling or grammar.

The format of the memo:

- Unlike other academic writing, it is acceptable to use bulleted lists in memos. The goal is to make your memo easy to read, so think about spacing and the use of white space.
- The content of the memos should be no more than two single spaced pages.
- Times New Roman 12 or equivalent, with one-inch margins.

**\*\*This memo is for a course, so please include full in-text citations, including page numbers for direct quotes, and a references list on a fourth page titled “References.”**

**\*\*All citations should be in APA format.**

Getting help –

I strongly recommend seeking feedback on your memo, you may want to exchange your memos with other students in the class for proofreading and editing before you submit them, this is a good practice to establish a working relationship with colleagues and peers. You can help one another with suggestions for clarity and content of your assignments.

**Policy Presentation** – (10 minutes + 5 minutes for question and answer) (20 points)

Students will present their food policy/systems issue, analysis, findings, conclusions, recommendations, etc. Presentations will be evaluated on the organization of the presentation, materials, the student’s knowledge of their subject, the soundness of the approach to the analysis, findings, conclusion, and recommendations. Finally, the effectiveness of the presentation and the student’s ability to manage their time will be assessed.

Presentation should most 10 minutes.

Evaluation will be based on the following criteria, plus clear focus on a food policy/systems issue, the clarity of the presentation, timing, and PowerPoint (or similar tool) presentations.

A good presentation will:

- Identify the food policy/systems problem or issue covered in the policy portfolio which relates to topics covered in this course.
- Provide the context of the policy problem or issue of interest.
- Provide all necessary and relevant information about the research, the analysis, and vital information for viewers to have a clear understanding of the topic and be able to come to an informed decision about the issue.
- Provide the necessary and relevant information about what is being done around the topic – what is being done to address the issue or problem.

- Provide an analysis of the issue or problem (based on information from the policy analysis)
  - what are the options, the criteria for evaluation, who are the stakeholders, what is the environmental scan, etc.
- Provide the options, recommendations, findings, conclusions related to the policy problem or issue.

### **Book Review – Critical Analysis (For Graduate Students) – (200 points)**

Graduate students will be required to select and read a book about some aspect of food policy (or food system related topic) to write a thorough and critically assessed book review. Graduate students may choose a book from the lists provided (see list below) or get approval of a book of their choosing. Since book reviews are written to acquaint readers with a book, a brief discussion of the book's contents as well as the reader's reactions to the book are important. Book reviews should be approximately 5 double-spaced pages in length. The review must include a thorough analysis of the following:

Details:

- Provide a summary of the book including major arguments, themes, and findings. (65 Points)
  - Describe how these arguments, themes, and findings are interrelated.
  - What evidence supports the authors arguments, themes, findings?
- Describe:
  - The implications of the book's major arguments, points, and importantly, findings and conclusions.
  - The ways in which the book contributes to knowledge building and overall contribution to the fields of food policy/systems. (65 Points)
- Include your critical thoughts about the book. (60 Points)

Questions to guide you:

- What is the context of the book, meaning what is the main topic(s) and the setting of the book?
- What are the author's basic ideas and arguments?
- What themes emerge?
- What issues are raised?
- What debates, if any, are present in the book?
- Is the book a contribution to the fields or to knowledge in general? How so?
- What is the theoretical underpinning of the book, if any?
- What are the book's major themes and terms?
- What are the major findings of the book and what are the implications of those findings?
- How accurate is the information?
- Who benefits from reading the book? Why?
- What is your critical evaluation? What are your thoughts about the book? Did it make sense? Did it present a compelling argument? Was it well written? Did it gloss over the material or leave out anything important? And so on.
- What aspects of the book are most compelling?
- How well did the author achieve the purpose of the book?

Formatting (10 points):

- Approximately 5 full double-spaced pages in length, not including title page and resources.
- Times New Roman, 12-point font, single spaced (extra spaces between paragraphs and headings).
- 1-inch margins.

### Book Review List:

- Anderson, E. N. (2014). *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food & Culture* (2nd ed.). New York: NYU Press.
- Andrée, P., Ayres, J., Bosia, M., & Massicotte, M. J. (Eds.). (2014). *Globalization and Food Sovereignty: Global and Local Change in the New Politics of Food*. University of Toronto Press.
- Bittman, M. (2021). *Animal, Vegetable, Junk: A History of Food, from Sustainable to Suicidal*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Callahan, D. (2016). *The Five Horsemen of the Modern World: Climate, Food, Water, Disease, and Obesity*. Columbia University Press.
- Carney, M. A. (2015). *The Unending Hunger: Tracing Women and Food Insecurity Across Borders*. Univ of California Press.
- Gottlieb, R., & Joshi, A. (2010). *Food Justice*. MIT Press.
- Gritter, M. (2017). *Undeserving: SNAP Reform and Conceptions of the Deserving Poor*. Lexington Books.
- Linnekin, B. (2016). *Biting the Hands that Feed Us: How Fewer, Smarter Laws Would Make Our Food System More Sustainable*. Island Press.
- Mandyck, J. M., & Schultz, E. B. (2015). *Food Foolish: The Hidden Connection Between Food Waste, Hunger and Climate Change*. Juppiter, FL, USA: Carrier Corporation.
- McDonald, B. L. (2016). *Food Power: The Rise and Fall of the Postwar American Food System*. Oxford University Press.
- Nestle, M. (2007). *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, revised and expanded edition. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Nestle, M. (2010). *Safe Food: The Politics of Food Safety*. 2nd ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Pullman, M. & Wu, Z. (2011). *Food Supply Chain Management: Economic, Social and Environmental Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.
- Winne, M. (2009). *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*. Beacon Press.
- Lecture notes will be provided by the instructor for the assigned chapter(s) in the Course Materials section. The note will be a way to review the highlights of the chapter, outlining the key components from the assigned readings.

### **Course Evaluation:**

#### 1. Qualtrics Evaluation

A short Qualtrics evaluation will be administered mid-semester as a means to check-in with students to see how things are going.

#### 2. Student Course Evaluation

End of Semester Student Evaluations.

Current grades will be provided periodically throughout the semester or upon request.

Only in cases of extreme hardship will an incomplete be given. Please see the Student Handbook for qualifying circumstances.

Course Access and Content: This course will utilize CSU Blackboard. Use your current CSU username and password to access the course. Blackboard may be accessed at:

<https://www.csuohio.edu/center-for-elearning/academic-integrity-statement>

All course information, announcements, and content will be posted on this site. It is important that you access the site regularly for updates. Correspondence will be sent through your CSU email account, please be sure to check your email to stay up to date on any course announcements or personal correspondence. The following sections will be used the most frequently for this course:

Announcements: Important notices, reminders, and/or updates may be found here.

Syllabus: A copy of the syllabus for this course will be available here.

Course Materials: Chapter notes, and any additional course readings/material will be posted here.

Assignments: The weekly homework assignments (problem sets) will be available here.

Discussion Board: This link will take you to the discussion board for this course. All weekly reading assignments and related discussion should be posted in the designated forums.

Email: Emails can be sent from here to the instructor and/or other students in the course.

Additional Study Materials on Blackboard: Lecture PPTs: Lecture PPTs will be provided each week as PowerPoint slides. They are the summary of each week's readings and will be useful guidelines for students to learn key learning points and to prepare course requirements.

Other Supplement Study Materials: Supplemental readings, videos, or audio sources will be provided.

### **Class Policies:**

All assignments are due on the specified dates. Any late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day. For example, an A paper will be deducted to an A- if submitted one day after the due date and so forth.

Please check Blackboard and your school email regularly as all correspondence will be sent to students via these sources. Please make sure that the email address listed for you through CSU is correct, active, and the email you prefer to use for this course. Unless otherwise noted, students are expected to submit individual assignments, and papers.

### **Plagiarism Statement:**

In this course, you will submit written work in which you make use of information and ideas found in print or online sources. Whenever you use material from another writer, it is important that you quote or paraphrase appropriately and cite the source.

Never let it appear that ideas and information gleaned from other sources are your own. The CSU Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as "stealing and/or using the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as your own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, or the work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment." See full link below in the academic integrity section un university policies.

Failure to cite sources appropriately is plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will not be accepted. Consequences for plagiarism are up to the discretion of the instructor; they may range, for example, from rewriting all or part of a paper to a grade of F for the course. Students who plagiarize more than once are subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the university.

If you have a question about using or citing another writer's work, **DO NOT GUESS**. Check with your instructor or a consultant at the CSU Writing Center. Bring a printout of the original source and your paper to the consultation.



## University Policies:

**Academic Integrity:** Under no circumstances should a student copy, quote, misrepresent, or use the ideas or writing of another person without crediting the source. Plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty can result in a failing grade for the course and could result in the student being removed from the class and/or the university. Please see the CSU catalog for the university's rules regarding academic integrity.

<https://www.csuohio.edu/academic-integrity/academic-integrity>

<https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/plagiarism>

**CSU Writing Center:** Students needing assistance with writing assignments may utilize the Writing Center located in Tower 124. The Writing Center is free for CSU students, and their website provides several helpful resources for writing assignments:

<https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/writing-center>

**CSU Michael Schwartz Library:** The CSU Library provides an array of comprehensive resources for research, including access to academic journals, periodical publications, and the university-system card catalog, which may be useful when searching for references for the writing assignments:

<https://library.csuohio.edu/>

**Disabilities:** Accommodations are provided for students with disabilities. If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class, or at my office. To request academic accommodations (for example, a note taker), students must also register with the Office of Disability Services it is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements. For more information, contact the Office of Disability Services in Rhodes Tower West 210 or 687.2015, or visit their website at <https://www.csuohio.edu/disability/disability>

**Lift Up Vikes! Food Pantry:** The Lift Up Vikes Food Pantry provides support to students, faculty, and staff at CSU who need access to dietary and personal hygiene resources. Requests for food packages can be submitted at

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSePG9jKwnJy\\_I1p14efrydfEB639FmPXPm\\_kuK-bywU1\\_E\\_A/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSePG9jKwnJy_I1p14efrydfEB639FmPXPm_kuK-bywU1_E_A/viewform).

## Diversity Statement:

There must be a clear respect for diversity maintained in the class. This includes respect for people related to gender, sexual orientation, religious identity, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and other differences. All of us have something to offer, and together, we can cultivate a classroom environment where individuals of varying opinions, experiences, and backgrounds are able to learn in a supportive and inclusive setting.

The Levin College believes that we all must work hard to communicate the fact that everybody belongs in public service regardless of race, color, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, indigeneity, immigration status or other identities that have historically been denied equal access to education and public service. Those who have traditionally been welcomed in race, gender, and class segregated universities have the greatest responsibility to our peers to make this belief real. We call on all students and faculty to create a space where everyone is valued for the unique experiences they bring to public service.

## Chosen Name & Pronouns:

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance,

and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name and your pronouns. Please advise me of this early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

### COVID-19 Statement:

The COVID-19 pandemic is still present and serious, especially with the Delta and the new Omicron variants. While you are in class on campus, you are required to have a properly worn mask regardless of vaccination status, always cough or sneeze into your elbow or tissue, and adhere to other public safety protocols and directives for your specific classroom/lab/studio. Students who do not follow these health and safety requirements will be instructed to leave class immediately. If you violate this protocol, you will need to leave the classroom and MAY be marked absent. Repeated violations of these health-saving protocols may lead to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct (3344-83-04 [E] and [Z]) up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students with medical conditions that prevent them from wearing a mask should register with the Office of Disability Services to explore reasonable accommodation options as soon as possible. To register with the office, please visit their webpage at: <https://www.csuohio.edu/disability/register>. The CSU community thanks you for your cooperation!

**Any additional readings, outside of the textbook for this course, will be made available on Blackboard under the files tab in the additional readings folder.**

**\*Anything labeled “recommended readings” are not required; they are offered to provide more information of key concepts in food policy/systems.**

### Semester Schedule (Subject to change as necessary)

Week	Topic, Readings, and Assignment
Week 1 Aug. 28, 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 1 (MON): Introductions, course overview, and syllabus review.</li> <li>Session 2 (WED): Overview – Food Policy and Food Systems (Neff (2015) Chapter 1: Food Systems).</li> </ul>
<b><i>History, Key Concepts and Operating Principles of Sustainability and Food Systems</i></b>	
Week 2 Sep. 4, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 3 (MON): No Class – Labor Day (University Holiday).</li> <li>Session 4 (WED): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 2: Biography of concepts; Portney (2015) Chapter 1: The Concepts of Sustainability.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 1: Due Wednesday, September 6 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 3 Sep. 11, 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 5 (MON): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 3: Consumption and consumerism; Portney (2015) Chapter 3: Sustainability and Consumption.</li> <li>Session 6 (WED): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 4: Global challenges as wicked problems; Portney (2015) Chapter 2: Sustainability and the Roots of Controversy.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 2: Due Wednesday, September 13 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 4 Sep. 18, 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 7 (MON): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 6: Sustainability models and concepts.</li> <li>Session 8 (WED): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 8: Environmental dimensions of sustainability.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 3: Due Wednesday, September 20 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 5 Sep. 25, 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 9 (MON): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 9: Social dimension of sustainability.</li> <li>Session 10 (WED): Mulligan (2018) Chapter 10: Personal dimension of sustainability.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 4: Due Wednesday, September 27 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> <li><b>Draft – Policy Brief Due Monday, September 25 by 3:15pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
<b><i>Public Policy, The Policy Process, and Food Policy</i></b>	

Week 6 Oct. 2, 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 11 (MON): Rinfret et. al., (2021) Chapter 1: The Foundation; Chapter 2: The Policy Process and Policy Theories (Available on Blackboard).</li> <li>Session 12 (WED): Portney (2015) Chapter 5: Sustainability and Governments: The importance of Public Policies.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 5: Due Wednesday, October 2 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 7 Oct. 9, 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 13 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 7: Food System Economics.</li> <li>Session 14 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 8: Policies That Shape the US Food System.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 6: Due Wednesday, October 11 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 8 Oct. 16, 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 15 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 9: Food, Culture, and Society.</li> <li>Session 16 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 10: Promotional Marketing: A Driver of the Modern Food System.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 7: Due Wednesday, October 18 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> <li><b>Draft – Field Research Journal Due Monday, October 16 by 3:15pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
<b><i>Taking Action: Ecological Threats within the Food Systems and Agricultural Production</i></b>	
Week 9 Oct. 23, 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 19 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 3: Ecological Threats to and from Food Systems.</li> <li>Session 20 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 11: Crop Production and Food Systems.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 8: Due Wednesday, October 25 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul> <p>Qualtrics Evaluations - Due Sunday October 29 by 11:59pm EST.</p>
Week 10 Oct./Nov. 30, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 21 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 12: Food Animal Production.</li> <li>Session 22 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 13: Food Processing and Packaging.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 9: Due Wednesday, November 1 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> <li><b>Draft – Policy Analysis Outline Due Monday, October 30 by 3:15pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 11 Nov. 6, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 23 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 14: Food Distribution.</li> <li>Session 24 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 17: Healthy Food Environments.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 10: Due Wednesday, November 8 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
<b><i>Food Systems and Public Health</i></b>	
Week 12 Nov. 13, 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 25 (MON): Field Trip: Green City Growers.</li> <li>Session 26 (WED): Neff (2015) Chapter 2: Food System Public Health Effects.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 11: Due Wednesday, November 15 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> <li><b>Book Review Due: Monday, November 13 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 13 Nov. 20, 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 27 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 4: The Food System and Health Inequities.</li> <li>Session 29 (WED): No Class – Thanksgiving Break.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 12: Due Wednesday, November 22 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> <li><b>Draft – Policy Memo Due Monday, November 20 by 3:15pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 14 Nov. 27, 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 30 (MON): Neff (2015) Chapter 5: Public Health Implications of Household Food Insecurity. Chapter 6: Community Food Security.</li> <li>Session 31 (WED): Group 1: Presentations.</li> <li><b>Blog Entry 13: Due Wednesday, November 29 by 11:59pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
Week 15 Dec. 4, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Session 32 (MON): Group 2: Presentations.</li> <li>Session 33 (WED): Group 3: Presentations.</li> <li><b>Final Draft – Food Policy/System Portfolio Due Wednesday, December 6 by 3:15pm EST.</b></li> </ul>
<b><i>Finial Week</i></b>	
Week 16 Dec. 11, 13	<b>No Final For This Section.</b>