

COURSE SYLLABUS
GGR 329 H1F: The Global Food System
May-June 2014

Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00am-12:00pm, Sid Smith Hall Rm. 1073

Instructor: Charles Z Levkoe (charles.levkoe@utoronto.ca)

Office: Sidney Smith Hall 5014

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00-1:00PM, Thursdays 9:00-10:00AM or by appointment

TA: Lauren Kepkiewicz and Hillary Barter

Course Description

Food is fundamental to human existence, central to most cultures and has significant and widespread effects on the physical environment. While food is often produced in place, its consumption has implications that reach across the globe – today more than ever. This course introduces some key issues and concepts for understanding food systems in a period of profound change. It serves as an introduction to the global food system through a critical examination of the interrelationships between social, political and economic systems. We will explore the changes in the food system from production and processing to consumption and regulation. Students will use food as a lens to explore current issues around social systems, economy, and ecology by making connections between theoretical concepts and real-world issues. We will begin with an historical overview of the food system and address current debates including land reform, food security and food sovereignty, genetically modified foods, global trade, and health. The focus of this course will be on the challenges to sustainability as well as on how groups of people are responding to these challenges through grassroots organizing and community development initiatives.

Classes

The class will be run as a seminar, meaning that we will be using the readings to engage in group discussions led by the instructor. Class meetings will consist of opening lectures to provide background and themes for the day, multi-media presentations, interactive activities, and guest speakers that make connections between the week's readings and the broader course themes. The material covered in the classes will be used to help interpret (as opposed to summarize) the readings, to add new concepts and examples to those covered in the text, and to provide opportunities for discussion.

Course Objectives

By the end of the class, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of issues, concepts, and theories that help us understand the relationships between food, the natural environment, and human society
2. Identify the historical and current factors that shape the global food system

3. Understand some of the main theories and debates around the geography of the global food system

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Assignments will be discussed in class and more details made available on the course website. Please submit your assignments via Black Board (see instructions below).

1) Reflective Essay and Discussion Questions (10%) – Write a reflective essay of no more than 2 pages (12-point font, double-spaced) on the readings from one class and include at least two discussion questions. Be prepared to share the questions with your peers in class.

Due by the beginning of the class in which we are discussing those readings

2) Film Analysis (25%) – Write a film analysis of approximately 4 pages (12-point font, double-spaced) using one or more of the course concepts. The University of Toronto Libraries have a good collection of films related to food. In order to obtain a list of the resources, visit the Media Commons home page at <http://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca>. Click on the icon for "Research Topics", and then scroll down to the icon for "Food". Click on the icon and list of all the films in the collection will appear. At the present, the Media Commons has almost 180 films on food related topics. Note: you must choose a popular film (i.e. NOT A DOCUMENTARY).

Due Date: May 29, 2014

3) Position Paper (35%) – The purpose of a position paper is to take a position on a controversial issue related to the global food system. The position paper is based on evidence that provide a solid foundation for your argument. The position paper should be approximately 2000 words max (12-point font, double-spaced).

Due Date: June 17, 2014

4) Final Exam (30%) – to be held during the exam period.

Readings

You will be expected to read the two course texts, which will be available at the University of Toronto Bookstore and the University of Toronto Libraries. Supplementary readings will be made available online. The course texts are:

1. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*. Mustafa Koc, Jennifer Sumner, and Anthony Winson (eds.). 2012. Toronto: Oxford.
2. *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Food*, Second Edition. Wayne Roberts. 2013. Toronto: Between the Lines.

The course outline and reading list is available on the course website. Please read the required readings before coming to the class during the week they are assigned.

Course Website

The course website is available through the University of Toronto portal (portal.utoronto.ca). All students enrolled in the class should be able to view the link to the course once they enter the portal using their UTORID and password. Information on the Portal login procedures available here:

<http://portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/login-and-access-your-course>. All course materials – including the course outline, reading lists, assignments, and links to additional readings – will be posted on the website. In addition, students can email questions to the instructor through the site.

COURSE POLICIES

Contacting the Instructor: The instructor can be reached in person at his office during office hours (or by appointment). He will be happy to answer any questions you have during these meetings.

Handing in Assignments: All assignments are due before the beginning of the class (10:10am) on the date indicated. Please note that the deadline is firm –late assignments will be penalized 5% if not turned in at the beginning of class but submitted before 5pm that day. An additional 10% is deducted for each subsequent day late, including weekends. No assignment will be accepted more than a week after the due date. Please keep a back-up copy of all assignments even after they have been submitted, as well as all rough notes and other preparatory work. Extensions will be granted in the case of illness or other emergencies (with a signed U of T medical certificate or a letter from your College Registrar).

The three written assignments must be submitted electronically through Black Board. To do that, follow these steps:

1. Click on “Assignment Submission” in the Course Menu.
2. Click on the name of the assignment you are submitting.
3. To upload an assignment:
 - a. Attach Assignment File
 - i. Click Browse for Local File
 - ii. Locate file on your personal computer. Make sure your full ROSI name is in the filename. Once you see the file listed in the Blackboard window, click the Attach File button. (N.B. *Make sure that your file name contains only letters and numbers. Uploaded files should not include special characters in the file name for example, # ! % ?. Do not attach multiple files with the same name.*)
 - iii. Click Open

- b. Enter the text of your assignment into to the Visual Text Box Editor provided (do not worry about formatting; this is just a back-up; your attached file will be marked)
- c. An option has been provided to enter comments to the instructor.
- d. Click Submit.

A few notes:

- Once you click “Submit” you cannot alter your submission.
- “Cancel” will ignore any additions you have made to the assignment.
- “Save as Draft” allows you to save the changes you have made to the assignment, so that you may return to it within the due date. Note: saving as a draft does NOT submit the assignment. You will need to go back and click “Submit” once you are ready.
- When you submit an assignment, the next page should have a green confirmation bar at the top, followed by assignment details, then submission details - including the attached document.
- Please only use one attempt to submit your assignment, so double check to make sure you’ve followed all the instructions before submitting: e.g. proper file format, cut and paste backup text, bibliography included, etc.
- Please keep a back-up copy of all assignments even after they have been submitted, as well as all rough notes and other preparatory work.
- If you have any questions, ask them well in advance of the submission deadline.

Please consult your college registrar should you have difficulties during term – health related or otherwise – that prevent you from completing your course work satisfactorily. If you require accommodation for a disability or long-term illness, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible at disability.services@utoronto.ca.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism (which includes the submission of someone else’s work as your own and the re-submission of academic work that had been previously submitted in another course for credit) is a very serious offence at the University of Toronto. Assignments are carefully reviewed for evidence of plagiarism, and penalties can be severe (including marks of zero on an assignment or in an entire course, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the university). If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, or how to appropriately reference other people’s writing, please ask– it’s better to be safe than sorry! Please consult the “Rules and Regulations” section of the Arts and Science Calendar (http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html) for further information and check the ‘How not to plagiarize’ website at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course

materials, please let me know and contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:
disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

Writing

Clear writing and communicating is essential. You will be expected to write clearly and effectively on tests and assignments. The University provides some resources through the writing centres (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/centres/arts-and-science>). Brief advice on specific elements of writing for university courses can also be found at (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>).