

GGR 329 H1S

THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM

Course Syllabus | Second Summer Session (July-August 2018)

Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

Class Meeting: Mondays & Wednesdays, 14:00-16:00

Location: Sidney Smith Hall 2127

Instructor: Anelyse Weiler

Email: anelyse.weiler@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30-3:30pm or by appointment

Office: TBD Sidney Smith Hall

Teaching Assistants: Leah-Marie Marajh (leah.marajh@mail.utoronto.ca) and Benjamin Butler (benjamin.butler@mail.utoronto.ca)

Course Objectives

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

1. Understand some of the main theories and concepts that are used to investigate food and agriculture issues across the globe.
2. Identify the major historical and contemporary dynamics that shape the global food system.
3. Analyze relationships between food, human society, and the non-human natural environment.
4. Critically evaluate various initiatives to advance social justice and environmental sustainability across the food system, along with political, economic and cultural structures that may constrain these initiatives.
5. Synthesize course material verbally through in-class discussions and in writing for distinct audiences.

OVERVIEW

Eating is one of the most intimate ways we interact with the rest of the natural world in our everyday lives. Food forms a core part of human cultures across the planet, and it is often seeped in rich meanings and traditions. Simultaneously, the contemporary food system is implicated in environmental harms, public health challenges, and social inequality.

Although these issues unfold in unique ways across different geographical contexts, we can identify dominant patterns and global consequences in the way food is owned, produced, consumed, distributed and disposed of today.

This course introduces some key historical context, contemporary issues and concepts for understanding food and agriculture in a period of profound change. We will use food as an entry point to investigate a selection of current issues and debates in the food system, ranging from corporate concentration to inequity in the kitchen and individual diets. How are ongoing historical processes such as colonialism and imperialism related to hunger today? How is capitalism tied to the disappearance of native bumblebees? We will also

critically consider various movements to advance social justice, animal welfare and environmental well-being across the food system, such as shopping for social change and labour organizing among food chain workers. Throughout the course, we will reflect on how scholarly theories relate to real-world problems, how food-related challenges intersect with inequalities such as race, class, gender and the body, and how the issues at hand affect our own lives.

Course Organization

Course Format

Class meetings will consist of opening lectures, multimedia presentations, and occasional guest lectures. We will be using the weekly readings to engage in group discussions and other participatory activities. The material we cover 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 opportunity for students to share their perspectives on the themes we are exploring.

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

ASSESSMENT AND DEADLINES

Assignments and Grading

Item	Grade weight	Where	Due Date
Op-ed	20%	Blackboard	11:00am Monday, July 16
Position Paper	35%	Blackboard	11:00am Wednesday, August 8
Final Exam	35%	Room TBD	TBA (Exam period is August 16-22)
Participation and Discussion Questions	10%	Post discussion questions on Blackboard > Discussion Board; participate in class and office hours	Discussion questions due by 11am before class; participation mark is ongoing

Notes:

- Assignment details will be provided on Blackboard
- For important dates, see the Faculty of Arts & Science calendar at: <https://fas.calendar.utoronto.ca/sessional-dates>

- E.g. July 30, 2018 is the last day to drop S section code courses from academic record and GPA

1. Op-Ed

Select a food-related problem based on recent news article (e.g. within 2018). You will write an opinion piece on this topic in an op-ed format and a 1 to 2-paragraph “pitch” to an editor. Students who submit their op-ed to a newspaper *and* get it published will receive an extra 3% on their next assignment. [800 words max., not including references or pitch]

2. Position Paper

In this paper, you will take a position on a controversial issue related to the global food system and use rigorous scholarly evidence to provide a solid foundation for your argument. You will present multiple sides of the argument on this debate and state your own position. You may decide to take one side of the debate, or you may opt to critique the terms of the debate itself. For instance, do the very terms of the debate need to shift? Should we be asking entirely different questions? [1900-2100 words., not including references]

3. Final Exam

Covers assigned reading and lecture material for the entire course, including guest lectures. The final exam will be two hours and will be scheduled during the university exam period (August 16-22).

4. Participation

Part of your overall course grade (10%) is based on your discussion questions (described below) along with the quality and quantity of your active in-class engagement. This includes activities such as raising thoughtful comments/questions in lectures and with guest speakers, contributing to small group discussions, and engaging in writing exercises. It also includes factors such as arriving on time, being prepared with the readings done, taking notes, being attentive and respectful toward members of the class. Please give others the space to express their perspectives, even if you disagree with them. If you feel shy about speaking in class, another way to actively participate is to engage with course materials while visiting me during office hours.

To help me calculate your participation mark, I will occasionally take class attendance beginning in Week 2.

Discussion Questions

Write two discussion questions that help spur deeper reflection on and critical analysis of the assigned readings for the week. Please come to class prepared to read your questions and facilitate a conversation with your colleagues. For **five out of the eleven classes**, submit questions by creating a new thread on the appropriate Blackboard “Discussion Board” Forum. You can select whichever five classes you prefer, although I encourage you not to leave them all until the very end. You are, of course, welcome to comment on your colleagues’ discussion questions.

Assignment Submissions and Late Penalties

Please submit assignments electronically by **11:00am** to Blackboard on the due date (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 six days after the due date.

Grade Appeals

Instructors and Teaching Assistants take the marking of assignments very seriously and work diligently to be fair, consistent and accurate. Nonetheless, mistakes and oversights occasionally happen. If it is a mathematical error, please contact the TAs by email. If it is a more substantive appeal, you must adhere to the following:

1. Wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark;
2. Carefully re-read your assignment, all assignment guidelines, marking schemes, and the grader's comments.
3. Send the instructor a grade appeal by email within 5 days of receiving the mark.
 - a. In your email, include one paragraph clearly indicating why you believe you should receive a regrade, the original assignment, and all original comments.

Most grade appeals result in the same mark. While a mark may go up, it may also go down.

Missing 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 five days 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

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This is a condensed summer course, and we are covering a full term of material in six weeks. Summer sessions can be a fabulous opportunity to immerse yourself in the material. Simultaneously, the course moves quickly. If you are aware of anything that will prevent you from attending class and fully completing the course requirements on time, it may be better to take the course when it is offered in a later term. If difficulties arise during the course, please speak with your College Registrar as soon as possible.

Strategies for Success in an Intensive Summer Course

- Complete all assigned readings according to the schedule. This will help you avoid having to catch up on an overwhelming amount of reading later in the course.
- As you are doing each reading, I encourage you to use a consistent, organized system to take notes. This will help you keep track of what you've learned in a fast-paced course and will assist with preparing for the final exam.
- Attend lectures every week and participate actively! Be prepared to critically engage with the course material, ask clarifying questions about concepts and topics, and raise thoughtful questions for guest speakers.
- Take notes in lecture and review them every week throughout the term.
- Review all 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.

Contacting the Instructor

- If you have a question requiring more than a brief email response, please see me in person during office hours.
- Please include the course code (GGR 329) in the email subject line.
- Please treat emails like any other professional communication.
- I will try to respond to messages within two working days.
 - Please allow adequate time for me to respond (e.g. avoid sending last-minute emails before an assignment is due).
 - I may not check or respond to emails on weekends or outside of regular working hours (9am-5pm).
- Before emailing me, please ensure your question is not answered in the syllabus or on the course website. If it is, I may not respond.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is quoting or paraphrasing another author's work, including the work of fellow students, without proper use of citations and/or quotations marks. You should not be submitting any academic work for which you have previously obtained or are currently seeking credit without first discussing this with me. Some useful resources:

- Academic integrity: <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca>
- How not to plagiarize: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses at UofT. 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.

Visual and Audio Recording

You are not permitted to make any video, photo or audio recordings of any aspects of in-class meetings 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.

Electronic Devices

Although laptops are permitted in class, I would prefer if you took handwritten notes. Studies have shown that written notes lead to better understanding of material than typed notes, that students with open laptops during classes tend to score lower overall on tests and exams, and that distractions on laptops negatively affect peers' performance. ***If you use a laptop to take notes, please sit at the front left of the class and do not use it in a way that is distracting or for non-class activities*** (e.g. Instagram, shopping, etc.). Please set cell phones to silent and keep them tucked away during class. If you must use a cell phone (e.g. family emergencies), please step into the hallway to text or call.

Notes from FAS Calendar About GGR 329

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). [GGR107H1](#) recommended.
 - Distribution Requirements: Social Science
 - Breadth Requirements: Society and its Institutions (3)
 - Program Area Section: [Geography and Planning](#)
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SUPPORT, ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

Accessibility

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 or www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as

Mental Health and Academic Impediments

Please contact me right away if you encounter a situation that compromises your ability to perform to your full potential in this course. If you have mental health concerns, you are not alone! Health and wellness resources available at UofT: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>

Writing

The University of Toronto offers excellent resources to help students improve their writing:

- The Writing Centre: www.writing.utoronto.ca
 - Writing Centre Summer 2018 Openings: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-centre-summer-openings-2/>
- English language support:
 - <http://writing.utoronto.ca/support/english-language-support/>

- <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>
 - 60+ advice files on all aspects of writing: <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs/>
 - *Please use APA formatting for citations and references on assignments. See: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> (Other formatting requirements will be specified in the assignment guidelines.)
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READINGS

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](#), including in [Course Reserves](#), although copies are limited:

- Koç, M., Sumner, J., & Winson, A. (2017). *Critical perspectives in food studies* (2nd Ed.). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press [*Please be sure to look for the second 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. Assigned/required readings will be testable on the final exam. Recommended readings can deepen your understanding of the issues we discuss in class, can be a vital resource in your assignments. I encourage you to come to class with questions and comments on the assigned / recommended readings.

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

HISTORY AND BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF THE FOOD SYSTEM

Class 1 | Wednesday, 4 July

Why Study the Global Food System?

- Fraser, E., & Fraser, E. (2014). 10 things you need to know about the global food system. *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/food-blog/10-things-need-to-know-global-food-system>
- Course Syllabus!

Recommended

- Fraser, E., Legwegoh, A., Krishna, K. C., CoDyre, M., Dias, G., Hazen, S., ... & Sneyd, L. (2016). Biotechnology or organic? Extensive or intensive? Global or local? A critical review of potential pathways to resolve the global food crisis. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 48, 78-87.
- Tansey, G. (2014). The Food System: An Overview [video]. *Food Systems Academy*. <http://www.foodsystemsacademy.org.uk/videos/geoff-tansey.html>

Class 2 | Monday, 9 July

Food Regimes and Political Ecology

- CHAPTER 2: Friedmann, H. Changing food systems from top to bottom: Political economy and social movements perspective (pp. 19-33)
- CHAPTER 9: Weis, T. A Political Ecology Approach to Industrial Food Production (pp. 118-134)
- Patel, R., & Moore, J. W. (2018, May 8). How the chicken nugget became the true symbol of our era. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/may/08/how-the-chicken-nugget-became-the-true-symbol-of-our-era>

Recommended

- Holt Giménez, E., & Shattuck, A. (2011). Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation? *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(1), 109-144.
- McMichael, P. (2009). A food regime genealogy. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(1), 139-169.

Class 3 | Wednesday, 11 July

Corporate Concentration in Food and Agriculture

- Howard, P. (2018). Food system concentration: A political economy perspective. In *Concentration and power in the food system: Who controls what we eat?* (pp. 1-16). London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Clapp, J. (2014). Financialization, distance and global food politics. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(5), 797-814.

Recommended

- Carolan, M. (2018). Big data and food retail: Nudging out citizens by creating dependent consumers. *Geoforum*, 90, 142-150.
- Fairbairn, M. (2014, May 26). Farmland Meets Finance: Is Land the New Economic Bubble? Food First. https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/LSA-Brief-No5_Finance_Fairbairn-1.pdf
- Nestle, M. (2013). Introduction: The food industry and 'eat more.' In *Food politics: How the food industry influences nutrition and health* (3rd Ed.) (pp. 1-27). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Class 4 | Monday, 16 July

Colonialism and Racism

Guest lecture: Chef Johl Whiteduck Ringette, NishDish Marketeria & Catering

- CHAPTER 14: Martin, D., & Amos, M. What constitutes good food? Toward a critical Indigenous perspective on food and health (pp. 205-220)
- Besky, S. (2008). Can a plantation be fair? Paradoxes and possibilities in fair trade Darjeeling tea certification. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 29(1), 1-9.

- Holt Giménez, E., & Harper, B. (2016, March 21). Food – systems – racism: From mistreatment to transformation. Food First. <https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/DR1Final.pdf>

Recommended

- Coté, C. (2016). “Indigenizing” Food Sovereignty. Revitalizing Indigenous Food Practices and Ecological Knowledges in Canada and the United States. *Humanities*, 5(3), 57-71.
- Jinadasa, S. (2015, September 23). Here’s why we need to stop calling pumpkin spice a ‘white people thing.’ *Black Girl Dangerous*. <https://www.bgdblog.org/2015/09/heres-why-we-need-to-stop-calling-pumpkin-spice-a-white-people-thing/>
- Kepkiewicz, L., & Dale, B. (2018). Keeping ‘our’ land: Property, agriculture and tensions between Indigenous and settler visions of food sovereignty in Canada. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1-20.

KEY CHALLENGES

Class 5 | Wednesday, 18 July

Workers Across the Food Chain

Guest lecture: Gabriel Allahdua, Activist & Organizer, Justice for Migrant Workers

- Lo, J., & Jacobson, A. (2011). Human rights from field to fork: Improving labor conditions for food-sector workers by organizing across boundaries. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, 5(1), 61-82.
- Lee, M. S. (2003). El Contrato [Film. 51 min.]: https://www.nfb.ca/film/el_contrato/

Recommended

- Lee, M. S. (2017). Migrant Dreams [Film. 88 min.]: <https://tvo.org/video/documentaries/migrant-dreams-feature-version>
- Mojtehedzadeh, S., & Kennedy, B. (2017, September 8). Undercover in temp nation. Toronto Star. <http://projects.thestar.com/temp-employment-agencies/>
- Preibisch, K. L., & Grez, E. E. (2010). The other side of el otro lado: Mexican migrant women and labor flexibility in Canadian agriculture. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 35(2), 289–316.

Class 6 | Monday, 23 July

Hunger and Food Insecurity

- CHAPTER 15: Dachner, N., & Tarasuk, V. Origins and consequences of and responses to food insecurity in Canada (pp. 221-238)
- Minkoff-Zern, L. A. (2014). Hunger amidst plenty: farmworker food insecurity and coping strategies in California. *Local Environment*, 19(2), 204–219.

Recommended

- Holmes, E., Black, J. L., Heckelman, A., Lear, S. A., Seto, D., Fowokan, A., & Wittman, H. (2018). “Nothing is going to change three months from now.” A mixed methods

characterization of food bank use in Greater Vancouver. *Social Science & Medicine*, 200, 129–136.

- Lappé, F. M., & Collins, J. (2015). World hunger: 10 myths. *Food First*. <https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Summer-2015-Backgrounder-10-Myths.pdf>
- CHAPTER 18: Margulis, M. E., & Duncan, J. Global food security governance: Key actors, issues, and dynamics (pp. 270-285)

Class 7 | Wednesday, 25 July

Gender and the Body

In-class photography by Arts & Science Communications Office.

- CHAPTER 6: Brady, J., Power, E., Szabo, M., & Gingras, J. Still hungry for a feminist food studies (pp. 81-94)
- Cairns, K., & Johnston, J. (2015). Choosing health: embodied neoliberalism, postfeminism, and the “do-diet.” *Theory and Society*, 44(2), 153–175.

Recommended

- Allen, P., & Sachs, C. (2007). Women and food chains: The gendered politics of food. *International Journal of Sociology of Food and Agriculture*, 15(1), 1–23.
- Bowen, S., Elliott, S., & Brenton, J. (2014). The Joy of Cooking? *Contexts*, 13(3), 20–25.
- Huang, C. (2017). Queer in the kitchen: Gender politics take center stage. *Civil Eats*. <https://civileats.com/2017/10/24/queer-in-the-kitchen-gender-politics-take-front-stage/>
- Sbicca, J. (2012). Eco-queer movement (s). *European Journal of Ecopsychology*, 3, 33–52.

ACTIVISM, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND SOLUTIONS

Class 8 | Monday, 30 July

Local, Sustainable and Alternative Food Movements

Guest lecture: Carolyn Young, Executive Director, Organic Council of Ontario

- Alkon, A., & Guthman, J. (2017). Introduction. In *The new food activism: Opposition, cooperation, and collective action* (pp. 1-27). Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Scott, S., Si, Z., Schumilas, T., & Chen, A. (2014). Contradictions in state- and civil society-driven developments in China’s ecological agriculture sector. *Food Policy*, 45, 158–166.

Recommended

- DuPuis, E. M., & Goodman, D. (2005). Should we go “home” to eat?: toward a reflexive politics of localism. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 21(3), 359–371.
- CHAPTER 22: McInnes, A., & Mount, P. Actualizing sustainable food systems (pp. 332-347)
- Seufert, V., & Ramankutty, N. (2017). Many shades of gray—The context-dependent performance of organic agriculture. *Science Advances*, 3(3), e1602638, 1-14.

Class 9 | Wednesday, 1 August

Vote with your fork? Ethical Lifestyles and Consumption

- Guthman, J. (2003). Fast food/organic food: Reflexive tastes and the making of “yuppie chow.” *Social & Cultural Geography*, 4(1), 45–58.
- Huddart Kennedy, E., Parkins, J. R., & Johnston, J. (2018). Food activists, consumer strategies, and the democratic imagination: Insights from eat-local movements. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 18(1), 149–168.

Recommended

- CHAPTER 3: Johnston, J., & Cappeliez, S. You are what you eat: Enjoying (and transforming) food culture (pp. 34-48)
- Lang, T. (2013, June 25). Food waste is the symptom, not the problem. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/food-waste-is-the-symptom-not-the-problem-15432>
- Lukacs, M. (2017, July 17). Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2017/jul/17/neoliberalism-has-conned-us-into-fighting-climate-change-as-individuals>

Class 10 | Wednesday, 8 August

Feeding the City and Food Justice

Guest lecture: Vanessa Ling Yu, Founder & Director, caterToronto

- CHAPTER 19: Mendes, W. Municipal governance and urban food systems (pp. 286-304)
- Walker, S. (2016). Urban agriculture and the sustainability fix in Vancouver and Detroit. *Urban Geography*, 37(2), 163-182.

Recommended

- Hecht, A. A., Biehl, E., Buzogany, S., & Neff, R. A. (2018). Using a trauma-informed policy approach to create a resilient urban food system. *Public Health Nutrition*, 43, 1–10.
- Levkoe, C. Z. (2006). Learning democracy through food justice movements. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 23(1), 89-98.
- Martellozzo, F., Landry, J. S., Plouffe, D., Seufert, V., Rowhani, P., & Ramankutty, N. (2014). Urban agriculture: a global analysis of the space constraint to meet urban vegetable demand. *Environmental Research Letters*, 9(6), 064025.
- McClintock, N. (2014). Radical, reformist, and garden-variety neoliberal: coming to terms with urban agriculture's contradictions. *Local Environment*, 19(2), 147-171.

Class 11 | Monday, 13 August

Food Sovereignty

- CHAPTER 24: Desmarais, A. A. Building food sovereignty: A radical framework for socially just and ecologically sustainable food systems (pp. 363-379)

- Holt-Giménez, E. (2010). Food security, food justice, or food sovereignty? *Food First*. https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/BK16_4-2010-Winter_Food_Movements_bckgrndr-.pdf

Recommended

- Agarwal, B. (2014). Food sovereignty, food security and democratic choice: critical contradictions, difficult conciliations. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6), 1247–1268.
- Desmarais, A. and H. Wittman. (2014). Farmers, foodies and First Nations: getting to food sovereignty in Canada. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6), pp. 1153-1173.
- Edelman, M., Weis, T., Baviskar, A., Borras, S. M., Jr, Holt-Giménez, E., Kandiyoti, D., & Wolford, W. (2014). Introduction: critical perspectives on food sovereignty. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6), 911–931.