



Course Outline – Agriculture and Food Systems: Critical Conversations

General Information

Course #:	FN3355B
Section #:	001
Term:	Winter
Year:	2024-25
Delivery:	In-person
Course Day and Time:	
Course Location:	

Instructor Information

Name:	Dr. Matthews
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Telephone number for office appointments:	
Office hours:	
Office location:	

Course Description

This course will cover the processes and practices associated with food production in Canada. Appreciation of the whole food system (i.e., production, transformation, distribution, access, consumption, and food waste management), and the multiple aspects of sustainability, will provide a solid foundation for evidence-based conversations in future professional practice.

Prerequisite(s): [Foods and Nutrition 1070A/B](#) and [Foods and Nutrition 1241A/B](#) or the former Foods and Nutrition 1030E and [Foods and Nutrition 2241A/B](#).

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Required Course Materials

Required Reading List posted on OWL Brightspace.

Learning Outcomes

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

1. Explain the role of RDs in agriculture.

2. Describe soils, climate, and agricultural products across Canada.
3. Value challenges facing farmers in Canada.
4. Formulate a deeper understanding of Indigenous agriculture.
5. Summarize various farming techniques and explain why farmers choose specific approaches.
6. Justify the use of pesticides by all farmers, including organic.
7. Assess agriculture's role in food security.
8. Evaluate strategies to address food waste.
9. Explain economic, social, and environmental sustainability related to food production.
10. Outline the role of grazing cattle in maintaining wildlife habitat and mitigating climate change.
11. Critique dietary guidelines in achieving sustainable food systems and health for all.
12. Demonstrate understanding of practices related to biosecurity and animal health and welfare.
13. Explain traceability and food safety practices at home and on the farm.
14. Explain how technology in agriculture contributes to food production.
15. Appraise trends in the future of agriculture.
16. Support the role of food and nutrition professionals in science communication.
17. Explain production practices and challenges associated with various farm products.
18. Demonstrate basic skills necessary for professional performance (e.g., time and workload management; effective and respectful written, oral, and interpersonal communication; leadership; self-reflection; ethics and judgment; independent literature searching, retrieval, and management).

Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP)

(Specific to the Brescia School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, Honors Specialization in Nutrition and Dietetics)

As an accredited dietetic program in Canada, we are required to meet the ICDEP. These competencies consist of 7 interrelated Domains (areas) of Practice Competencies: Food and Nutrition Expertise, Professionalism and Ethics, Communication and Collaboration, Management and Leadership, Nutrition Care, Population Health Promotion, and Food Provision. This course is designed to ensure that students who complete the course as outlined obtain certain competencies in the above domains. This is required to meet entry level dietetic practice.

For more information on the ICDEP please visit the [UWO OWL FN UNDERGRADUATE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION](#) site.

Teaching Methodology and Expectations of Students

Students are expected to search for and read assigned articles **before** class (Reading List posted on OWL Brightspace). Attendance at lectures and active engagement in class discussions is required.

Copyright and Intellectual Property

PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines, and other components of the course materials are typically the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, video-recording, photographing, sharing on social media, or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited. Such action may be considered a Code of Conduct violation and lead to sanctions.

Use of Generative AI

For this course, students may not use generative AI (e.g., Chat GPT, QuillBot) for graded course assessments. Use of generative AI will be considered a scholastic offence which may be subject to the penalties outlined in the academic calendar.

Evaluation

Component	Weight	Date/Deadline	Learning Outcomes
Mid-term 1	30%	Jan. 28, 2025	Students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain the role of RDs in agriculture.2. Describe soils, climate, and agricultural products across Canada.3. Value challenges facing farmers in Canada.4. Formulate a deeper understanding of Indigenous agriculture.5. Summarize various farming techniques and explain why farmers choose specific approaches.6. Justify the use of pesticides by all farmers, including organic.7. Assess agriculture's role in food security.8. Evaluate strategies to address food waste.9. Explain production practices and challenges associated with various farm products.
Mid-term 2	35%	Mar. 4, 2025	Students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain economic, social, and environmental sustainability related to food production.2. Outline the role of grazing cattle in maintaining wildlife habitat and mitigating climate change.3. Critique dietary guidelines in achieving sustainable food systems and health for all.4. Explain production practices and challenges associated with various farm products.
Final Exam	35%	Apr.11-30 TBA	Students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Demonstrate understanding of practices related to biosecurity and animal health and welfare.2. Explain traceability and food safety practices at home and on the farm.3. Explain how technology in agriculture contributes to food production.4. Appraise trends in the future of agriculture.5. Support the role of food and nutrition professionals in science communication.6. Explain production practices and challenges associated with various farm products.

Per University policy, makeup examinations for final exams (i.e., during the December exam periods) are held on the Thursday of the first week of classes in January (for first-term courses), excepting when a change to this date is approved by the Associate Dean.

Course Content

Class	Date	Topics (Required Reading List posted on OWL Brightspace)
1	Tues., Jan. 7	Introduction to course; RDs in agriculture
2	Thurs., Jan. 9	Agriculture in Canada; soil; Indigenous agriculture
3	Tues., Jan. 14	Organic dairy farming
4	Thurs., Jan. 16	Farming techniques; pests and pesticides
5	Tues., Jan. 21	Beekeeping
6	Thurs., Jan. 23	Food security; food waste
7	Tues., Jan. 28	Mid-term 1 (30%) Covers classes 1 – 6
8	Thurs., Jan. 30	Economic sustainability
9	Tues., Feb. 4	Local food; market gardening; fruits and vegetables
10	Thurs., Feb. 6	Social sustainability
11	Tues., Feb. 11	Grains and oilseeds; grain marketing and trading
12	Thurs., Feb. 13	Environmental sustainability
		Spring Reading Week – Feb. 15-23 – no class
13	Tues., Feb. 25	Cattle and wildlife habitat
14	Thurs., Feb. 27	Dietary guidelines and sustainable food production
15	Tues., Mar. 4	Mid-term 2 (30%) Covers classes 8 – 14
16	Thurs., Mar. 6	Biosecurity; turkeys; chickens
17	Tues., Mar. 11	Animal health and welfare; laying hens
18	Thurs., Mar 13	Food safety; traceability
19	Tues., Mar. 18	Robotic dairy; supply management
20	Thurs., Mar 20	Biotechnology
21	Tues., Mar. 25	Agricultural technology
22	Thurs., Mar 27	Climate change; future trends in agriculture
23	Tues., Apr. 1	Pork; garlic
24	Thurs., Apr 3	Role of FN professionals in science communication
	TBA	Final exam (40%) Covers classes 16 – 24

FHS Common Course Outline Attachment

Statement on Prerequisite Checking

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Support Services

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Academic Support and Engagement - <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca>
2. Wellness and Well-being - <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

In accordance with [policy](#), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Health and Wellness

As part of a successful undergraduate experience at Western, we encourage you to make your health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre as part of their registration fees. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page (<http://www.music.uwo.ca/>), or the McIntosh Gallery (<http://mcintoshgallery.ca/>). Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

If you are in emotional or mental distress, please visit Western Psychological Services (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych>) for a list of options for obtaining help.

Use of Electronic Devices

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class.

Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. For those classes in which we use this technology, it is your responsibility to ensure that the device is activated and functional. You must speak with the course instructor immediately, if you have any concerns about whether or not your clicker is malfunctioning.

You must use only your own clicker. For all components of this course in which clicker records are used to compute a portion of the grade:

- The use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence;
- The possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offense

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, in the [Academic Calendar \(westerncalendar.uwo.ca\)](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca).

Plagiarism

Student work is expected to be original. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and could lead to a zero on the assignment in question, a zero in this course, or your expulsion from the university. You are plagiarizing if you insert a phrase, sentence or paragraph taken directly from another author without acknowledging that the work belongs to him/her. Similarly, you are plagiarizing if you paraphrase or summarize another author’s ideas without acknowledging that the ideas belong to someone else. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Re-submission of Previously Graded Material

Without the explicit written permission of the instructor, you may not submit any academic work for which credit has been obtained previously, or for which credit is being sought, in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

Use of Statistical Pattern Recognition on Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Academic Considerations and Absences from Lectures and Assessments

Religious Accommodation

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request (in writing) any necessary academic considerations at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the academic advisors in their Home Department. Additional information is provided in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Academic Accommodation

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. Students with ongoing accommodation needs within this course are also encouraged to contact [Accessible Education](#), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances that are medical or compassionate in nature. These extenuating circumstances may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. In all cases, students are advised to consult with the academic advisors in their home units, at their earliest opportunity. Academic advisors may refer students to [Accessible Education](#) for ongoing academic accommodations.

Most forms of academic consideration require documentation, and this documentation is to be submitted to academic advisors within five (5) business days of their return to academic responsibilities. Any such documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's [Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy](#). Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic considerations shall be determined by academic advising, in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic considerations may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic considerations shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”).

Whenever possible, students who require academic considerations should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Under no circumstances are students expected to submit rationales for (or documentation of) any absences, to course instructors. Students are, however, required to follow-up with course instructors, in a timely fashion, to identify the ways in which the academic consideration will be implemented.

Examination Conflicts

A student completing tests or examinations with flexible submission times (e.g., where one or more evaluation is a take-home assessment) cannot request alternative arrangements unless a conflict cannot be avoided by rescheduling writing the exam to a different time within the window specified by the instructor. This applies to direct conflicts as well as “heavy load” conflicts (e.g., three exams within a 23-hour period). The student should discuss any concerns about a potential conflict and/or request academic considerations with their academic advising unit prior to the deadline to drop a course without academic penalty

In the case of online tests and examinations, use of a “Conflict Room,” wherein student can write two proctored exams concurrently, will be interpreted as arrangements for continuous proctoring.

Contingency Plan for an In-Person Class Pivoting to 100% Online Learning

In the event of an event that requires this course to pivot to online content delivery, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Tests and examinations in this course may be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide **personal information** (including some biometric data) and the session will be **recorded**. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western’s Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

Appealing a Grade Within this Course

You have the right to appeal any grade within this course. The grounds for a grade appeal may be one or more of: medical or compassionate circumstances, extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control, bias, inaccuracy, or unfairness.

A request for relief against a mark or grade must be initiated with the instructor as soon as possible after the mark is issued. This appeal need not be in writing. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily with the instructor, a written request for relief must be submitted to the Chair of the Department within three weeks of the date that the mark was issued. In the case of a final grade in a course, the written request for relief must

be submitted to the Chair of the department by January 31st (for first-term half courses) or June 30th (for second-term half courses or full-year courses).

Your appeal letter does not need to be lengthy, but it should clearly indicate the detailed reason(s) for your request, any circumstances that impacted your ability to perform successfully, and the relief you are requesting. You are encouraged to provide supporting documentation if you identify extenuating circumstances that contributed to your situation. The Office of the Ombudsperson has extensive information available on their website (<https://uwo.ca/ombuds/get-help.html>) related to academic appeals.