

**CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**Socioeconomic Contexts of Sustainable Agriculture**  
**October 14-15, 2016**  
**Western Connecticut State University; Danbury, Connecticut**

The Institute on Science for Global Policy (ISGP), in partnership with **Western Connecticut State University**, announces a new conference focused on linking scientifically credible information to the formulation and implementation of effective domestic and international policies. The distinctive, if not unique, ISGP model emphasizes critical debates and extended caucus discussions among highly credible scientists, policy makers, students, and the public. These debates seek to clarify the scientific and technical (S&T) understanding for the non-specialists who are often responsible for making, or directly influencing, local, regional, national, and global policy decisions. ISGP conferences also provide opportunities for scientists to experience the challenging tasks routinely faced by those responsible for formulating and implementing effective policies that involve S&T issues.

The debate/caucus model pioneered by the ISGP has been successfully used to examine a wide range of contemporaneously critical issues, including Emerging and Persistent Infectious Diseases (EPID), Food Safety, Security, and Defense (FSSD), and climate change.

The critical debates and caucuses at the **Socioeconomic Contexts of Sustainable Agriculture Conference** are open to the public and press, and have been organized in conjunction with Western Connecticut students and faculty. Although the conference is free, attendance is by invitation only. The conference is designed to provide a forum in which the scientific and technological issues facing societies worldwide can be viewed through the personal life choices and community-wide decisions facing the Danbury area.

**The Socioeconomic Contexts of Sustainable Agriculture Conference** will be convened in two parts:

1. On Friday, October 14, 2016, three internationally recognized scientists will debate their respective policy position papers, which express their views of the current realities and the scientific opportunities and challenges, and their recommendations for policy related to current socioeconomic structures of sustainable agriculture. The scientists will defend their positions in debate sessions that involve critical questioning by a panel of 40-45 debaters, composed of Western Connecticut students and faculty, scientists and academics, and representatives from government, the private sector, and the community. Participants in the audience will also be able to submit written questions for consideration by the moderator.
2. On Saturday, October 15, 2016, conference participants, including those in the audience who attended the debates on Friday, will join small-group caucuses to identify areas of consensus and actionable next steps to be considered by governmental and societal leaders. The conference concludes with a plenary session that synthesizes the conclusions from all the individual caucuses. Summaries of these conclusions and of the debates will be prepared by ISGP staff in collaboration with Western Connecticut students and faculty and published, along with the scientists' policy position papers, in a freely available book shortly after the conference.

To register for **Socioeconomic Contexts of Sustainable Agriculture Conference** go to <https://goo.gl/forms/IOIQBmR8J4lrV24a2>

For questions, please contact [dbaeza@scienceforglobalpolicy.org](mailto:dbaeza@scienceforglobalpolicy.org).