

Spring 2026 Seminar

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY:

Understanding, Measuring, and Reimagining Nutrition Assistance in the U.S.



NUTR 400/500 Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m. Instructors: Jennifer Otten & Marie Spiker

APR

1 **Food and Nutrition Security: Definitions, Dimensions, and the U.S. Context**

Jennifer Otten, professor, Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences (DEOHS); undergraduate program director and core faculty, Food Systems, Nutrition, and Health (FSNH), UW; Marie Spiker, assistant professor, Epidemiology, core faculty, FSNH, UW

8 **How Food Security Has Been Measured Over Time and Why it Matters**

Matthew Rabbit, former senior research economist and domestic food security team lead, USDA Economic Research Service

15 **Understanding U.S. Nutrition Assistance Programs: SNAP, WIC, School Meals, and Food Banks**

Michelle ver Ploeg, former chief, Food Assistance branch, Food Economics Division, USDA Economic Research Service; senior fellow, National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy

22 **From Food Stamps to SNAP: A Political and Social History**

Tracy Roof, associate professor, political science, University of Richmond

29 **Data Politics: What We Lose as USDA Household Food Security Reporting is Discontinued**

Parke Wilde, food economist and professor, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

MAY

6 **Redefining Nutrition Assistance: The Rationale and State-Level Rollout of SNAP Food Restrictions**

Alyssa Moran, deputy director, Center for Food and Nutrition Policy, University of Pennsylvania

13 **Food Banks in the U.S.: Roles, Limits, and Realities**

Jen Muzia, executive director, Ballard Food Bank

20 **SNAP Under Stress: The 2025 shutdown and the impacts of HR1**

Brice Montgomery, director, community services division, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services; Babs Roberts, senior advisor programs and policy, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

27 **State-Level Food Security Data in Action: Insights from Washington State's WAFOOD Survey**

Marie Spiker, assistant professor, Epidemiology, core faculty, FSNH, UW; Jennifer Otten, professor, DEOHS; undergraduate program director and core faculty, FSNH, UW

JUN

3 **Reimagining Nutrition Assistance: Future Directions for Food Security Policy**

Katie Rains, director, Food Systems Initiatives, Washington State Department of Agriculture



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