

## Sustainable Food Systems (I002765)

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits 5.0**

**Study time 150 h**

### Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2024-2025

A (semester 2)

English

Gent

lecture

independent work

### Lecturers in academic year 2024-2025

Dessein, Joost

LA27

lecturer-in-charge

Van Schoubroeck, Sophie

LA27

co-lecturer

### Offered in the following programmes in 2024-2025

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject India)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Middle East Studies)	5	A
International Master of Science in Agro- and Environmental Nematology	5	A
International Master of Science in Rural Development	5	A
Master of Science in Bioscience Engineering: Sustainable Urban Bioscience Engineering	5	A
Master of Science in Nutrition and Food Systems	5	A
Exchange Programme in Bioscience Engineering: Agricultural Sciences (master's level)	5	A

### Teaching languages

English

### Keywords

Food systems, sustainability, food environment, food security, food democracy, food sovereignty

### Position of the course

This course focuses on sustainable food systems: we unpack the concept of sustainable food systems, explore the different narratives found in literature, discuss the challenges of globalized food chains and search to understand what is needed to make the food systems more sustainable. Particular attention is given to concepts of food security, food democracy, food sovereignty, fair trade, and transition pathways.

### Contents

The aim of this course is to introduce, discuss and frame aspects of sustainable food systems with a (non-exclusive) focus on the Global South. Concepts, theories, determinants and opportunities for sustainable food systems and agriculture are discussed. We unpack and analyse the different elements that constitute a sustainable food system, and pay attention to its different components. It allows us to explore different approaches and narratives to understand sustainable food systems - such as food security, food democracy, food sovereignty and fair trade - and to take position in the accompanying scientific and societal debates on these issues. We invite students to think about a sustainable food system and to express their critical analyses during response lectures and a group assignment.

### Initial competences

## Final competences

- 1 The student knows and assesses aspects of sustainable food systems.
- 2 The student is able to analyse the food environment and its components, including environmental, technological, political, economic, social, cultural and demographic dimensions.
- 3 The student understands different narratives and approaches to food security, food democracy and food sovereignty.
- 4 The student takes position in scientific and societal debates on sustainable food systems.

## Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

## Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

## Teaching methods

Group work, Lecture, Independent work

## Extra information on the teaching methods

A series of lectures introduces sustainable food systems as a multidimensional concept with different narratives. The lectures are organized in blocks in each of which a particular dimension of sustainable food systems is discussed. Dimensions studied include food security, food democracy, food sovereignty, fair trade, and transition pathways to a sustainable future. More dimensions could be added if topical and timely. The lectures are accompanied by response lectures for which the students may be asked to read papers before coming to class and to participate in the discussions. A group work consists of making and pitching a poster on future pathways towards more sustainable food systems

## Study material

Type: Slides

Name: Slides for all chapters.  
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty  
Optional: no  
Language : English  
Available on Ufora : Yes  
Online Available : No  
Available in the Library : No  
Available through Student Association : No

Type: Reader

Name: Selection of papers and reports  
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty  
Optional: no  
Language : English  
Available on Ufora : Yes  
Online Available : No  
Available in the Library : No  
Available through Student Association : No

## References

Several books on sustainable food systems and food environment are available in the library.

Websites of international organisations (World Bank, IFPRI, IFAD, IMF)  
International journals including World Development, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Development Studies, Food Policy, Agricultural Economics, Journal of Rural Studies, Journal of Peasant Studies, Journal of Cleaner Production

## Course content-related study coaching

Interactive support through Ufora, coaching on appointment by lecturer or assistant

## Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

## Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment

**Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period**

Written assessment

**Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Participation, Assignment

**Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

**Extra information on the examination methods**

The exam is based on the lectures and reading material provided in class; the assignment consists of making and pitching a poster (written and oral); attendance and participation in the response lectures is required.

**Calculation of the examination mark**

The exam counts for 65% of the final grade; the assignment counts for 25% of the final grade; participation in the response lectures counts for 10% of the final grade. In case a student obtains less than 10/20 for either the exam or the assignment, the student can no longer obtain a pass mark for the course unit as a whole. If the total score does turn out to be a mark of ten or more out of twenty, this is reduced to the highest fail mark (i.e. 9/20). In case the student needs to retake the exam and/or the assignment, the score obtained on the participation in the response lectures is transferred to the second examination session.

**Facilities for Working Students**

The poster developed in group is an important part of this course and requires students to be able to participate in classes and groupwork. This may be difficult for students who work and who can not join classes.