ENVS 350F (4 credits)
Solutions to Environmental Problems (STEP): Food Systems
Loyola University Chicago
SYLLABUS - Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Tania Schusler, 425 BVM Hall, 773-508-8954, tschusler@luc.edu
Office hours: Tuesday, 2:30-3:30 p.m. and by appointment
Class meets: Tuesday from 1:00-2:15 in IES 218 and Thursday from 1:00-3:45 in IES 217
Sakai site: https://sakai.luc.edu/portal/site/ENVS_350F_01E_6078_1156

Contributing Instructors
This course is team taught by faculty and staff from across LUC and local community members including:
Susan Pachikara, Cardamom Kitchen
Karen Keane, New Leaf Natural Grocery
Chris Peterson, IES
Marilyn Krogh, Sociology
Matt Ryan, The Talking Farm
John Frendreis, Political Science
Kevin Erickson, IES
David Treering, IES
Breanne Heath, Peterson Garden Project
Lindsay Shepherd, Peterson Garden Project
Joanne Kouba, School of Nursing
Michael Welch, School of Business
Mary Wondolowski, World's Finest Chocolate
Hahn Pham, Climate Cycle
Ryan Anderson, Delta Institute

Course Overview
STEP is an interdisciplinary and hands-on course in which students develop and implement practical, local solutions to pressing and complex global problems. Because of our foci on community engagement and leadership in sustainability, this course satisfies Loyola’s Engaged Learning core requirement.

IDEA Objectives
- Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
- Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the sustainability field

Course Objectives
By the end of the semester, students should be able to:
- Articulate a multi-disciplinary understanding of the food system.
- Make food-related choices that align with one’s values.
- Examine problems within the food system at a global scale and identify their root causes.
- Actualize practical solutions to problems within the food system through collective action at a local scale.
- Demonstrate skills essential for working in the sustainability field: critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, problem solving, project management, and leadership.
Course Structure
We will explore the social, historical, economic, political, and environmental contexts of our food system from local to global scales. We will also focus on the health, environmental, and social consequences of the food system, while working to address some of these issues on campus and in our local community. The course consists of the following elements:

Lectures - Faculty from multiple academic departments within Loyola and food system professionals from the community will provide you with a well-rounded understanding of the environmental, social, economic, and political intricacies of our local, national, and global food system. **You will be assessed on lecture content through periodic Synthesis Papers and class discussion.**

Readings - Weekly readings will be posted on Sakai and are intended to enrich lecture content. In addition, you are required to read Barbara Kingsolver’s *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life.* (If you have previously read this book, please speak with me at the start of the semester.) **You will be assessed on readings content through periodic Synthesis Papers and a Book Reflection.**

Discussions - Discussions of readings and course content will occur periodically throughout the semester. Discussions will explore student and faculty ideas on the major concepts of the course. **You will be assessed by your participation in class discussions.**

Labs and Field Trips - Laboratory activities and field trips will occur on selected Thursdays throughout the semester. Labs will provide you with technical skills and experience related to the food life cycle. Field trips are opportunities to get out of the classroom and see examples of solutions learned about in class. **You will be assessed by your participation in labs and field trips.**

Project-Based Learning - A **significant** portion of student work in the course will focus on semester-long group projects. Through the projects, you have an opportunity to apply learning toward creating real and lasting solutions on campus or in the local community. **You will be assessed through 1) pre-flection on assets and learning goals, 2) presentation of proposed project, 3) project plan 4) teamwork check-in, 5) final project product, and 6) final poster presentation.**

Required Text
- Weekly readings will be posted on Sakai.
Assignments (660 points total)

Synthesis Papers 1-3 (50 points each, 150 points total)
DUE at 11:55 pm on 9/17, 10/15 and 11/12 via Sakai Assignments

Approximately every four weeks, you will write a paper that reflects upon and synthesizes your understanding of course content from lectures and readings during the specified time period and relates that content to your own professional goals and/or personal life. You can also draw upon from class discussions, labs, and field trips as relevant. An exemplary synthesis paper will:

- Compellingly discuss a central question or theme
- Demonstrate understanding of course content, including accurately and precisely referencing at least 5 course materials (readings, lectures, field trips, discussions) from roughly the prior three weeks, at least 3 of which are readings
- Extend that understanding by connecting course content with other aspects of your life
- Raise novel insights
- Demonstrate original, critical, and/or creative thinking
- Accurately attribute information to sources within the text
- Include complete citations for references at end
- Be logically organized
- Be concisely written
- Use active voice
- Use paragraphs that include a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences
- Be free of typos or grammatical errors
- Be 500-1,000 words long
- Include a photo, diagram, or other relevant figure (optional)

One synthesis paper will be selected each time and featured in a “Student Spotlight” on the STEP pages of the Institute of Environmental Sustainability’s website. I will select the three papers that best fulfill the above criteria and share them with students to read and vote for the winner. A student can earn this honor once per semester.

Book Reflection (50 points) DUE on Sakai at 11:55 pm on 11/3

Provide a reflection on Animal, Vegetable, Miracle addressing how the main ideas of the book fall within the context of this course and how events in the book affected your actions. Please address any of the following ideas. (3-4 pages double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins)

- What have you learned about how the food system operates that you did not know before reading this book?
- Kingsolver’s family lived by certain rules that she outlines in the beginning of the book (what they can and cannot eat). Which of the rules did you agree with and which did you not agree with? Why?
- This book was a personal chronicle of Kingsolver’s year in food. Did you enjoy reading this personal story? Why or why not? If you were to attempt what this family did for the year, what factors would you emulate and what factors would you change? What aspects in your own life would serve as supports in this endeavor? What obstacles would you likely encounter and how would you overcome those?

Labs and Field Trips (10 points each, 60 points total)
You will be expected to prepare for, attend, and actively participate in the lab and field trip activities below.
- Scratch Cooking with Herbs and Spices Lab
- NewLeaf Natural Grocery Field Trip
- Talking Farm Field Trip
- Winthrop Garden Work Day
- Mapping Food Resources Lab
- Food Preservation Lab

Participation (50 points)
You are expected to be an active participant throughout the course. Participation is not just attending class or field trips, but being prepared and engaging thoughtfully in discussion by asking questions and sharing reflections.

End of Term Personal Reflection (20 points) DUE on Sakai and to Task Stream at 1 p.m. 12/11

Loyola University Chicago’s mission statement:
“We are Chicago’s Jesuit Catholic university—a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice, and faith.”

In an effort to assess the Engaged Learning University requirement, we ask all students enrolled in an Engaged Learning course to complete this reflection.

Referencing Loyola’s mission statement above, compose a written reflection (at least 2 pages, double-spaced) that connects your in-class and out-of-class experience responding to the following:

- How did your Engaged Learning experience help you to connect to the mission?
- How did the Engaged Learning experience in this course impact your personal, intellectual, civic, and/or professional development?

Please submit your completed reflection in Taskstream in addition to submitting it to me via Sakai. For a tutorial on Taskstream, visit: http://www.luc.edu/experiential/eportfolio/engagedlearningassessment/
Group Project (330 points) – See project documents for instructions.

Project Pre-flection (10 points)
You will reflect on the assets you bring to a project, as well as the content and skills that you’d like to learn.

Proposed Project Presentation (50 points)
You will present your proposed project with your group members in class on 9/24.

Project Plan (100 points) Draft due 9/22; final plan due 9/29 Submit in hard copy or via e-mail. MUST have mentor’s approval first.
You will work with your group to develop a project proposal.

Project Check In (10 points)
You will assess your group’s performance and adjust as needed to improve progress. DUE on Sakai at 11:55 p.m. on 10/1

Final Project Product (100 points) DUE 12/3
Your group will create a final product suitable to your project objectives.

Final Poster Presentation (60 points) Draft due via email at 11:55 p.m. on 11/24. Final DUE via email at 1 p.m. on 12/3
Your group will create a poster and present it during the scheduled exam period from 1-3 pm on 12/11

* Not all students within your group will necessarily receive the same grade. Achievement will be partially evaluated via self and group member assessments.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
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<td>A-</td>
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Late Assignments - Late assignments will not be accepted unless arranged with me IN ADVANCE or in the case of a documented medical emergency.
**Academic Honesty** - You will be held to the University’s standard of academic integrity described at: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml). Please read this statement carefully and do not hesitate to ask me for further information about plagiarism and how to appropriately cite the work of others. Also visit [http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/student-materials](http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/student-materials) to understand better what constitutes plagiarism.

**Writing Center** - The Writing Center offers tutors who are available to help you at any point of the writing process, from brainstorming and organizing to putting the final touches on a bibliography. To learn more or schedule a session, visit [http://www.luc.edu/writing/](http://www.luc.edu/writing/).

**Accommodations for Disabilities** - Please let me know as soon as possible if you require accommodation for a disability. I will be happy to work with you. Disabilities must first be registered with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. For more information, visit [http://www.luc.edu/sswd/](http://www.luc.edu/sswd/).

**Technology Use** - As a courtesy to your instructors and classmates, your cell phone should be off during all class meetings. You can use your tablet or laptop as long as you stay on task and use it solely for purposes related to our course.

**Course Calendar** - All activities are subject to change. I will provide advance notice of changes.

Ongoing: Read *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tuesday 1:00-2:15 pm</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Thursday 1:00-3:45 pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8-25</td>
<td>Welcome to STEP: Food Systems&lt;br&gt;What is a food system? (Schusler)</td>
<td>8-27</td>
<td>Scratch Cooking with Herbs &amp; Spices (Pachikara)&lt;br&gt;Project Pre-Flection Due</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9-1</td>
<td>Project Overview &amp; Workday</td>
<td>9-3</td>
<td>Field Trip: Newleaf Natural Grocery (Keane)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9-8</td>
<td>Sustainable Meal – Eat and Discuss&lt;br&gt;Project Workday (approx. 30 minutes)</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>Origins of Agriculture, Green Revolution &amp; Genetic Engineering (Peterson)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9-15</td>
<td>Global Food Security (Krogh)</td>
<td>9-17</td>
<td>Project Workday&lt;br&gt;Synthesis 1 Due</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9-22</td>
<td>Environmental Impacts of Industrial Agriculture (Schusler)&lt;br&gt;Draft Project Plans Due</td>
<td>9-24</td>
<td>Discuss <em>Animal, Vegetable, Miracle</em> pages 1-110&lt;br&gt;Project Presentations (in class)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9-29</td>
<td>Project Workday&lt;br&gt;Project Plans Due</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Field Trip: Talking Farm (Ryan)&lt;br&gt;Project Teamwork Check-in Due</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10-6</td>
<td>Mid Semester Break - No Class</td>
<td>10-8</td>
<td>Discuss <em>Animal, Vegetable, Miracle</em> pages 111-241&lt;br&gt;Project Workday</td>
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<td>10-13</td>
<td>U.S. Agricultural Policy (Freidreis)</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>Winthrop Garden Workday (Erickson) Synthesis 2 Due</td>
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<td>10-20</td>
<td>Project Workday</td>
<td>10-22</td>
<td>Mapping Food Resources Lab (Treering) Meeting Location TBA</td>
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<td>10-27</td>
<td>Project Workday</td>
<td>10-29</td>
<td>Food Preservation: Canning Lab (Heath &amp; Shepherd)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11-3</td>
<td>Discuss Animal, Vegetable, Miracle pages 242-352 Project Workday (45 minutes)</td>
<td>11-5</td>
<td>Nutrition and the Food System (Kouba)</td>
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<td>11-12</td>
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<td>Book Reflection Due</td>
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<td>11-10</td>
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<td>Sustainability in the Food Industry (Welch and Wondolowski)</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Food Waste (Pham) Synthesis 3 Due</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11-17</td>
<td>Perennial Agriculture (Anderson)</td>
<td>11-19</td>
<td>Workday Draft Final Product Due</td>
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<td>Draft Final Product Due</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11-24</td>
<td>Workday Draft Poster Due</td>
<td>11-26</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - No class</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>12-3</td>
<td>Workday</td>
<td>12-3</td>
<td>Growing Cities Film &amp; Discussion Course Evaluation &amp; Wrap Up Poster and Final Product due</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>12-3</td>
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<td>12-11</td>
<td>1 – 3 pm, IES Atrium Final Poster Presentations Personal Reflection due</td>
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Other important dates to keep in mind:
- November 2-8 – Hunger Week at LUC
- November 7, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Green Living Expo, McHenry County College (call for exhibits due October 1)

\[i\] This syllabus draws upon the course design of prior STEP instructors Lane Vail and Adam Schubel. Thank you!