



Graduate Certificate in Food Systems

The Graduate Certificate in Food Systems (GSFS) responds to an escalating need to empower new leaders with the capacity to create innovative solutions to pressing food and agriculture challenges. Building on UC Berkeley's strength as a multi-disciplinary pioneer in food systems studies, the Certificate in Food Systems prepares master's and doctoral students to think critically about the multi-level, multi-system factors that affect food production, distribution, and consumption locally, nationally, and globally. This interdisciplinary program complements students' primary fields of study by addressing the ecological, social, health, political, policy, legal, and economic dimensions of food and agriculture and providing graduates with the necessary theoretical framework and practical skills that can be applied across diverse and emerging food-system challenges.

The GSFS is hosted by the School of Public Health, College of Natural Resources, and Goldman School of Public Policy, and administered by the Berkeley Food Institute. Students from any graduate program at UC Berkeley are eligible to undergo the certificate.

Certificate Website

<https://food.berkeley.edu/programs/community-engagement-edu/graduate-certificate-food-systems/>

Eligibility and Requirements

Qualified applicants must:

1. Be currently enrolled in a UC Berkeley graduate program
2. In good academic standing: GPA of 3.0 or better

Coursework requirements:

3 courses (totaling a minimum of 9 units), each of which must be taken for a letter grade.

1. Required core course: Transforming Food Systems: From Agroecology to Population Health (3 units, taught each fall)
2. Two elective courses, chosen from the list below, totaling a minimum of 6 units. Courses not on the electives list will be considered on a case by case basis.

We encourage students to take all certificate courses outside their primary degrees; however one course can overlap with primary degree requirements.

Application

Completion of the [Application for Admission Form](#) is required before completing the certificate core course. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. This application for admission signals a student's interest in the Graduate Certificate in Food Systems, but does

not guarantee that the certificate will be awarded, nor guarantee a seat in GCFS-approved courses.

Core Course

“Transforming Food Systems: From Agroecology to Population Health” is held every fall and taught by Kris Madsen, Associate Professor in the Joint Medical Program/Public Health Nutrition and Faculty Director of the Berkeley Food Institute. The course is conducted as a weekly seminar with guest lectures by UC Berkeley’s preeminent food systems scholars and other experts in the field. It takes a solutions-oriented approach to addressing the pressing problems in current food systems through strategies used by the disciplines of agroecology, policy, law, public health, and business in working to improve food systems and apply their varied approaches to real-world case studies. Through weekly readings, discussions, and problem-solving sessions, students will gain a broad understanding of food systems and the leverage points that can be targeted to improve the health of people and the planet.

Elective Courses

The following electives count toward the Graduate Certificate in Food Systems. See full course descriptions [here](#). Note that not every course is offered on a yearly basis.

1. A,RESEC 241 Economics and Policy of Production, Technology, and Risk in Agricultural and Natural Resources, 3 Units (Fall). David Zilberman.
2. CY PLAN C256/PB HLTH C233 Healthy Cities, 3 Units (Fall). Jason Corburn.
3. ENE RES 275 Water and Development, 4 Units (Spring, every other year). Isha Ray.
4. ESPM 226 Interdisciplinary Food and Agriculture Studies, 3 Units (Spring, every other year). Alastair Iles.
5. ESPM 230 Sociology of Agriculture, 4 Units (Fall). Kathryn de Master.
6. ESPM 261 Sustainability and Society, 3 Units (Fall). Alastair Iles.
7. ESPM 279 Seminar on Pastoralism, 3 Units (Fall and/or Spring). Lynn Huntsinger.
8. ESPM 280 Seminar in Range Ecosystem Planning and Policy, 3 Units (Fall). James Bartolome.
9. LAW 220F, Food Law and Policy, 3 Units (Spring). Steve Sugarman.
10. MBA 292N Food Innovation Studio, 2 Units (Fall). Will Rosenzweig.

11. NUSCTX 260 Metabolic Bases of Human Health and Diseases, 4 Units (Spring). Andreas Stahl.
12. PB HLTH 206B Food and Nutrition Policies and Programs, 3 Units (Spring). Wendi Gosliner or Lia Fernald.
13. PB HLTH 206D Food and Nutrition Programs and Policies in Developing Countries, 3 Units (Fall). Lia Fernald.
14. PB HLTH 214 Eat.Think.Design, 3 Units (Spring). Kris Madsen and Jaspal Sandu.
15. PB HLTH 266A Foodborne Diseases, 2 Units (Spring, every other year). Sangwei Lu.
16. PB HLTH 271G Health Implications of Climate Change, 3 Units (Spring). Rachel Morello-Frosch.
17. PUB POL 290 The Social Safety Net, Poverty, and Income Inequality, 3 Units (Spring). Hilary Hoynes.
18. PUB POL 290 Special Topics in Public Policy: The Fight for Food Justice: Mass Movement or Consumer Culture? 3-4 Units (Fall, every other year). Saru Jayaraman.

Elective Petitions

Students can petition for graduate courses beyond the standard elective list to count toward the certificate. Particularly 290 Special Topics and 299 Independent Study courses will be considered on a case by case basis, as topics pertain to food systems. Students must submit the [Elective Petition Form](#) at least **one month prior** to enrolling in the proposed course. Electives proposed by petition must be approved before taking class.

Certificate Completion

Students submit the [Certificate Completion Form](#) at the point that all requirements for the Graduate Certificate in Food Systems are complete. The **form must be submitted by April 15** of your graduating year in order for the certificate to appear on your transcript. If you have certificate courses in progress during your final semester, you can indicate this on the form. Final grades will be verified prior to award of the certificate.

Completion of the GCFS will be noted in the memorandum section of your official transcript (not on the diploma). Certificate will be mailed after July 1st of your completion year.

If you have any questions, please contact Rosalie Z. Fanshel at rzfanshel@berkeley.edu.