



**ACADEMIC SENATE  
Executive Committee  
REFERRAL FORM**

**CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA**

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Date:	11/12/2025
To:	General Education Committee
From:	Academic Senate Executive Committee
Subject:	Academic Senate Referral
Classification	GE-014-256
Title of Referral:	<u>HRT 4550 - Critical Issues in Global Food Systems (New GE Area 4C)</u>
Background:	See attached referral request form. Additional background provided by the Executive Committee:  New course proposed for GE Area 4C.
Recommended resources:	See attached referral request form and supporting documentation. Additional resources recommended by the Executive Committee:  None.  For the Committee's Report on this referral, please list in separate sections, the resources recommended, and resources actually consulted. If a resource was not consulted, briefly state why.
Review and recommend:	Review and recommend as appropriate.
Date required for presenting committee report to the Executive Committee:	3/2/2026

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Keywords: HRT, 4550, Critical, Issues, Global, Food, Systems, New, GE, Area, 4C

Background:

Explore pathways toward a more sustainable and just food system by examining urgent challenges across local and global scales, including food insecurity, inequality, ecological degradation and climate change, labor conditions, and inequitable resource distribution. Critically analyze how colonialism, globalization, economic and political institutions, policies, and corporate concentration have shaped these issues in historical and contemporary contexts. Explore alternative food movements, policy interventions, and community actions that can drive meaningful and systemic change.

- A. Explain how power structures, institutions and policies, and historical legacies shape global food production, distribution, access, and consumption.
- B. Apply social science methods to analyze and compare how colonialism, industrialization, globalization, corporate concentration, economic and political institutions, and policies contribute to today's food system challenges for different communities and regions, identifying mechanisms and equity implications.
- C. Demonstrate information literacy by locating, assessing, and synthesizing scholarly sources, policy reports, and public datasets to build coherent, evidence-based arguments.
- D. Construct evidence-based proposals for policy Interventions or community initiatives that advance equity and sustainability in food systems.
- E. Communicate analyses of food system issues effectively to academic, professional, and public audiences.

All sections must maintain consistency in **learning outcomes, major course topics, and key assignments** to ensure alignment with GE Student Learning Outcomes and assessment rubrics.

**All sections of Critical Issues in Global Food Systems must:**

- **Cover the same foundational content areas, including:** the structural and historical drivers of global food system problems (e.g., colonialism, industrialization, globalization, political and economic institutions, policies, and corporate concentration); contemporary food system challenges (e.g., food insecurity and health disparities, inequality, labor conditions, and environmental issues); and pathways toward a more sustainable and just food system.
- **Include the following required assignments, which directly assess GE SLOs and course learning outcomes:**

weekly writing assignments (e.g., analytical essays, reading reflections, or discussion posts) that promote critical thinking, information literacy, intercultural engagement, and written communication skills; AND a final capstone project (written policy or community initiative proposal) with an accompanying oral presentation, which serve as summative assessments of written and oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy, and civic literacy.

This proposed course is designed to be an HRT Elective course and a GE Area 4C course. The course is **aligned to GE outcomes.**

**How this course supports and advances each Hospitality Management PLO:**

- **PLO1: Identify and apply the knowledge and skills necessary for hospitality and tourism operations.**

This course provides students with a broad understanding of global food systems and the political and economic institutions that shape them. While not focused on daily operations, it equips students with contextual knowledge about food supply chains, labor, and sustainability that directly affect hospitality operations. Understanding these systemic forces helps students make informed operational and managerial decisions related to sourcing, facilities planning, and operation procedures.

- **PLO2: Develop and integrate a core set of business skills necessary to successfully operate a hospitality and tourism organization.**

By analyzing how corporate consolidation, globalization, climate change, trade and public policy affect food supply, access, and costs, students gain insights into the economic and policy contexts influencing hospitality businesses. The course develops skills in evaluating data, constructing evidence-based arguments, and analyzing policies — all transferable to data-driven strategic business decision-making in hospitality organizations.

- **PLO3: Demonstrate competence in the communication skills necessary for hospitality and tourism management.**

Through written assignments, oral presentations, and public-facing communication exercises, students learn to clearly articulate complex food system issues to different audiences. These skills support effective communication with diverse stakeholders in hospitality, including employees, suppliers, guests, and policymakers.

- **PLO4: Formulate business decisions in hospitality and tourism management.**

Students explore how social, environmental, and economic challenges in global food systems influence business choices in hospitality. By evaluating alternative food systems and proposing equity-focused initiatives, students practice connecting systemic analysis to concrete strategies that can inform ethical and sustainable business decisions.

- **PLO5: Evaluate leadership principles necessary in the diverse and global hospitality and tourism industry.**

The course emphasizes civic and intercultural engagement through topics such as labor rights, food justice movements, and cross-cultural perspectives on food. These discussions foster leadership qualities such as ethical reasoning, cultural awareness, and commitment to equity, which are essential for guiding hospitality organizations in a diverse and interconnected world.

### **What makes this course unique among the electives**

This course occupies a policy–systems–equity space that complements hospitality operations-focused electives.

- **Systems & policy lens (PLO1, PLO4):** Students analyze how colonial histories, globalization, institutions, trade and public policies shape supply, pricing, labor, and risk/resilience across the food supply network. These skills are directly transferable to sourcing, compliance, and resilience decisions.
- **Equity & sustainability integration (PLO5, PLO4):** Understanding distributional analysis, labor conditions, and environmental externalities prepares students for roles in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), and community impact.
- **Evidence-based intervention design (PLO2, PLO4):** The major assignment in the course requires an evidence-based policy or community initiative proposal that includes budget, implementation plan, feasibility assessment, and evaluation metrics. These skills are directly transferable to developing business proposals.

- **Public & professional communication (PLO3):** Students complete weekly writing assignments for academic audiences and a final capstone project, which includes a written proposal for professional audiences and decision-makers, as well as an oral presentation intended for public (non-specialist) audiences.
- **Applied relevance to emerging roles (PLO1, PLO5):** Prepares students for niches like responsible procurement, food-waste/circularity programs, sustainability/ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) coordination, community partnerships, and supply-chain risk/resilience assessment.

**Professional niche served:** Sustainability/ESG coordinators in hotel and restaurant companies; responsible sourcing/procurement; food-waste reduction and circularity initiatives; municipal or institutional dining policy; nonprofit/community food access partnerships; and risk/resilience roles tied to global food supply chains.

### 1. GE SLO: Critical Thinking

- Students will engage in the logical process of inquiry to analyze information from multiple perspectives to develop reasoned arguments.

#### Assessment Methods:

- **Weekly Writing Assignments** (e.g., short analytical essays, reading reflections, discussion posts) & **Final Capstone Project** (policy or community initiative proposal)

Throughout the semester, students complete a series of short writing assignments that encourage critical engagement with course readings and concepts. In the final capstone project, students develop a written proposal for a policy intervention or community-based initiative that advances equity and sustainability in food systems. Through these assignments, students will critically evaluate major global or local food system issues (e.g., land inequality, inequitable food access and health disparities, labor exploitation, or ecological degradation). They identify key contributing factors, evaluate relevant evidence from multiple perspectives, and construct a coherent, evidence-based argument or conclusion. Students must demonstrate logical reasoning, clarity of thought, and awareness of alternative viewpoints or counterarguments.

- **Linked CLOs:** A, B, C, D

**2. GE SLO: Information Literacy:** Students will responsibly identify, locate, and critically evaluate the array of information sources and voices necessary to engage in sound inquiry.

#### Assessment Method:

- **Weekly Writing Assignments** (e.g., short analytical essays, reading reflections, discussion posts) & **Final Capstone Project** (policy or community initiative proposal)

Throughout the semester, students complete a series of short writing assignments that encourage critical engagement with course readings and concepts. In the final capstone project, students develop a written proposal for a policy intervention or community-based initiative that advances equity and sustainability in food systems. Students are expected to locate, assess, and synthesize information from diverse scholarly articles, policy reports, and public datasets. They explain how each source contributes to understanding the problem and synthesize relevant, credible, diverse sources to develop evidence-based arguments. They must cite sources accurately and ethically using standard academic conventions.

- **Linked CLOs:** C

**3. GE SLO: Intercultural Engagement:** Students will integrate knowledge and relationships reflective of the diversity of human experience and forms of expression.

**Assessment Method:**

- **Weekly Writing Assignments** (e.g., short analytical essays, reading reflections, discussion posts) & **Final Capstone Project** (policy or community initiative proposal)

Students critically examine how diverse cultural, political, and economic contexts shape food access, labor conditions, and sustainability outcomes (e.g., smallholder farming in the Global South versus industrial agriculture in the United States). Through weekly writing and discussions, they analyze how structural inequities, historical legacies, and power relations influence food systems across different communities.

Students are expected to demonstrate intercultural awareness by recognizing and valuing diverse ways of knowing, producing, and consuming food. They compare how cultural perspectives inform policy priorities, community practices, and ethical considerations related to food justice. In both written analyses and the final capstone project, students integrate intercultural understanding into their arguments and proposed solutions, articulating approaches that respect cultural diversity, promote equity, and foster cross-cultural collaboration toward more just and sustainable food systems.

- **Linked CLOs: A, B, E**

**4. GE SLO: Civic Literacy:** Students will apply civic knowledge, associated with historical structures of power, to self-discovery and responsibility to the community.

**Assessment Method:**

- **Weekly Writing Assignments** (e.g., short analytical essays, reading reflections, discussion posts) & **Final Capstone Project** (policy or community initiative proposal)

Students connect course concepts to civic engagement by analyzing how historical structures of power (such as colonialism, globalization, and policy inequities) shape present-day food system challenges in their own communities or regions. In the final capstone project, each student identifies policies or community initiatives that could contribute to a more just and sustainable food system, reflecting on their civic responsibility and potential for impact. Students are expected to examine their personal beliefs, values, and roles in addressing systemic food inequities and to propose feasible, evidence-based actions or policy recommendations that promote community well-being, sustainability, and equity.

- **Linked CLOs: A, B, D**

**5. GE SLO: Written Communication:** Students will express their ideas through the written word with an awareness of audience, purpose, and form.

**Assessment Method:**

- **Weekly Writing Assignments** (e.g., short analytical essays, reading reflections, discussion posts) & **Final Capstone Project** (policy or community initiative proposal)

Throughout the semester, students complete a series of short written assignments that encourage critical engagement with course readings and concepts. These assignments help students practice evidence-based analysis, apply theoretical frameworks to real-world food system challenges, and develop clear, organized written communication. Feedback from these weekly tasks supports the development of the final capstone project.

In the final capstone project, students develop a written proposal for a policy intervention or community-based initiative that advances equity and sustainability in food systems. They are expected to communicate a clear and original argument appropriate to the assignment's purpose and audience, organize ideas logically with smooth transitions and coherent structure, integrate credible evidence and

visual data (when applicable) effectively, and demonstrate clarity, conciseness, and proper academic style and mechanics.

- **Linked CLOs: A, B, C, D, E**

**6. GE SLO: Oral Communication:** Students will express their ideas through acts of speech with an awareness of audience, purpose, and context.

**Assessment Method:**

- **Final Project Presentation**

As part of the capstone project, students present their policy proposal or community action plan addressing a global or local food-system challenge (e.g., labor inequities, sustainable agriculture, food insecurity). Each presentation demonstrates the student's ability to communicate evidence-based analysis clearly in a logical and coherent structure, apply social science reasoning, and engage an audience through effective organization and delivery.

- **Linked CLOs: D, E**

### **How the course meets the GE Area 4C requirements**

**1a. The course content centers the study of social and behavioral science:** This course develops students' understanding of food systems through the lenses of economics, sociology, geography, and political science. It examines how power, institutions, and policies influence production, distribution, and consumption patterns across global and local contexts. By analyzing issues such as food insecurity, inequality, labor conditions, and environmental degradation, students engage deeply with social-scientific perspectives on human behavior, governance, and societal structures.

**I.b. Course content prompts students to explore the principles, methodologies, value systems, and ethics of social scientific inquiry:** Students apply social science methods, including literature review, policy analysis, case studies, and evaluation of secondary data, to investigate how historical and contemporary forces shape food systems. The course emphasizes ethical reasoning about justice, sustainability, and the equitable distribution of resources, helping students connect empirical evidence with value-based inquiry.

**I.c. Course content is not focused on skills development or professional preparation:** Although students strengthen analytical and communication skills, the course's primary purpose is conceptual and analytical, not pre-professional. It focuses on developing understanding of structural and systemic food issues rather than vocational training.

**I.d. Course content focuses on deeper or broader understanding of concepts and their application to social problems:** Students move beyond surface-level discussion of "food issues" to analyze the underlying systems and power structures that create them, and propose solutions to real-world problems including food insecurity, supply chain inequities, and environmental injustice.

**II.a. Policy: Course assignments assess the GE SLO for Critical Thinking:** Students demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing the causes and consequences of food system inequities and evaluating potential interventions through written arguments, debates, and applied projects. Assignments require synthesis of multiple perspectives and evidence-based reasoning (*Assessed through CLOs A, B, and D*).

**II.b. Policy: Course assignments assess the GE SLO for Information Literacy:** Students locate, evaluate, and synthesize scholarly literature, policy documents, and datasets to construct arguments about global food systems. Research-based assignments teach them to discern credible sources and integrate information effectively (*Assessed through CLO C*).

**II.c. Policy: Course assignments assess EITHER Intercultural Engagement OR Civic Literacy:** The course integrates Intercultural Engagement by examining how colonial histories, globalization, and cultural practices shape food access and values across diverse societies. Students compare case studies from different regions and reflect on equity and justice in food systems (*Assessed through CLOs A and B*).

**II.d. Policy: Course assignments assess EITHER Written Communication, Oral Communication, or Quantitative Reasoning:** Students communicate their analyses in multiple formats (written assignments, policy briefs, final project, and oral presentations) and tailored to academic, professional, and public audiences. This supports the development of effective written and oral communication (*Assessed through CLO E*).

**II.e. Policy: The course is designed to be inclusive and open to all students:** As an upper-division GE course, it is interdisciplinary, requiring no professional prerequisites. Content and materials are inclusive of diverse cultural perspectives and global case studies, allowing students from any major to engage critically with the material.

**II.f. Policy: The course's syllabus reflects what is described in the ECO, is appropriate for GE students, includes the GEMPS, and identifies the GE SLOs:** The course syllabus has consistent course description and learning outcomes as the ECO, explicitly connects content, learning outcomes, and assessments to the GE SLOs for Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Intercultural Engagement, and Written & Oral Communication.

**II.g. Policy: The course focuses attention on understanding interrelationships among disciplines and examines ideas in broader, integrative ways:** Food systems analysis inherently integrates economics, politics, sociology, and environmental studies. Students synthesize insights across these disciplines to form holistic understandings of global challenges and pathways toward sustainable, equitable change.