Course Description and Purpose:
The purpose of the class is for students to develop an informed critique of agricultural production. We will review traditional non-industrialized, modern industrialized, modern organic, and GMC (genetically modified crops)-based systems through the lens of sustainability. For our purposes, sustainability includes not only environmental, but also economic and cultural considerations. While holding a holistic perspective, the course examines the various material components of production systems. In each unit we will highlight problems and explore alternatives to current methods of production. Finally, we will discuss food policy and food security. The greatest single share of the course material stems from North American experience but the class is decidedly global in scope.

Schedule
Unit 1: Defining Sustainable Agriculture
Unit 2: Traditional Agriculture and the Green Revolution
Unit 3: The Curious Case of Corn
Unit 4: Seeds and Genetically Modified Crops
Unit 5: Water Conservation and Management
Unit 6: Soil Conservation and Management
Unit 7: Pest Control Options
Unit 8: Energy and Agriculture
Unit 9: Access, Waste, and Food Justice
Unit 10: Prospects for Change
Course Requirements:

Class Participation: (20%) All students are expected to be present and active participants in this seminar. This will only be possible if you stay current with the readings and attend classes. I encourage thoughtful and respectful contributions to class discussion. Participation includes attending field trips or arranging for alternative experiences.

Reading, Video, and Event Critiques: (40%) Students are required to submit six 2-page critiques (one sheet, printed two sides) from the twenty daily readings and two video or event reviews. Reading responses are due at the beginning of each class period starting with the second meeting. Video reviews and event reports are due within one week of the showing or event. At least four critiques must be submitted by the beginning of week six. Instructions are posted in Blackboard. Late responses will be docked on letter grade for each class meeting.

Sustainable Alternatives Research Project: (40%) Students will engage in a research project focusing on “best practices” in alternative agriculture. Topics may range from technological remedies to policy change. The work includes a book review, construction of a research question, an annotated bibliography and a final report. Detailed instructions and deadlines are included in a separate handout.

GRADUATE STUDENTS: Required to complete all readings, submit 5 three-page reading critiques/video reviews, field trip reports, book review, and a 12-15 page research paper to be formally presented to the class. I am willing to consider alternative proposals for the research paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading responses</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>5x6% of grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4-5 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20 minute presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12-15 page work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Class and Reading Schedule

Texts: Will be placed on reserve in the Knight Library


**Electronic Reading Packet:** All readings will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Hard copies of the texts will be placed on reserve in the Knight Library. Back issues of *Capital Press: The West’s Ag Weekly* will be on reserve in the ENVS office.

**READING SCHEDULE**

**Note:** Readings are subject to change throughout the course.

**Un)**Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems

**September 28**


**September 30**


Halweil, “All Our Eggs in One Basket”, 1-21.

**Traditional Agriculture and the Green Revolution**

**October 5**


**October 7**


**Video:** Seeds of Profit, Seeds of Hunger

**The Curious Case of Corn**

**October 12**

Halweil, “Where Have all the Farmers Gone?”, 59-78.

October 14

Video: King Corn

**Seeds and Genetically Modified Organisms**

October 19


October 21

Manning, “In Wildness Is the Preservation of the World: Sustaining Traditional Farming and Genetic Resources”, 149-172.


**Water Conservation and Management**

October 26

October 28


Video: Cadillac Desert

Saturday a.m., October 31
**FIELD TRIP**

**Soil Conservation and Management**

November 2


November 4

Pollen, “Grass”, 185-207.
Wes Jackson and Marty Bender, “Investigations into Perennial Polyculture”, in Meeting the Expectations..., 183-194.

**Pest Control Options**

*November 9*

Manning, “From Basket Case to Bread Basket: When Biotechnology Has a Brain Trust”, 79-94


*November 11*


**Agriculture and Energy**

*November 16*


*November 18*


**Access, Waste, and Food Justice: Urban Designs**

*November 23*


*November 25*


**Emerging Alternatives and Prospects for Change: Group Presentations**

*November 30, December 2*

