

Food and Nutrition Policies (1002784)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2025-2026

A (semester 2) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Dessein, Joost	LA27	lecturer-in-charge
Hung, Christine Yung	LA27	co-lecturer
Lachat, Carl	LA23	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Nutrition and Food Systems	5	A
Master of Science in Global Health	5	A
Exchange Programme in Bioscience Engineering: Food Science and Nutrition (master's level)	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Governance of food systems; Food policy; Nutrition policy; Food justice

Position of the course

This course provides an overview of contemporary focus areas in food and nutrition policies across the world. The objective of this course is threefold:

1. To make students familiar with the principles and diversity of food and nutrition policies
2. To enable students to integrate and apply all their knowledge and skills in public health, nutrition and food systems to the development and analysis of food and nutrition policies
3. To enable students to further develop professional and personal competencies in food and nutrition science through providing them with the skills and competences to critically evaluate food and nutrition policy actions. This course will also pay attention to communication of evidence based recommendations to policies in relation to food and nutrition.

Contents

The course revolves around three modules: food governance, policy interventions at Eu level, and the professional field of food and nutrition policy. Each module reflects the combination of an excursion, lectures and debate.

The **first module: food governance**:

- the *excursion* explores the unique setting of the city of Ghent as a frontrunner in local food policy
- the *lectures and debates* discuss the shift from classic government to contemporary governance settings; the concepts of 'politics of scale', 'environmental justice', 'food justice' and 'food sovereignty'; and the power of discourses in policy making

The **second module: policy interventions at the EU level**:

- the *excursion* leads to the EU-environment of Brussels and its multiple lobbying actors.
- the *lectures and exercises* discuss classification of food and nutrition policies; Evaluation of the intervention effectiveness stakeholder participation

and the key success factors for public health campaigns

The **third module : the professional field of food and nutrition policy**

- *Excursions* to selected examples of policy making and advocacy in the field of nutrition and food policies, at European and local levels.
- *the lectures and debates* illustrate real-life practices in the field of evidence-informed policy making in nutrition and inform about 'policy briefs' as link between science and policy making.

A **final group work** brings the different elements together in the re-enactment of a policy process about a relevant topic that will be defined at the beginning of the semester.

Initial competences

Basic knowledge and know how acquainted through the programme of the first year Master in Rural Development and Nutrition.

Final competences

- 1 **Knowledge:** In-depth understanding of the characteristics of and requirements for a good food and nutrition policy.
- 2 **Skills:** Ability to justify the theoretical bases for critical appraisal of food and nutrition policy at national and regional level, within an international context.
- 3 **Skills:** Ability to contribute effectively to the planning (including implementation and monitoring) of food and nutrition policies, taking into consideration health and environmental issues.
- 4 **Skills:** Ability to make reasoned proposals for the implementation and monitoring of food and nutrition policy, taking into consideration the broader societal, political, economic and technological constraints.
- 5 **Skills:** Make reasoned proposals for monitoring and evaluating food and nutrition policy in line with state-of-the-art practices and methodologies.
- 6 **Attitude/Skills:** The students are competent in advocacy in food and nutrition policy planning and are able to draft evidence based policy recommendations.

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, Excursion, Lecture, Independent work

Study material

None

References

See UFORA

Course content-related study coaching

Permanent coaching through UFORA.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Assignment

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

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Peer and/or self assessment, 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 evaluation is based on the following elements:

- the policy process: group position paper
- the policy process: the final debate (evaluation based on a rubric, detailing expectations about listening, respectful behaviour, argumentation and reacting)
- peer-evaluation

- individual reflection on the policy process
- individual policy brief

Calculation of the examination mark

The final score is based on the following components:

- the policy process: group position paper (30%)
- the policy process: the final debate (30%)
- peer-evaluation (10%)
- individual reflection on the policy process (10%)
- individual policy brief (20%)