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# Syllabus: How to Recover a Truly Sustainable Food System: A Look at Food Waste and Recovery

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**STOCKSCH 197 W: How to Recover a Truly Sustainable Food System:  
A Look at Food Waste and Recovery**

**Instructor:**

Mary Bell, B.S.  
Angela Roell, M.Ed.

**Class Meeting:** Tuesday 4:00-5:15 pm, **Tentative Location: Paige Conference Room**

**Office Hours:** By appointment, Ag Engineering, Room TBD

**Contact Information:**

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**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to food waste, and the impact waste has on our food system. We will introduce the current food recovery hierarchy, and examines how consumers, producers and distributors waste food. We will explore the environmental and social impact of food waste in our food system, and introduce social and policy initiatives employed to recover food. Students will read, reflect and discuss the actionable steps being taken to shift our local food system's food waste into food recovery.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Required Course Materials:**

A blank notebook should be *brought to every class*. This notebook will be used for notes, reflections and homework assignments. It is a vital part of your grade. Laptops will be permitted as a note taking tool ONLY if students elect to create a digital journal.

There will be no formal text book for this course, readings will be distributed via .pdf

**Grading:**

<u>Project</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Pre-Course Self Assessment	10.00%
Reflection Journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview Project</li><li>• Case Study Notes</li><li>• Weekly Homework</li><li>• Technology Tools</li></ul>	40.00%
Case Study Presentation	40.00%
Post-Course Self Reflection	10.00%

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1, 1/24/17, Course Introduction**

In Class:

Review Syllabus  
Based on current knowledge and assumptions students will build EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy in small

groups

Self Assessment Survey & Learning Styles Quiz

- Students will complete initial self assessment survey
- Students will complete a learning style quiz:  
<http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/>

Homework:

Read:

- *American Wasteland*, by Jonathan Bloom: Chapter 4, A Culture of Waste: Our Fall from Thrift and Our Imminent Return
- *Wasted: How America Is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill*, by Dana Gunders, Natural Resources Defense Council

Do:

- Use your phone's camera to document your own food waste. In one week take one photograph per day the food that you throw out, discard due to spoilage, compost, etc. Share photos via UMass UDRIVE

***Week 2, 1/31/17, How Does Food Waste Impact the Food System***

In Class:

A definition and discussion of the EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy

- *EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy* and *Three Reasons for a Growing Interest in Food Loss*, Economic Research Service, USDA

Review and discuss our class's cumulative weekly food waste

Homework:

Read:

- *American Wasteland*, by Jonathan Bloom: Chapter 5, American Farms: Growing Waste, Selling Perfection
- *Causes of Food Loss and Waste at the Farm, Farm-to-Retail, Retail, and Consumer Levels*, Economic Research Service, USDA

Do:

- Reflect on the Food Recovery Hierarchy, how is it different than you assumed? How is it similar?

***Week 3, 2/7/17, Why is there Food Waste?***

In Class:

Discuss readings from *American Wasteland* and the Economic Research Service Think/Pair/Share Activity

Homework:

Read/Do:

- Review the website: <http://www.leanpath.com/>
- Read one case study from the “case study” tab
  - How is Lean Path using technology to address food waste and recovery?
    - Record your thoughts in reflection journal

***Week 4, 2/14/17, The Gap- Expiration Dates and Labeling***

In Class:

Facilitated discussion with student questions

Experiential Activity

Case Study Overview and Distribution

Homework:

Review assigned Case Study, record brainstorm and any actionable steps in your journal

***Week 5, 2/21, The Value of Food vs. The Cost of Waste***

In Class:

Interview Questions Brainstorm

Discussion about Farm-Based Food Waste

Homework:

Read:

- *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty* by Mark Winne: Chapter 7: Growing Obese and Diabetic; Going Organic and Local

Do:

- *Interview Questions Project* published/shared to begin

***Week 6, 2/28, Food Insecurity and Nutrition***

In Class:

An introduction to food insecurity with facilitated discussion and student questions

Homework:

Read:

- *How Food Made History* by BW Higman: *Chapter Seven: Cooking, Class, and Consumption*

Do:

- Review Rachel's Table website: <http://rachelstablespringfield.org/>
- Generate two questions you have about Rachel's Table's gleaning programs and their community impact

***Week 7, 3/7, Gleaning as a Food Recovery Tool***

In Class:

Facilitated discussion with student questions

Homework:

Read:

- Review the Franklin County Community Development Center website:
  - <http://www.fccdc.org/>
- Watch their introduction video on YouTube:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hI3Fq09fx4>

Do:

- Meet with your Case Study team, record brainstorm and actionable steps in your reflection journal

***Week 8, Spring Break***

***Week 9, 3/21, Redirecting Food Waste: Farm-Based Food Recovery***

In Class:

Panel Discussion, guests TBD

Homework:

Read:

- Review the website: <http://www.foodtodonate.com/>

Do:

STOCKSCH 197 W: *How to Recover a Truly Sustainable Food System - A Look at Food Waste and Recovery Spring 2017*

- How is Food Donation Connection using technology to address food waste? How could they do better?
  - Record your thoughts in reflection journal, 1-2 pages

***Week 10, 3/28, Creative Community Initiatives Addressing Food Insecurity***

In Class:

How is food insecurity being addressed in our community?  
Facilitated discussion with student questions  
Facilitated review of results found in *Interview Questions* Project

Homework:

Read:

- *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty* by Mark Winne: Chapter 9: Public Policy; Food for the People

***Week 11, 4/4, Bill Emerson Food Donation Act***

In Class:

Presentation by Mary Bell  
Facilitated discussion with student questions

Homework:

Read:

- Mass Local Food Action Plan: Processing
- Mass Local Food Action Plan: Food Access, Security and Health
- <http://mafoodsystem.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/MLFSPFull.pdf>

Do:

- Write about two new things you learned from the Mass Local Food Action Plan
  - How are these ideas actionable in your local or regional food system?
  - Are any of these ideas being implemented in our local food shed?

***Week 12, 4/11, Mass Local Food Action Plan***

In Class:

Discuss Mass Local Food Action Plan  
Think/Pair/Share Activity

Homework:

Review:

- *Legal Fact Sheet for Massachusetts Food Donation: Liability Protections*, Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic, July 2015
- Federal *enhanced* - Tax Deduction for Food Donation – a legal guide, Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic, April 2016

***Week 13, Patriots Day: Monday Schedule***

***Week 14, 4/25, Self Assessment and Course Review***

In Class:

Students will complete a final self assessment  
Students will complete an exit survey

Homework:

Meet with group to work on final presentations

**Week 15 & 16, 5/2-5/9, Final Presentations**

In Class:

Final Presentations of *Case Studies*

**Attendance at all presentations is mandatory to receive a passing grade**

**Assignments**

Project	Description	Due Date
<p>Case Studies in Food Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>A Perfect Loop - Food Recovery in San Diego</i>, BioCycle 2013</li> <li>○ <i>The Good Food Fight for Good Samaritans: The History of Alleviating Liability and Equalizing Tax Incentives for Food Donors</i>, Stacey H. Van Zuiden- 2012 Drake University</li> <li>○ 3<sup>rd</sup> Case Study TBD</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will review one of three case studies of a food recovery project in our local/regional food system assigned by instructors</li> <li>2. Case studies are designed to address our three themes: farm/environmental impact, food security/food justice, and food policy</li> <li>3. Students will record main ideas from the reading in their reflection journal</li> <li>4. Students will generate a list of 3-5 ideas for addressing the thematic nature of the case study and record them in the reflection journal</li> <li>5. Students will work in small groups assigned by instructors</li> <li>6. Using case studies students will generate an actionable idea for addressing food waste and recovery at a campus, local or regional level</li> <li>7. Students will prepare a presentation of their main ideas and actionable steps to address food waste using Prezi or Power Point</li> </ol>	<p>5/2/17 5/9/17</p>
<p>Interview Project</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As a class students will compile interview questions</li> <li>2. Instructors will generate a survey based on student input and distribute digitally via Google Forms</li> <li>3. Students will interview 3 people in their communities</li> </ol>	<p>03/28/17</p>

	<p>about their food system experience: one consumer, one producer, one retailer or distributor</p> <p>4. Students will reflect on their findings in reflection journal</p> <p>5. Findings will be shared in class and discussed</p>	
Reflection Journal	<p>1. All weekly reflections and writing assignments MUST be kept in one reflection journal</p> <p>2. The journal will be collected on the last day of class</p>	04/25/17

**Course Policies**

1. The success of this course depends on student participation. Everyone is expected to arrive on time, ready to comment, answer questions, and actively contribute. Cell phones, iPads, etc should be turned off during class unless you have requested accommodations from the instructor prior to class. Please bring all reading materials to class. Laptops will be permitted as a note taking tool ONLY if students elect to create a digital journal.
2. Written work is to be handed in on time. *Late work will not be accepted.* We will make exceptions to this rule only in the case of serious emergency, and only if contacted via phone or email within 24 hours of missing the scheduled deadline.
3. Students are responsible for course information sent to their UMass email accounts. We will respond to your email within 24 hours, please plan accordingly.
4. Office hours will be by appointment, if a question or concerns arises
5. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Use care in written work to avoid the appearance of cheating/plagiarism. Please discuss questions with us if you have a concern.
6. If you are in need of learning accommodations please come speak with one of us at the beginning of the semester so we can guarantee your needs are fully met throughout the course.