



VIU Graduate Seminar **Zero Hunger's** **Goal: The Global** **Challenge** **of a Sustainable** **and Quality** **Food For all**

**Zero Hunger's Goal: the Global Challenge
of a Sustainable and Quality Food for All**

April 13-17, 2026

**Venice International University
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

VIU Graduate Seminar

Zero Hunger's Goal: the global challenge of a sustainable and quality food for all

Venice International
University

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Scientific Coordinators:

Roberta Dameno
University of Milano-
Bicocca

Carola Ricci
University School for
Advanced Studies (IUSS)
of Pavia

Organizing Committee:

Emma Sofia Lughi
University of Milano-
Bicocca

VIU Global Challenges
Initiatives

One of the global challenges raised by climate change and pollution in relation to human society is to ensure access to a food that is sufficient, safe, nutritious and of quality. While climate change and pollution of the environment are partially caused by food production systems themselves, these same factors also have a direct negative impact on food security and food safety. According to the second objective of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goal ("Zero Hunger"), a sustainable food production system has the following characteristics: (1) it reduces the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and their dispersion in the environment and water courses; (2) it prioritizes local food production and short supply chain; (3) it minimizes food waste at all stages of production and consumption; (4) it rationally uses water and energy resources.

The aim of this Interdisciplinary Seminar is to create a learning environment that allows young researchers to develop an interdisciplinary method and an international outlook on the theme of sustainable food. In order to be able to propose valid scientific answers to issues related to the right to food, it is necessary to train researchers with the ability to interact at the international level, but also with a trans-disciplinary approach. In order to identify solutions to sustainable food systems, scholars and researchers need to learn how to share and communicate knowledge from different fields, such as law, economics, social sciences, medicine, nutrition, agro-ecology and biology.

In this vein, the proposed Seminar intends to suggest interdisciplinary interactive lessons in articulation with workshop activities that, through a bottom-up approach, will underline in particular how scientific and technological transformation impact diets, food regimes and food access in a global context and how related policies should be revised in order to tackle the common goals set in the 2030 SDGs and reaffirmed in the recent '2024 Pact for the Future', under Action 3, to end hunger, eliminate food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition. The major societal challenge of the right to sufficient and nutritious food in order to live a

dignified and active life and its interrelation with scientific innovation will be addressed theoretically thanks to the contribution of scholars from different backgrounds and from different VIU member institutions, as well as from other non-member research centres and Universities, while incorporating an interactive training methodology to boost transversal skills (as the ability to work in group and manage time correctly, to speak in public effectively) adopting innovative teaching (for example, conducting assessments in class through live interactive quizzes on the topics discussed, flipped classroom for preparatory work, group tasks, and team collaboration over an extended period before and/or after the one-week activity at VIU, brainstorming tools, role-gaming based on case-studies, integrating a virtual component when feasible, etc.).

This Graduate Seminar will be led by

- University of Milano-Bicocca
- University School for Advanced Studies (IUSS) of Pavia
- National Research Council of Italy (CNR)

Faculty

Dominique Barjolle, University of Lausanne
Gloria Rita Bertoli, National Research Council of Italy

Roberta Dameno, University of Milano-Bicocca
(Scientific Coordinator)

Paolo A. Leone, National Research Council of Italy
Giulia Mattavelli, University School for Advanced Studies (IUSS) of Pavia

Axel Marx, KU Leuven

Paola Palestini, University of Milano-Bicocca
Carola Ricci, University School for Advanced Studies (IUSS) of Pavia and University of Pavia
(Scientific Coordinator)

Laura Salamero Teixidó, University of Lleida
Alessandra Stella, National Research Council of Italy

Jan Wouters, KU Leuven

Andrea Zappalaglio, University of Leeds

Methodology

The Graduate Seminar will involve a combination of frontal lectures and interactive workshop-like activities. Open discussions with the participants will be stimulated and debates animated.

Topics

- Food Quality, Local Systems and Ethical Matters
- Food, One Health and Biodiversity Conservation
- Food Sustainability and Waste Management
- Public Policy, Innovations and Food Systems
- Food, Armed Conflict and Human Rights

Learning outcomes for participants

- To gain a good understanding of main theoretical and practical concepts of food quality, food security, food safety, food sustainability, food certifications and traceability, international food policies and politics;
- To promote a wide and holistic view on how scientific progress may have an impact on human rights.
- To handle different methods and different disciplines and learn how to create interdisciplinary skills.
- To learn how to collaborate and create an international and interdisciplinary network.

Who can apply?

This Graduate Seminar is offered to advanced Master, PhD students and junior researchers in Legal, Social, Economic and Political Sciences including International Relations; Biotechnology and Biosciences; Medical Health Sciences and Nutrition; Agricultural and Food Sciences; Agro-ecology; Food Psychology. Open to candidates from all the VIU Member Institutions; applications from excellent candidates from nonmember institutions will be also considered and evaluated.

Fees & Grant Support

Full fee waiver scholarships are available for students from VIU member institutions. In addition, grant support is available to support partially or fully the costs of international travel.

Accommodation is provided free of charge. The participation fee for students of non-member institutions is Euro 1150.00 VAT included. The fee is inclusive of tuition, course materials, accommodation, lunches, social events and taxes. Students from non-member institutions are not eligible for VIU grant support. VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

Credits

Participation in the Graduate Seminar is considered equivalent to **2 ECTS**.

The program is available on the VIU website.

Applications

November 5, 2025 – January 15, 2026, via the VIU website

Applicants must submit the application form, a letter of motivation – which should include a brief description of the candidate's research interests, a curriculum vitae, and a photo.

VIU Graduate Seminars

These are thematic intensive seminars given in a concentrated period on subjects of universal interest, open to a broad spectrum of disciplines. They are suited to both Master's and PhD students as well as junior researchers and are open to candidates from all the VIU member institutions. The young researchers will receive support in defining their research proposal. Significant cooperation among departments in the member institutions is expected.

Venice International University is a consortium of 23 institutions, representing 14 countries throughout the world. The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting and organizing joint academic, research, and training/capacity-building programs. Students from non-member institutions may participate in selected academic programs. The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

Location



Venice International University

Isola di San Servolo

30133 Venice

Italy

T +39 041 2719511

F +39 041 2719510

E summerschools@univiu.org

www.univiu.org