THE JUSTICE CHALLENGE

FOOD • CLIMATE • SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Join honors students from universities across the United States in exploring the complex issues around food justice in the 2023-2024 academic year. Collaborating with experts from a variety of fields, you will engage with real social needs and develop your capacity for civic engagement, innovation and leadership.

The program is open to a limited number of participants. Each student will enroll in an opening online 1-day workshop, an eight-week online colloquium, and a 1-day concluding online conference. In addition, each student shall participate in at least one of three signature experiences: a Design Challenge (semester-long course, in-person); a Hackathon (2-day, in person or online); or a Field Course (1 week, in-person). Details of each are provided below. Applicants should complete the signature experience preference form. Every effort will be made to match participants to one of their top preferences based on availability. Applicants selected for the Grand Challenge Scholars Program will be notified of their signature experience match prior to committing to the program.

CALENDAR

Registration Deadline
MARCH 1, 2023

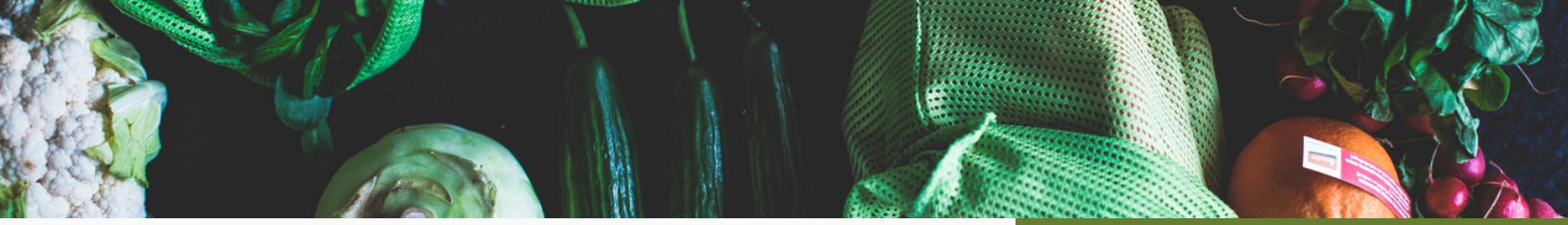
Students may nominate themselves or be nominated by a representative of their honors college or program. Students who self-nominate should ask a current or former professor to complete this reference form by March 1st.

Opening Workshop
SEPTEMBER 6, 2023

The opening workshop will be held at from 2-5 PM EST.

Colloquium
SEPTEMBER 13 - NOVEMBER 1, 2023

Students in the colloquium will meet once a week, Wednesdays 2-5 PM EST.



The Program

A one-day virtual workshop common to all participants will introduce participants to one another and to the complex issues around food justice.

An 8-week synchronous virtual online colloquium for all participants to engage with experts to explore the theme of food justice. Students will meet online once per week with dual foci of meeting with a subject expert or experts and applying the knowledge in an online workshop format. The colloquium will provide the context and content knowledge that students will need to take on the challenges offered in the subsequent signature experiences. Topics will include: who is hungry and why? food insecurity; food deserts and food banks; food safety; global food systems; campus food insecurity; community gardens; food cultures and food geographies; etc. Students may but not required to enroll for credit at participating institutions.

Signature Experiences are offered in multiple formats to allow each participant flexibility in what best accommodates their needs. Signature experiences include the Design Challenge, Hackathons, and Field Course described below. Students will be matched to one or more of these experiences based upon their preferences and availability.

Design Challenges

SPRING 2024

On-site at Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, VA), South Dakota State University (Brookings, SD), University of Montana (Missoula, MT), and Texas A&M (College Station, TX).

Hackathons

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

In-person at Virginia Tech February 16-17 and online January 19-20, February 16-17, and March 8-9. Student problem solvers from multiple institutions will form working teams and develop innovative solutions for an issue central to food justice. Capacity 144 students.

Field Course

MAY 19-25 2024

On-site in Stillwater Oklahoma. Each student participant will receive a flight subsidy of $500 Student participants will be housed on-campus and provided with a campus meal plan. Capacity 15 students.

Culminating Conference

SPRING 2024

The Program

The optional semester-long Design Challenge is a local, in person opportunity for students to identify and propose solutions to a local problem related to food justice. Design Challenges are in seminar format, emphasizing design thinking, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration on solutions to issues attached to food justice. Understanding the inter-relationships and complexities of what are termed "wicked problems" (i.e., issues so inter-related that a singular solution may lead to further problems unless they are tackled at a systemic, structural level) is central to each design challenge.

In the optional Hackathons, student problem solvers from multiple institutions will form working teams and develop innovative solutions for a food justice challenge, concluding the event with solutions presented and evaluated based on workability, feasibility, and usability. The top three teams in each hackathon will receive a $500 award.

A seven-day in-person optional Field Course experience will immerse students into a deep exploration of food justice within Stillwater, Oklahoma and surrounding communities. Students will experience real-world constraints, opportunities, and realities of food justice from the expertise of field course coordinators and the lived expertise of local communities. The curriculum will be packed with local community visits, team building, problem solving, and culminating projects.

The annual program ends in a Culminating Conference for all participants to reflect on their learning and to provide a forum for cooperative learning among students from their signature experiences. Student participants will create an e-portfolio.

This work is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Students will be offered, but not required to enroll for credit at participating institutions.

Workshop and Colloquium: 2 credits total
Design Challenge: 3 credits
Hackathon: 1 credit
Field Course: 3 credits

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Fall 2023 Class Offering

Food Justice Colloquium

HON 3397

Wednesdays, 1-4 p.m.

Join honors students from universities across the United States in exploring the complex issues around food justice. Collaborating with experts from a variety of fields, you will engage with real social needs and develop your capacity for civic engagement, innovation, and leadership.

In addition to the weekly colloquium, students will participate in an opening one-day workshop and participate during the spring or summer of 2024 in one of three (depending on their interests and needs) signature experiences:

- a Design Challenge (semester-long course, in-person);
- a Hackathon (2-day, in person or online); or
- a Field Course (1 week, in-person),

followed by a culminating conference.

For More Information

Email Associate Dean Jonathan Williamson at **jlwilliamson4@uh.edu** for additional details and to apply to be accepted into the program.

The Honors College

UNIVERSITY OF **HOUSTON**