FN 397/FN 398: Sustainable Food Systems Field Work

(summer 1: Personal application and integration into community food systems)

UWSP Course Catalog Description: Supervised training work program in a cooperating off-campus establishment; work experience and supervision followed by an evaluation of individual progress.

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Course Description applied to Sustainable Food Systems: The purpose of the field work experiences within the Sustainable Food System major is increased knowledge and integration of your community food system. Field work is to prepare you for fully engaging within your community food system with increasing professional skills. The culmination of your work is your senior project or research which will address an issue in your community food system.

Summer 1: Personal application and integration into community food systems

The first summer field work experience is recognizing your local food ways by an in-depth investigation of the food system, which is the flow of food (production -> processing -> distribution-> preparation ->consumption -> waste) and an introduction to the food-water-energy nexus.

The Summer 1 FN 397 course meets the following competencies of the Sustainable Food System Program:

* Use a systems approach to analyze food and nutrition issues, with consideration of the social determinant of health, historical perspectives and current beliefs and practices.
* Assess the economic, cultural, social, political and environmental subsystems to support sustainability and resilience of a community food and water system and recommend improvements.
* Demonstrate critical thinking, collaborative leadership and community-participatory research skills in fostering community development.
* Demonstrate an understanding regarding the role of environment, food, nutrition and lifestyle choices in health promotion and disease prevention.

Assignments: A series of short descriptive reports (4-6 pages) of different sectors of the food and water system in your community. See the instructions in the following section.

Grades:

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| --- | --- |
| Community description | 10 pts. |
| Field Work and Research Reports (5 topics) | 50 pts. each |
| Total | 260 pts. |

Grading Rubric:

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| --- | --- |
| Parameter | Points |
| Planning phase: planning is based on your current understanding of food and water systems. As field work develops, the purpose becomes more integrative of the food & water system and sustainability (resources, social and economic). | 5 |
| Data phase: field notes are well-organized and detailed, sources are identified and recognized for their contribution to field research | 20 |
| Summary and Reflection phase: Major points from field research are presented in a comprehensive summary. Connections to the food and water system are identified. Community concerns are identified. Thoughtful and specific application to your personal and professional life is clearly articulated. | 25 |
| Writing meets or exceeds 13th grade level. There are no grammar or spell mistakes. Format is followed. | Minus points |
| Total points | 50 |

**Field Work Process and Reports**

SFN field work follows a process adapted from anthropology and sociology methodology that includes both quantitative and qualitative research. You will produce one report for each of the following topics:

* Community description with a historical and current perspective-1-2-page paper describing your community. You can use any information that you feel is pertinent and include the geographic location within the state and county, the history of the different cultural groups that have been in your area and the changing food production in your area. **This document must be completed first and is due June 10th**
* Follow the field work and report structure listed below these remaining reports in these areas
  + Food production: What is produced in your community? Food is produced within and around our communities and this includes both rural and urban food production. Rural areas produce food which may be exported out of the area or imported into local farmer’s markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) memberships, restaurants and grocery stores. Urban food production may include community gardens, school gardens, aquaponic facilities, or urban farms. Be sure to include information about the different foods produced, number of people or farms producing the food and any information about where the food is sold or distributed (next step after production). How is food production changing in your community? What are the issues that challenge food production that is being discussed in your community? Interview a farmer.
  + Food processing and distribution: Who are the major food processors and food distributors in your area? Communities may have small food processors such as canning or freezing facilities, specialty facilities for cultural foods such as egg rolls, pastries, Kringles, pickles, etc., or large processing facilities such as Del Monte canning or cheese factory. Major distributors will export the crop outside the area and may also import. These distributors may work with farmers to deliver “local food”, i.e. food sourced within the state or region or they may import food as part of their delivery system. Institutions such as schools and hospitals and restaurants will contract with a distributor for their foods. Interview a food processor or someone involved in the distribution.
  + Food Retailing and Preparation: Where is food sold in your community? Consider farmer’s markets, convenience stores, grocery stores, fast food franchises, local restaurants, bakeries, etc. Be sure to consider both whole food sales and prepared food. Interview a food retailer.
  + Utilities:
    - Water: Where does your water originate? Is the water public, private or both? How sustainable is the water supply for the agricultural, manufacturing and consumer demand? What water issues are concerns of your community? Interview someone who owns their own well or someone from the municipal water department. How is waste water treated?
    - Energy: What is the major sources of energy for your community? How sustainable is the energy supply? What energy issues does your community discuss?
  + Waste: Where does your waste go? Identify the waste stream as far as possible. Who collects the waste? Who pays for waste removal? How are stable are the costs of waste removal? Is there recycling in your community? If so, where does the recycling go? Is recycling mandatory? Is there curbside pick-up? Do you have municipal composting? How sustainable is your waste system? Visit the waste facility or recycling facility.

Field work process and report structure:

1. Before the beginning (Planning phase) (approximately ½ page)
   1. What I expect from my observation
   2. Purpose of my field work-clearly articulating your purpose will guide your research. With each phase of your work, you will become more comfortable with your statement of purpose
2. During the research (Data phase) (approximately 2-3 pages) These are your field notes that list the major findings and important points whether this is data, notes from an interview, relationships between key players, etc. This may be in short notes, bullet format or phrases and may be different format for the type of data that you are compiling. You must include both quantitative and qualitative data.
   1. What did I find? Provide the field note evidence, both qualitative and quantitative. List both quantitative (information in numbers and quantities from websites, documents, etc.) and qualitative (conversations, interviews, etc.)
      1. Quantitative examples: number of farms, acreage in agriculture, number of fast food franchises, number of farmers’ markets per week, number of acres per crop in the county, number of schools with gardens, number of municipal wells for city water, etc.
      2. Qualitative examples: elder memories of food production in the area, cultural value of a food, farmers reflection on farming-struggles and triumphs, family-owned restaurant owners’ views of customers or community, etc.
   2. What were my resources? Each field note section is identified with the resource. Use standard citations for websites or documents. Individual interviews or conversations are identified by name, descriptor of the person’s place within the community and date of conversation.
   3. Pictures may be added to your document.
3. After the research (Summary and Reflection phase) (approximately 1-2 pages)
   1. Summary of field notes and research
   2. Your personal response to the summary:
      1. How does this impact your own food and water system?
      2. How does this impact your knowledge of and relationship with people in your community?
   3. Your professional response to the summary:
      1. What did you learn about your community that is important to your role as a food and nutrition professional?
      2. What key players are involved in this area of the food & water system?
      3. What are the most significant impacts that you found (consider the socio-ecological model, food-water-energy nexus, or areas of impact)?
      4. How does this contribute to your understanding of sustainability?
      5. How does this contribute to your understanding of a community food & water system?
4. Formatting
   1. Text is written at a minimum 13th grade level.
   2. Use 0.5-inch margins, single-spaced
   3. Use 10-point font, Calibri
   4. Add page numbers to the upper right corner, your name in the upper left corner.
   5. Submit in Word format into the Dropbox as you complete each paper, all paper are due before **August 16th**.