



# ENV/PSCI/FSST 370: Food & Environmental Policy in Italy & Europe

## Course Syllabus

### Spring Semester 2026

**Instructor:** Alessandra Asteriti, PhD

**Credits:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Prerequisites:** None

**Office Hours:** by appointment after a class or via Zoom (see Moodle site)

**Course Type:** Standard Course

**Course Fee:** \$15

#### Course Description

The Food and Environmental Policy in Italy course will examine how EU policy in three linked areas interact and are applied in the Italian context. The three areas are the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU (the CAP, one of the EU's largest and most expensive programmes); the UN Sustainable Development Goals to the extent that they affect food production and trade in agricultural products; and the Geographical Indications (GIs) and Quality Schemes, which protect food and drink products. Italy is the country with the most protected products in the EU so it is the perfect case study for understanding the rationale and effects of the European scheme.

#### Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

Below are the course's learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *identify* the main legislative sources for the three policy areas—the CAP, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and GIs, i.e. the primary EU legislation, be it in the treaties, in EU Regulations and in EU Directives. In the case of directives, find out how the directives have been 'translated' into Italian law (Weekly Quiz, Course Journal, Final Exam);
- *summarize* connections between the three policy areas and whether they exist in a relationship of conflict or synergy (Course Journal, Final Exam);
- *distinguish* between hard law duties EU countries are subjected to, and policy options (Weekly Quiz, Course Journal, Final Exam);
- *analyze* different kinds of protected products schemes in Umbria and their relative success;
- *integrate* the acquired legal knowledge and the first hand experience in food production in Umbria in the context of one of the EU policy goals (Final Exam).

#### Course Materials

##### Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course's Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments. Some readings are available online. Please refer to the Syllabus if in doubt.

#### Assessment

Attendance 10%

One-on-One Prof Meeting	5%
Weekly Moodle Quizzes	25%
Course Journal	25%
Final Exam	35%

### Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

**Please note:** Decimal and centesimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

### Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria.

#### *Attendance (10%)*

Attendance is an essential part of this course. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences per course without penalty, per Institute policy. If you attend all the other meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

#### *One-on-One Professor Meetings (5%)*

Getting to know your professor makes you more comfortable with that person and therefore more likely to ask for help. It also might help for you to ask questions about the various assignments or discuss a paper idea. In this course, you get 5% of your grade for coming one time before Week 9 to office hours.

#### *Weekly Online Quizzes (25%)*

Students will be assigned a short quiz every week, which will be due before class time and will not be reopened. The quiz will be on Moodle and it is not timed. Students can take the quiz as many times as they like, with the recorded grade being the highest grade they receive. There will be a combination of *technical*, *methodological*, and *content questions*. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the readings. The technical questions will help students learn the class' policies and administrative procedures. The methodological questions will test on skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author's argument and assessing sources.

#### *Course Journal (25%)*

Students will be provided with a notebook at the start of the semester, which they will use as a personal space through which to reflect on course material and ideas. Very short, low-stakes in-class assignments will be given and the entries (a complete list of which will be available on Moodle) will all be graded at the end of the course (Week 12). Course journal entries will be submitted through Moodle. For more information, see the full prompt on Moodle.

### *Final Exam (35%)*

Students will have a final, in-class exam to test their knowledge and understanding of the main topics covered in the course. For more information, see the full prompt on Moodle.

The exam will take place on week 13, on Thursday 23 April at 12:30. The exam will last one hour. In advance of the exam, we will do a mock exam if time permits, and review study and exam taking strategies. As always, you are all welcome to meet with me any time suitable, either in person or online, to discuss any question you may have on the exam. The exam will be divided into two sections. The first is a series of 10 multiple choice questions, to assess your knowledge of the topics covered in the course. The second gives you a choice of five essay-style questions, of which you have to select and answer two with a short essay answer (minimum one page for each question).

### **Extension & Submitting Late Work**

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero.

As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first two absences per course due to illness will be considered excused "sick days" and do not require medical documentation. To receive additional excused absences due to illness, students are required to see a local physician or request a letter from an Institute-approved doctor documenting they should be excused from class for illness.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student's final course grade by 2% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower the students' grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness include death in the immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, and medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled.

Absences relating to illness may be excused by the Director, but only if a medical certification is provided.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

### Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually. Any student arriving up to 15 minutes late or leaving up to 15 minutes earlier than the scheduled class end time will be marked as tardy. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. However, should a student arrive more than 15 minutes late or depart more than 15 minutes before the conclusion of the class, it will be recorded as an absence. Students are also expected to remain in class during the time of instruction except for a reasonable amount of time to use the restroom. Students who leave class and do not return during the class session will receive an unexcused absence or late penalty.

**Academic Integrity**

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

**Laptop & Classroom Policy**

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices (e.g., ear buds and smart watches) cannot be used during class lectures and discussions, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.

As an instructor and as a person, I am dependent on both my computer and my telephone. That said: An ever-increasing body of research shows that open laptops and telephones in the classroom create distraction (both visual and auditory) for those using them and those around them. You can type faster than you can write, and as a result you end up processing less when you're simply typing notes. For this reason, I have a physical notebook policy: I ask you to leave your computers in your bags and phones in your pockets and use a regular notebook. There are four exceptions: 1) if you have an accommodation; 2) if you're using a tablet to take notes, 3) if you make an office hours appointment with me to discuss the use of a computer; or 4) if we have an in-class tutorial about online research tools.

## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1

#### **Introduction to EU and its functioning**

Meeting 1 *Introduction of the topic of the course: general overview of the EU and its functioning*

Meeting 2: *Second part of introduction of the topic with examples: the legal instruments of the EU (Treaty of the EU, Treaty on the Functioning of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Regulations and Directives)*

#### Readings for the week:

1. Glossary of the most important terms used in EU law to familiarize students with terminology and structure of the EU. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/glossary/eu-law.html#:~:text=Strictly%20speaking%2C%20EU%20law%20consists,decisions%2C%20recommendations%20and%20opinions>
2. European Parliament Publications ‘Sources and Scope of European Union Law’ (2023) pp. 1-6

### WEEK 2

#### **The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in the EU**

Meeting 1 *What is the CAP in the EU: Treaties and rules*

Meeting 2:*The CAP in the Practice of the EU: The Example of Italy*

#### Readings for the week:

1. Articles 38 to 44 (pp 62-65) of the TFEU on the scope and effect of the Common Agricultural Policy in the EU
2. EU Commission, ‘The Common Agricultural Policy at a Glance’ - **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance_en)
3. European Commission, ‘Italy - CAP Strategic Plan’ (2023) **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/cap-my-country/cap-strategic-plans/italy\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/cap-my-country/cap-strategic-plans/italy_en)

### WEEK 3

#### **The Conditionality Mechanism in the CAP**

Meeting 1: *The Legal Basis of the Conditionality Mechanism in the CAP*

Meeting 2: *The Conditionality Mechanism: Features and Issues*

#### Readings for the week:

1. European Commission, Council Regulation 1782/2003/EC on the CAP in EU countries, 2003. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32003R1782>
2. European Commission, Conditionality] **AVAILABLE ONLINE: Conditionality - European Commission**
3. European Parliament, [Parliament approves a revision of the EU’s common agricultural policy | News | European Parliament](#)

#### Assignments:

Turn in the first reading report through Moodle.

### WEEK 4

## The UN Sustainable Development Goals

Meeting 1 *Brief Introduction to the UN and its work in the environment and food production*

Meeting 2: *The UN's Sustainable Development Goals and food production*

### Readings for the week:

Links to the UN environmental agency, the sustainable development goals programme of the UN and the Food and Agriculture Organization, the main UN body for food production and agriculture at a global level. While perusing these sites, look at the work of these two agencies and familiarize yourself with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

<https://www.unep.org/about-us>

<https://unsdg.un.org/>

<https://www.fao.org/home/en>

1. FAO, 'Sustainable Food Systems - Concept and Framework' (2018) pp. 1-8
2. FAO, WFP, WHO, UNICEF, UNECE and WMO, 'Technical Note on Sustainable Food Systems. Issue-Based Coalition on Sustainable Food Systems (2021) pp. 1-18  
<https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Technical%20Note%20on%20Sustainable%20Food%20Systems%202021FINAL.pdf>
3. Alessandro Cerutti, Bruun Sander, Dario Donno, Gabriele L. Beccaro, and Giancarlo Bounous. 'Environmental Sustainability of Traditional Foods: The Case of Ancient Apple Cultivars in Northern Italy Assessed by Multifunctional LCA.' *Journal of Cleaner Production* 52 (August 1, 2013): 245–52.  
**AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652613001674>

## WEEK 5

### EU Law and Forestry Protection in Italy

Meeting 1 *Introduction to the EU Framework on Forestry Protection*

Meeting 2: *The Situation in Italy*

### Readings for the week

1. EU Strategy for Forestry to 2030
2. Strategy for the NATURA 2000 Network for Umbria. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/4015>
3. C. Fagarazzi and Others, 'From European Forestry Strategies to Implementing Local Policies: A Study on Public Forest Workers in the Tuscany Region of Italy', *International Forestry Review* 23(3) pp 309-320 (2021)

## WEEK 6

### From Paesaggio to Landscape

Meeting 1 *The Protection of the Landscape in Italian Law and European Law*

Meeting 2: *Il Paesaggio Amerino: An Historical Landscape and Its Protection*

### Readings for the week:

1. *Italian Constitution*, Articles 9 and 44 ([link here](#))
2. Law on the Protection of Landscape and Cultural Heritage. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2016-05-20/italy-new-code-of-cultural-heritage-and-landscape/#:~:text=The%20Code%20protects%20landscape%20assets,131\(1\).](https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2016-05-20/italy-new-code-of-cultural-heritage-and-landscape/#:~:text=The%20Code%20protects%20landscape%20assets,131(1).)
3. Maguellone Déajeant-Pons, 'The Implementation of the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe' in Paola Sabbion (ed), *Incontri con il paesaggio*. Genova 2010-2020, Genova University Press 2021, pp 25-38
4. Dario Gaggio, *The Shaping of Tuscany: Landscape and Society between Tradition and Modernity*, New York:

Cambridge University Press, 2016. Read chapter 6, 'Searching for the Bel Paese: Norming and Litigating the Landscape,' pp. 238-280.

Please upload the journal entries for weeks 1-7 on Moodle.

### **Semester Break**

#### **WEEK 7**

#### **Protected designations of origin (PDO)**

Meeting 1 *An overview of the Protected Designation of Origin scheme in EU law*

Meeting 2: *Protected Designation of Origin in Italy*

#### Readings for the week:

1. A link on the operation and effects of the protected designation of origin in the EU. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/geographical-indications-and-designations-of-origin.html>
2. Council Regulation 510/2006 The regulation on protected designation of origin schemes in the EU. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32006R0510>
3. Lora I., Zidi A., Magrin L., Prevedello P., Cozzi G. 'An Insight into the Dairy Chain of a Protected Designation of Origin Cheese: The Case Study of Asiago Cheese', *Journal of Dairy Science* 103(10) (2020) 9116–9123

#### **WEEK 8**

#### **Geographic Indications: Theoretical Issues and Practical Perspectives**

Meeting 1 *The Theory behind the Search for Localisation and Territory*

Meeting 2: *An Italian Case Study: Il Territorio*

#### Readings for the week:

1. Beriss, David. 'Food: Location, Location, Location.' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 48, no. 1 (2019).
2. M. DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union.' *American Sociological Review* 75, no. 3 (June 3, 2010): 432–55.
3. Steffan Ayora Diaz, Ed., *The Cultural Politics of Food, Taste, and Identity. A Global Perspective*. Bloomsbury (2021). Read Chapter 5: Cristina Grasseni, 'Italian Cheese in the Global Heritage Arena' pp 73-85 and Chapter 15: Rossella Galletti, 'The Taste of the Mediterranean Diet. Food, Taste and Identity in the Region of Campania', pp. 226-241.

#### **WEEK 9**

#### **The Fisheries Sector**

Meeting 1; *EU Fisheries Law*

Meeting 2: *Italian Fisheries between tradition and modernity*

#### Readings for the week:

1. The Common Fisheries Policy explained. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/policy/common-fisheries-policy-cfp\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/policy/common-fisheries-policy-cfp_en)
2. Longo, Stefano, "Mediterranean Rift: Socio-Ecological Transformations in the Sicilian Bluefin Tuna Fishery," *Critical Sociology*, 38 (3): 417-436

## WEEK 10

### **Climate Change Regulation in the EU and Sustainable Agriculture**

Meeting 1 *Introduction to EU Climate Change Regulation*

Meeting 2 *Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Agriculture in Italy*

#### Readings for the Week

1. European Commission, EU Climate Law at a Glance. **AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-climate-law\\_en#:~:text=The%20Climate%20Law%20includes%3A,of%20emission%20reductions%20and%20removals](https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-climate-law_en#:~:text=The%20Climate%20Law%20includes%3A,of%20emission%20reductions%20and%20removals)
2. Artur Runge-Metzger and Peter Wherheim, 'Agriculture and Forestry in the EU Climate Target' in *Towards a Climate Neutral Europe*, Taylor and Francis (2019), pages 165-179.

## WEEK 11

### **Review of the Material**

Meeting 1 *Review of the international and EU legal framework*

Meeting 2: *No class*

## WEEK 12

### **Review of the Material - Students' contributions**

Meeting 1 *Students' short presentations on main topics, part 1*

Meeting 2: *Short presentations, part 2*

## WEEK 13

### **Final Classes, Final Exams, & Special Academic Events Week**

Meeting 1: *Mock Exam*

Meeting 2: *Final Exam*