Food Systems: Security and Sustainability – GEOG*3320
University of Guelph, Department of Geography

Fall 2018

Course Description:
This course examines current debates around the ecological and social sustainability of the food system and its capacity to feed the global population into the 21st Century. We begin with an overview of the historic conditions that have – and continue to – shape our current food system. We will also explore how forces of globalization, trade and finance are impacting the food system further. Additionally, we will examine how social and structural inequities, such as racism and colonialism, are shaping how the food system functions, and in whose interests. Throughout the course, we will integrate class discussions, guest speakers, and popular media to connect issues of agricultural sustainability and security to food system localization, access, global food trade, food movements and potential food and farming futures. This course will connect the dots between our food histories, current food system challenges and how communities are organizing to build more sustainable and equitable food futures.

Credit Weight: 0.5

Academic Department (or campus): Geography

Campus: University of Guelph

Semester Offering: Fall 2018

Class Schedule and Location: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00-5:20 pm, MCKN 120

Instructor Information
Instructor Name: Sara Epp
Instructor Email: sepp@uoguelph.ca
Instructor Phone and Extension: 519-824-4120, ext. 53619
Office location and office hours: HUTT *** – Monday 8:00 – 9:00 am (or by appointment)

TA Information
TBA
Course Content

Course Objectives
1. To provide a thorough and critical evaluation of the issues and concepts underpinning global food system security and sustainability
2. To critically explore political, social, economic, and ecological elements shaping the food system trajectories
3. To enhance students’ ability to critically evaluate popular media on food related issues

Style of Teaching
This course aims to strike a balance between in-depth critical analysis and reflection on one hand, and active discussion and debate on the other. As a result, we will integrate in-class lecturing with discussion groups, panel sessions, and online media during class time. The lectures and in-class time will connect and expand on concepts rather than summarize the readings. Therefore, students are expected to come to class having read the material. I very much welcome your participation, comments and feedback throughout the course. Even though the class is large, I hope I can cultivate a diverse, active and interesting class environment.

Expectations
I expect you to arrive on time, attend all classes, and invest an average of 8-10 hours per week in this course, in and outside of class. Since class lectures, panels, discussions and assignments will require you to apply information obtained from the readings, you are expected to complete all of the assigned readings, and to participate actively in class (I recognize that not everyone will feel comfortable speaking out in a large seminar class, but you can make up for this by participating actively in small group discussions when appropriate – which I will make as much room for as possible).

Readings
All readings will be available online and are listed below on the weekly schedule.

Course Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Contribution to Final Mark (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 (Annotated Bibliography)</td>
<td>Friday October 5</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 (Food System Analysis)</td>
<td>Friday October 19</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 (Documentary Review)</td>
<td>Friday November 9</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Discussion</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
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Lecture Schedule
See table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 6</td>
<td>• Course overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 11</td>
<td>• The state of the food system</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 18</td>
<td>• Seminar discussion</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 25</td>
<td>• Agricultural production systems</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>OCTOBER 2</td>
<td>• Food security</td>
<td>OCTOBER 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>OCTOBER 9</td>
<td>• NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)</td>
<td>OCTOBER 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OCTOBER 16</td>
<td>• Northern food security</td>
<td>OCTOBER 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>OCTOBER 23</td>
<td>• Perspectives on food system transitions: local, GMOs or food sovereignty</td>
<td>OCTOBER 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>OCTOBER 30</td>
<td>• Localization and sustainability</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 6</td>
<td>• Food system planning</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 13</td>
<td>• Inequality and injustice in the food system</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 20</td>
<td>• Food movements</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 27</td>
<td>• Food and farming futures</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Seminar Discussions**

Current research on education suggests that it is vital for people to express ideas and topics if a teacher wants to have any chance of the material they present sinking in. Therefore, I have scheduled six seminar group discussion sessions throughout the term. In these sessions, students will be broken into smaller groups and will be given specific questions, related to course content, to discuss. Each group will present highlights of their discussion after which the discussion will be open to the entire class for further reflection. The seminars are worth 15% of your mark and you must attend five of six seminars (3% per seminar) in order to earn this 15%.  

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Readings

Week 1: September 6th
Introduction
- No readings this week

Week 2: September 11th/13th
The State of the Food System

Week 3: September 18th/20th
Food Systems in Context

Week 4: September 25th/27th
Agricultural Production Systems

Week 5: October 2nd/4th
Food Security
- Riches, G. 2011. Thinking and acting outside the charitable food box: hunger and the right to food in rich societies. 768–775.
- Adrianne Lickers. Our Sustenance: Learning & Growing at Six Nations. Available at: https://reimaginingthenewskool.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/46-49.pdf

Week 6: October 9th/11th
- No readings
Week 7: October 16th/18th
Northern Food Security


Week 8: October 23rd/25th
Perspectives on Food System Transitions: Local, GMOs or Food Sovereignty


Week 9: October 30th/November 1st
Localization and Sustainability


Week 10: November 6th/8th
Food System Planning

**Week 11: November 13th/15th**  
*Food Inequality and Injustice in the Food System*


**Week 12: November 20th/22nd**  
*Food Movements*


**Week 13: November 27th/29th**  
*Food and Farming Futures/Exam Review*


**Assignments**

**Assignment 1 – Annotated Bibliography**
The purpose of this assignment is to compare and contrast readings from *EITHER* week 3 or week 4 (in other words, both of the readings must be from the same week as I want you to compare and contrast articles with similar topics). Then, use these papers as a springboard to gather two external articles of a similar topic to include in an annotated bibliography. For example, if you choose the agricultural production systems week, search for articles that also address these topics. You will then compare and contrast these four articles in the form of four annotated bibliographies. Each annotation should be around 200 words. The assignment should be between 800-1,000 words in total, with 1,000 words being the maximum.

Evaluation: Do not only summarize the articles. A very brief summary is necessary but focus on explaining the value and relevance of the articles.

Due: Friday October 5th before midnight in dropbox on courselink
Assignment 2 – Food System Analysis
The purpose of this exercise is to critically look at your own personal food system within the City of Guelph and reflect on the decisions you make within your daily food habits and how these are impacted by broader systems. For example, if you primarily purchase your food from a grocery store, reflect on the impacts of your purchasing on the farmer, the policies in place to promote this food system, global trade impacts, etc. There is no wrong way to complete this assignment, as it is a personal reflection; however, it must critically assess your personal food purchasing decisions, the systems in place that support these decisions and the impacts of these decisions within the broader food system.

You must include at least three academic sources that support your discussion. The maximum length is 1,250 words (excluding references, photos, maps etc.). This reflection must include an introduction and conclusion, as well as a proper reference page. If you choose to include images, they must have a proper caption, including a “Figure #” and reference.

Due: Friday October 19th before midnight in dropbox on courselink

Assignment 3 – Documentary Review
The purpose of this assignment is to critically reflect on the claims and solutions presented in one of three mainstream documentaries shown in lecture.

All three movies, Sustainable, GMO OMG, and The Harvest, will be screened during lecture. While watching the films, keep a list of arguments that are made about the problems with the current food system and the solutions they propose. Each documentary focuses on one aspect of the food system and you may not agree with the direction of the documentary or the “facts” provided. I do not expect you to agree with all aspects of the films and I encourage you to question the content.

What I would recommend is that you identify one to three themes from whichever film you prefer and then look into the academic literature to see if the way the filmmakers depicted the issues is accurate and whether the solutions are realistic or useful.

The format of your essay is up to you; however, the following structure might be useful:
- An introduction where you introduce the specific topic(s) that you want to critically explore
- Present an overview of the film’s argument on each of these topics
- Explore the academic (peer reviewed) literature on these topics (must include a minimum of five academic sources)
- Reflect on whether you think the movie’s position is justified vis-a-vie the academic literature
- A conclusion that summarizes your findings/argument
Your work will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Evaluation of the claims: Have you critically, and with reference to peer reviewed sources, examined one or more themes
2. Structure: Is your paper coherently laid out with a strong and easy-to-follow structure?
3. Mechanics: Is your paper professionally presented, with appropriate referencing, accurate spelling, grammar, etc.?

The maximum length of this assignment is 1,500 words.

Due: Friday November 9th before midnight in dropbox on courselink

Exam
An exam will be scheduled during the December exam period. The exam will involve 25 multiple choice questions and three essay questions regarding the content provided in lectures and course readings. You will select three of six essay questions and your written response must be in essay format (e.g. introduction with thesis, body paragraphs and conclusion).

A few Additional Notes
- All assignments must have an introduction and conclusion – the introduction must include a thesis (e.g. This paper will explore... or The following essay will prove that...)
- All maps, images, etc. must have a proper caption, figure number and source
- All assignments must include proper referencing and a reference page – you can pick APA or MLA, as long as you are consistent

Course Policies

Grading Policies
NOTE: Students are to be familiar with the University of Guelph policy on plagiarism found at: http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/plagiarism

Evaluation
Assignments will be evaluated based on understanding (use of course content), clarity of thought (insightfulness – application of content to current planning issues) and quality of writing (presentation – logically presented, concise and legible).

Submission
All assignments are to be submitted through dropbox on courselink. Late work will be penalized 5% of the value of the assignment per day.

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures
Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted, they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.
University Policies

Academic Consideration
The University of Guelph is committed to supporting students in their learning experiences and responding to their individual needs and is aware that a variety of situations or events beyond the student’s control may affect academic performance. Support is provided to accommodate academic needs in the face of personal difficulties or unforeseen events in the form of Academic Consideration.

Information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions, including categories, grounds, timelines and appeals can be found in Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar.

Academic Misconduct
The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Detailed information regarding the Academic Misconduct policy is available in Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar.

Accessibility
The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community’s shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS), formerly Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD), as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca or visit the Student Accessibility Services website (https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/).
**Course Evaluation Information**
End of semester course and instructor evaluations provide students the opportunity to have their comments and opinions used as an important component in the Faculty Tenure and Promotion process, and as valuable feedback to help instructors enhance the quality of their teaching effectiveness and course delivery.

While many course evaluations are conducted in class others are now conducted online. Please refer to the Course and Instructor Evaluation Website for more information.

**Drop period**
The drop period for single semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period and extends to the Fortieth (40th) class day of the current semester (the last date to drop a single semester courses without academic penalty) which is listed in Section III (Schedule of Dates) of the Undergraduate Calendar.

The drop period for two semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period in the first semester and extends to the last day of the add period in the second semester.

Information about Dropping Courses can be found in [Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar](#).