

**American University of Beirut
Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences**

FSEC 300: Food Security: Challenges and Contemporary Debate

Course Syllabus

Credits: 3

Course Duration: approximately 15 weeks

Contact Hours: 3 hours per week

Course Instructor: Assistant Professor Martin Keulertz, PhD
Room: 117, Reynolds building
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Course Description

This course introduces concepts and principles of food security, namely availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability of food supply. Students are familiarized with the history of thought on food security, from Malthus to the Green Revolution to Sen to Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons and the inclusion of political, environmental and social factors in considering food security.

Course Schedule: Tuesdays 4.20pm – 7.20pm

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Format

FSEC 300 meets once a week during term 1 for lectures seminars of 75 minutes each session. Lectures are based on sequential materials as proposed in the syllabus. There is an extensive amount of reading and discussion that is expected in this upper level course during both the class and seminars. The recitation session will be an opportunity to participate more fully in critiques and discussions of assigned readings, lead reviews of topical area and meet with invited guest speakers. All materials should be carefully reviewed; handouts and information covered during class discussion and on Moodle are all subject to evaluation.

Program Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the concept of food and nutrition security : its determinants and outcomes
- Learn the basic underlying fundamentals of food and nutrition security such as economic, political, health and environmental factors
- Identify key factors for food insecurity in mid-income and developing countries
- Understand the current picture and future challenges for food and nutrition security both globally and in the Arab world
- Develop knowledge and skills in the assessment of food and nutrition security both regionally and globally
- Become familiar with the economic, political, environmental and health methods used to measure food and nutrition security
- Develop knowledge and skills needed to design, plan, implement and evaluate public food and nutrition security strategies.

FSEC 300 supports the following program learning outcomes, such that students are able to:

- Explain the core areas of food security and the relationships between its multi-sectorial dimensions;
- Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);
- Relate food security to political, cultural, gender, and ethical issues, including the broader human rights debate on the right to food;
- Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences; and,
- Assess food security strategies, programs, and their implementation in developing countries and the MENA region.

Course Learning Outcomes and General Overview of the Course

Learning Outcomes	Teaching Strategy/Activities by which the CLO will be met	Assessment Method & Criteria for Evaluation	Corresponding Program Learning Outcome
Explain the underlying human and physical fundamentals of food and nutrition security (demographic change, global trade, health factors, water and land availability)	Lectures, seminars, group discussion and guest lectures	literature review, final examination, participation and attendance	Explain the core areas of food security and the relationships between its multi-sectorial dimensions;
Assess the current discourse on food and nutrition security by critically analyzing contemporary thinking of different thinkers	lectures, seminars, group discussions and guest lectures	literature review, final examination, participation and attendance	Relate food security to political, cultural, gender, and ethical issues, including the broader human rights debate on the right to food and Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger);
Explain the key global and regional players in food and nutrition security from an economic, political, cultural and environmental perspective	lectures, seminars, group discussions and guest lectures	literature review and final examination	Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences
Demonstrate mastery of written communication skills (written reports, written policy notes)	seminar, group discussion	student presentations, literature review, final examination	Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences
Demonstrate knowledge of the common problems facing communication for development in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) countries (class discussions & group work)	seminar, group discussion	student presentations, literature review, final exam, attendance and participation	Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences
Present and document results and findings in a scientifically appropriate format (student presentations)	seminar, group discussion	student presentations, attendance and participation	Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences

Demonstrate mastery of oral presentation skills (public speaking, PowerPoint)	seminar, group discussion	student presentations and participation	Communicate effectively on the issue of food security, from its relevance for social, environmental and political stability in developing countries to the interpretation of research findings, to diverse institutional and community audiences
Identify potential risk factors for food and nutrition security through environmental, economic and demographic change	lectures, seminars, guest presentations, group discussion	literature review, student presentations, attendance and participation and final examination	Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);
Relate technological change such as the green revolution, food safety and advanced irrigation techniques to food and nutrition security strategies	lectures, seminar, group discussions	Literature review, student presentations, attendance and participation and final examination	Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);
Identify the role of women, principles of food safety and prevention of food-borne illness and their impact on food security	lectures, seminar, group discussions	Literature review, final exam, student presentations, attendance and participation	Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);
Relate future food availability scenarios (food prices) to food and nutrition security	lectures, seminar, group discussions	Literature review, student presentation, attendance and participation	Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);
Describe the potential impacts of climate change on food insecurity	lectures, seminar, group discussions, guest presentation	student presentation, attendance and participation	Discuss the linkages between food security and wider socio-economic development in the context of the MENA region (e.g., health, water availability, climate, production);

Student Evaluation

	Due Date	Weighting
Literature review 2000 words	30 October	30%
Final examination	December (date tbd)	30%
Seminar presentations	Throughout course	20%
Attendance and Participation	Throughout course	20%

Course Policies

- Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to engage in the topic identified in the syllabus or announced in class. It is expected that in an upper-level, multi-discipline class, students will seek out additional clarification as needed based. Likewise, students will be encouraged to bring in their diverse knowledge and expertise to enhance our collective knowledge and understanding of food and nutrition security. Students will be expected to show respect towards all members of the learning community. After the first class meeting, complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class. Any adjustments made to assignments are the responsibility of the student. There is an expectation for meaningful engagement which cannot happen if students are not completing the readings or not coming to class in a consistent manner.
- Students are expected to attend all lectures and seminars. Absence, whether excused or not, from any class does not excuse the student from his/her responsibility for the work done or from any announcement made during his/her absence. Students who miss more than one-fifth of the sessions in the first ten weeks of the semester will lose all credit for the course and will receive a grade of W (withdraw). (AUB Catalogue).
- Course exam will be “closed-book/closed-notes”. Students should leave their bags, books, lecture notes, etc. in unoccupied areas of the exam room, and switch off their mobile phones, before the start of the exam.
- Plagiarism in produced material for all assignment tasks is unacceptable. Students might be asked to bring proof of originality of work. If plagiarism is suspected, a failing grade may be given on the assignment. Please read AUB’s policy on cheating and plagiarism <http://pnp.aub.edu.lb/general/conductcode/158010081.html>
- Cell phones, Blackberries, beepers and pagers must be turned off during class and discussion.
- Students must provide a medical form in case of late assignments. Otherwise, the assignment will be marked as failed.

- If you have a documented special needs and anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability, please contact me and/or your academic advisor, as well as the Counseling Center in the Office of Student Affairs (x3196), as soon as possible to discuss options for accommodations. Those seeking accommodations must submit a [Special Needs Support Request Form](#) along with the required documentation.
- Any specific policies that the Food Security Program has would apply to this course.

Course Outline and Required Reading Material

Please refer to the course Moodle page.