

GGR329 H1S

# THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM

Course Syllabus | Winter 2018

Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

Lectures: Fridays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in SS2125

## Course Instructor

Bryan Dale, PhD Candidate, Department of Geography and Planning

Email: bryan.dale@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., or by appointment,

SS5039 (Sidney Smith Hall) *\*Note: If you cannot find me in this room during my scheduled office hours, please look for me in SS5060.*

**Teaching Assistant:** Isabel Urrutia, PhD Candidate

isabel.urrutiaschroeder@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

## Course Objectives

Once you have successfully completed this course you should be able to:

1. Understand some of the main theories, concepts, and political aspects concerning the geographies of the global food system.
2. Identify the key historical and contemporary factors that have shaped, and continue to shape, the food system—as well as the role of *place* in relation to these factors.
3. Analyze many of the relationships between food, human society (including politics and culture), and the non-human natural environment.
4. Evaluate alternative food initiatives as a means to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and the structural and political constraints with which they are faced.

## Notes from the FAS Calendar about the course:

Explores the changing global geographies of food by tracing international movements of food through both mainstream and 'alternative' supply chains. The implications for sustainability, food security, community autonomy and health are investigated.

- Recommended Preparation: 8.0 FCE's including 1.0 FCE in Geography (SOC SCI/BR=3)
- Distribution Requirements: Social Science
- Breadth Requirement: Society and its Institutions (3)

For further information see the FAS Calendar at: <https://fas.calendar.utoronto.ca>

## *Overview*

Food is fundamental to human existence, central to most cultures and significant in terms of its effects on the physical environment. While the food system has long been global, the current processes involved with producing, distributing and consuming food are in many ways unique when we consider their complexity and the consequences those processes have worldwide. Place and geographical connections are tremendously important to understanding these dynamics of the food system.

This course introduces some key issues and concepts for understanding food and agriculture 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 a range of topics to analyze the changes that have been taking place in the food system—from production and labour to health and inequalities based on class, race and gender. We will use food as a lens to explore current issues that cover social, political, economic and ecological systems, by making connections between theoretical concepts and real-world problems.

We will also discuss recent historical trends that have led to the development of the current food system, and address debates concerning global trade, corporate concentration, industrial agriculture, hunger and more. We will focus on the responses to the challenges to socio-ecological sustainability and justice that are evident in the world of food and agriculture. These responses include, for example, food sovereignty and agroecology, and we will consider such proposals for alternative food systems with a focus on their potential implications your lives, and for Toronto and Canada more generally, in relation to the global context.

## *Course Organization*

### **Course Format**

Class meetings will consist of opening lectures to provide some background and context for the themes for the day, as well as multimedia presentations, group discussions and other interactive activities and, occasionally, lectures by guest speakers. The material covered in class will be used to help interpret (as opposed to summarize) the readings, to add new concepts and examples to those covered in the texts, and to provide opportunities for discussion.

The course website is available through Blackboard (a.k.a. the Learning Portal: [portal.utoronto.ca](http://portal.utoronto.ca)). Information on login procedures is available [here](#). All course materials will be posted on the Blackboard site, including the syllabus, assignment descriptions and submission links, and additional information related to the course.

## Assigned and Recommended Readings

See below for the course schedule and readings list. There is an assigned textbook for this course, which is available at the U of T Bookstore. It is also available [at the library](#), although copies are limited:

- Koç, Mustafa, Jennifer Sumner and Anthony Winson (eds. 2017) *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, Second Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. *[Please be sure to look for the 2017 edition!]*

All other course readings, unless otherwise noted, will be available for download or linked through Blackboard. Please read the required readings *before* the class for which they are assigned. Recommended readings can help you further develop your understanding of the issues being discussed in a given week, and they may be particularly helpful as you work on your course assignments. I encourage you to come to class with questions about the assigned/recommended readings.

## Assignments and Grading

Item	Grade weight	Dates
Assignment 1: Podcast Analysis (Podcast episode options will be provided)	20%	Feb. 9
Assignment 2: Position Paper (An in-depth analysis of a relevant issue; topic options will be provided)	35%	Mar. 16
Exam	35%	TBA (Exam period is Apr. 9 to 30)
Participation	10%	Ongoing

Notes:

- Details regarding the assignments will be provided in separate documents.
- For important dates, see the Faculty of Arts & Science calendar at: <https://fas.calendar.utoronto.ca/sessional-dates> ...For example, March 14, 2018 is the last day to drop S section code courses from academic record and GPA.

## Strategies for success in this course

- Complete all assigned readings in a timely fashion according to the schedule, so that you develop a strong grasp of the course content and avoid having to catch up on an overwhelming amount of reading later in the course.
- Attend lectures every week and participate actively! Be prepared to critically engage with the course material and ask clarifying questions about concepts and themes as needed.
- Take notes in lecture and review them periodically throughout the term (every week if possible!).
- Review all of the assignment guidelines at the beginning of the term and schedule your time so that you begin working on the assignments well ahead of their due dates.

### **Assignment Submissions and Late Penalties**

Please submit assignments electronically by 11:59 p.m. to Blackboard on the due date in question (Go to *Course Materials > Assignments*). I will only accept hard copies in exceptional circumstances, provided you have cleared this with me in advance. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (including weekends). Assignments will not be accepted more than ten days after the due date.

### **Turnitin.com**

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to *Turnitin.com* for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the *Turnitin.com* reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the *Turnitin.com* service are described on the [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) web site. If you have concerns about the course's use of *Turnitin*, please contact me at least a week before the first assignment is due so that alternative arrangements can be made.

When submitting assignments to *Turnitin.com*, please use:  
Class ID: 17018137 | Enrolment password: 012018GGR329

### **Missed Term Work**

You are expected to complete all assignments by the dates indicated in this outline. Exemption or deferral of an assignment or examination is only permitted for a medical or personal emergency or due to religious observance. Please notify me if you anticipate any problems in meeting the deadlines outlined here. If you miss an assignment deadline I will expect you to come forward as soon as possible, and usually no later than one week after the date in question. I will request documentation in order to accommodate missed term work, e.g.

- U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form (available [online](#))
- Student Health or Disability Related Certificate
- A College Registrar's Letter
- Accessibility Services Letter

### **Participation**

A portion of your overall course grade (10%) is devoted to your participation in class. I am, however, sympathetic to the fact that some students are shy and others require time for reflection before they comment on the issues being discussed. Consequently, this grade accounts for much more than simply how frequently you participate (i.e. *quality* of participation is generally more important than *quantity* of interventions). It includes other factors such as being on time, being prepared with the readings done, being attentive and respectful during discussions, taking notes, and asking thoughtful questions before, during and after class. I also ask that you make an effort not to dominate discussions and to allow your fellow classmates the opportunity to fully express their perspectives, even if you may sometimes disagree with them.

*N.B.: In order to help me calculate your participation mark, I will take attendance in each class beginning in week 2, and I will occasionally ask you to complete tasks in class and submit your responses/reflections.*

*Also, you can contribute to your participation mark by engaging in Discussion Board conversations on Blackboard. Please see the forum 'Questions and comments' on Blackboard for details.*

### **Email Policy**

Please be sure to allow adequate time for me to respond to your emails (e.g. avoid sending last-minute emails before an assignment is due). I will endeavour to respond to messages within 24 hours, however please come to see me in person if you have a question that requires more than a brief response. I cannot guarantee that I will be checking email on weekday evenings or on weekends.

### **On Writing (Well)**

There are numerous resources at your disposal at the University of Toronto that are intended to help you improve your writing. Some of these are tailored to students whose first language is not English. Some are simply meant for anyone seeking to improve their writing. I encourage you to make use of these resources.

To access these resources visit: [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca)

See in particular:

- The page on Writing Centres at [www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres)
- Resources for those for whom English is not their first language at [www.writing.utoronto.ca/faqs/english-as-second-language](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/faqs/english-as-second-language).  
Note also that [Communication Café](#) will be holding sessions for English language learners who are seeking guidance.
- Writing Plus is a workshop series aimed at helping students improve a range of academic skills: [www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus)

As I prefer that you use APA formatting for citations and references, please see the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> (Other formatting requirements will be specified in the assignment guidelines.)

### **On Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Please also be sure that you are clear about:

- Academic integrity: <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca>, and
- How to avoid plagiarism in your writing: [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize)

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's

[Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources.

### **Accessibility Needs**

Both the University of Toronto and I are committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or [www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as)

### **Impediments to Academic Performance**

If you should encounter a situation that compromises your ability to perform to your potential in this course please notify me immediately. I am committed to your success in this course so please maintain an open line of communication with me.

For health and wellness resources available through U of T, please visit: [www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc)

### **Video and Audio Recording**

You are not permitted to make any video or audio recordings of any aspects of in-class meetings on electronic devices, unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. accessibility needs). If you would like to take photos or videos during class, please speak with me beforehand.

### **Use of Technology in the Classroom**

I ask you to not 'misuse' technology in class, which includes for example: texting, web browsing, online gaming, and watching videos, movies, etc. While laptops are permitted in class, I would prefer that you take hand-written notes. Studies have shown that written notes lead to better conceptual understanding of material than typed notes, and students with open laptops during classes (i.e. lectures, etc.) tend to score lower overall on tests and exams than students who do not use laptops.

## Course Schedule and Readings

Note: Chapters listed in capital letters below are from the assigned textbook (see above).

### Class 1: January 5

#### Geographies of the Global Food System

- CHAPTER 8 – Albritton, Robert – *Two Great Food Revolutions: The Domestication of Nature and the Transgression of Nature's Limits*
- Bernstein, Henry (2006). Is There an Agrarian Question in the 21st Century? *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 27(4): 449-460.
- Nestle, Marion (2017). *The Capitalism in our Food*. Food First Backgrounder, 23(3). Oakland, CA: Food First / Institute for Food and Development Policy. Available at: <https://foodfirst.org/publication/the-capitalism-in-our-food/>

Recommended:

- CHAPTER 1 – Koç, Mustafa, Margaret Bancercz, and Kelsey Speakman – *The Interdisciplinary Field of Food Studies*
- Winter, Michael (2003). Geographies of food: agro-food geographies – making reconnections. *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(4): 505–513.

### Class 2: January 12

#### Food Regimes and the Industrial Food System

- CHAPTER 2 – Friedmann, Harriet – *Changing Food Systems from Top to Bottom: Political Economy and Social Movements Perspectives*
- CHAPTER 9 – Weis, Tony – *A Political Ecology Approach to Industrial Food Production*
- Boyd, William (2001). Making Meat: Science, Technology, and American Poultry Production. *Technology and Culture*, 42(4): 631-664.

Recommended:

- McMichael, Philip (2009). A Food Regime Genealogy. *Journal of Peasant Studies*. 36(1), 139–169.
- CHAPTER 12 – Sundar, Aparna – *The Food System in the Fisheries: Crisis and Alternatives*

### Class 3: January 19

#### Food Sovereignty

Guest lecture: Ayla Fenton, farmer and activist with the National Farmers Union (NFU)

- CHAPTER 24 – Desmarais, Annette Aurélie - *Building Food Sovereignty: A Radical Framework for Socially Just and Ecologically Sustainable Food Systems*
- Trauger, Amy, Priscilla Claeys and Annette Aurélie Desmarais (2017). Can the revolution be institutionalized? In Desmarais et al. (eds.) *Public Policies for Food Sovereignty: Social Movements and the State*. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 1 - 15.
- Rosset, Peter (2011). Food Sovereignty and Alternative Paradigms to Confront Land Grabbing and the Food and Climate Crises. *Development*, 54(1): 21-30.

Recommended:

- Martínez-Torres, María Elena and Rosset, Peter M. (2010). La Via Campesina: the birth and evolution of a transnational social movement. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37(1), 149–76.
- Edelman, Marc, Tony Weis, Amita Baviskar, Saturnino M. Borrás Jr, Eric Holt-Giménez, Deniz Kandiyoti and Wendy Wolford (2014). Introduction: Critical perspectives on food sovereignty. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6): 911–931.

#### **Class 4: January 26**

##### **Corporate Power and its Consequences**

- CHAPTER 13 – Winson, Anthony – *Spatial Colonization of Food Environments by Pseudo Food Companies: Precursors of a Health Crisis*
- CHAPTER 17 – Clark, E. Ann – *Questioning the Assumptions of Genetically Modified Crops in Canada*
- Johnston, Josée, Andrew Biro and Norah MacKendrick (2009). Lost in the supermarket: the corporate-organic foodscape and the struggle for food democracy. *Antipode*, 41(3): 509-532.

Recommended:

- Clapp, Jennifer (2014). Financialization, distance and global food politics. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(5): 797-814.
- Gille, Zsuzsa (2013). From Risk to Waste: Global Food Waste Regimes. *The Sociological Review*, 60(2): 27-46.

#### **Class 5: February 2**

##### **Agroecology**

- CHAPTER 22 – McInnes, Ashley and Mount, Phil – *Actualizing Sustainable Food Systems*
- Méndez, V. Ernesto, Christopher M. Bacon, and Roseann Cohen (2013). Agroecology as a Transdisciplinary, Participatory, and Action-Oriented Approach. *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 37: 3–18.
- CHAPTER 11 – Kornelsen, Shannon – *The Welfare of Farm Animals on Intensive Livestock Operations (ILOs) in Canada*

Recommended:

- CHAPTER 21 – Sumner, Jennifer – *Conceptualizing Sustainable Food Systems*
- Altieri, Miguel A. and Toledo, Victor Manuel (2011). The Agroecological Revolution in Latin America. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(3): 587-612.

#### **Class 6: February 9**

~ First assignment due ~

##### **Farmer Livelihoods and Food Insecurity**

- CHAPTER 10 – Wiebe, Nettie – *Crisis in the Food System: The Farm Crisis*
- CHAPTER 15 – Dachner, Naomi and Tarasuk, Valerie – *Origins and Consequences of and Responses to Food Insecurity in Canada*

- CHAPTER 18 – Margulis, Matias E. and Duncan, Jessica – *Global Food Security Governance: Key Actors, Issues, and Dynamics*

Recommended:

- CHAPTER 20 – MacRae, Rod – *Food Policy for the 21st Century*
- Wakefield, Sarah, Julie Fleming, Carla Klassen, and Ana Skinner (2013). Sweet Charity, revisited: Organizational responses to food insecurity in Hamilton and Toronto, Canada. *Critical Social Policy*, 33(3): 427-450.

## **Class 7: February 16**

### **Cities within the Global Food System**

- CHAPTER 19 – Mendes, Wendy – *Municipal Governance and Urban Food Systems*
- Lister, Nina-Marie (2007). Placing Food: Toronto's Edible Landscape. In Knechtel, John (ed.). *Food*. Boston: MIT Press, pp. 148-185.
- McClintock, Nathan (2014). Radical, reformist, and garden-variety neoliberal: coming to terms with urban agriculture's contradictions. *Local Environment*, 19(2): 147-171.

Recommended:

- Levkoe, Charles and Wakefield, Sarah (2011). The Community Food Centre: Creating Space for a Just, Sustainable and Healthy Food System. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development*, 2(1): 249-268.
- Araghi, Farshad A. (1995). Global Depeasantization: 1945-1990. *Sociological Quarterly*, 36(2): 337-368.

~ Reading week: No class February 23 ~

## **Class 8: March 2**

### **Indigenous Food Sovereignty**

*Guest lecture: Danielle Boissoneau, Anishnaabekwe writer, seed saver and gardener, who also works for the Hamilton Community Food Centre*

- CHAPTER 14 – Martin, Debbie and Amos, Margaret – *What Constitutes Good Food? Towards a Critical Indigenous Perspective on Food and Health*
- Morrison, Dawn (2011). Indigenous food sovereignty: a model for social learning. In H. Wittman, A. Desmarais, and N. Wiebe (eds.). *Food sovereignty in Canada: creating just and sustainable food systems*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, pp. 97-113.
- Vowel, Chelsea (2012). Undermined at every turn: the lie of the failed native farm on the prairies. *âpihtawikosisân*, 23 May 2012. Available at: <http://apihtawikosisan.com/2012/05/undermined-at-every-turn-the-lie-of-the-failed-native-farms-on-the-prairies/>

Recommended:

- Kepkiewicz, Lauren (2017). Understanding food sovereignty in Canada: settler colonialism and Indigenous-settler alliances. In Desmarais et al. (eds.)

- Public Policies for Food Sovereignty: Social Movements and the State*. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 164 - 180.
- People's Food Policy Project (2011). Discussion Paper 1: Indigenous Food Sovereignty. *Food Secure Canada*. Available at: <https://foodsecurecanada.org/resources-news/newsletters/1-indigenous-food-sovereignty>

## **Class 9: March 9**

### **Labour and Racial Justice**

*Guest lecture: Chris Ramsaroop, Justice for Migrant Workers (Justicia)*

- Reid-Musson, Emily (2017). Grown Close to Home™: Migrant Farmworker (Im)mobilities and Unfreedom on Canadian Family Farms. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 107(3): 716-730.
- Ramsaroop, Chris and Wolk, Katie (2009). Can we achieve racial equity in the food security movement? In Palassio, Christina and Wilcox, Alana (eds.) *The Edible City: Toronto's food from farm to fork*. Toronto: Coach House Books, pp. 252-263.
- Guthman, Julie (2008). "If They Only Knew": Color Blindness and Universalism in California Alternative Food Institutions. *The Professional Geographer*, 60(3): 387-397.

Recommended:

- Weiler, Anelyse M., McLaughlin, Janet and Cole, Donald C. (2017). Food Security at Whose Expense? A Critique of the Canadian Temporary Farm Labour Migration Regime and Proposals for Change. *International Migration*, 55(4): 48-63.
- Holt-Giménez, Eric and Wang, Yi (2011). Reform or transformation? The pivotal role of food justice in the US food movement. *Race/ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, 5(1): 83-102.

## **Class 10: March 16**

~ Second assignment due ~

### **Bodies and the Gendered Politics of Food**

*Guest lecture: Isabel Urrutia, PhD Candidate, Human Geography, University of Toronto*

- LeBesco, Kathleen (2011). Neoliberalism, public health, and the moral perils of fatness. *Critical Public Health*. 21(2): 153-164.
- CHAPTER 6 – Brady, Jennifer, Elaine Power, Michelle Szabo, and Jacqui Gingras – *Still Hungry for a Feminist Food Studies*
- Allen, Patricia and Sachs, Carolyn (2007). Women and Food Chains: The Gendered Politics of Food. *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, (15)1: 1-23.

Recommended:

- Shiva, Vandana (2009). Women and the Gendered Politics of Food. *Philosophical Topics*, 37(2): 17-32.

- Khadse, Ashlesha (2017). Women, Agroecology & Gender Equity. *Focus on the Global South, India*. Available at:  
<https://focusweb.org/content/women-agroecology-gender-equality>

### **Class 11: March 23**

#### **Diets and Consumption in the Capitalist Food System**

- CHAPTER 3 – Johnston, Josée and Cappeliez, Sarah – *You Are What You Eat: Enjoying (and Transforming) Food Culture*
- CHAPTER 5 – Beagan, Brenda L. and Chapman, Gwen E. – *Constructing "Healthy Eating"/Constructing Self*
- Guthman, Julie (2007). Commentary on teaching food: Why I am fed up with Michael Pollan et al. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 24(2): 261-264.

Recommended:

- Getz, Christy and Shreck, Aimee (2006). What organic and Fair Trade labels do not tell us: towards a place-based understanding of certification. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 30(5): 490–501.
- Moss, Michael (2013). The Extraordinary Science of Addictive Junk Food. *New York Times Magazine*, 20 February 2013. Available at:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/24/magazine/the-extraordinary-science-of-junk-food.html>

~ No class March 30 (Good Friday; University closed) ~

### **Class 12: Make-up class. Thursday, April 5 (11 a.m. – 1 p.m. in SS2125)**

#### **Moving Forward + Exam Review**

*Note: Come to class with questions prepared!*

- Holt-Giménez, Eric and Shattuck, Annie (2011) Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation? *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(1): 109-144.
- CHAPTER 23 – Levkoe, Charles Z. – *Alternative Food Initiatives, Food Movements, and Collaborative Networks: A Pan-Canadian Perspective*

Recommended:

- Desmarais, Annette Aurélie and Wittman, Hannah (2014). Farmers, foodies and First Nations: getting to food sovereignty in Canada. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(1): 1153–1173.
- Guthman, Julie (2008). Bringing Good Food to Others: Investigating the Subjects of Alternative Food Practice. *Cultural Geographies*, 15(4): 425-441.

~ Faculty exam period runs Apr. 9 to 30 ~