I. COURSE OVERVIEW

Food plays an essential role in our lives in many very evident ways: its nutrients sustain our bodies, its preparation signifies and celebrates our social identities, and its production occupies almost half of our planet’s land. Yet although most of us encounter food itself on a daily basis, the paths it has travelled and the actors and geographies it has encountered along the way are less evident. This is unsurprising given the growing scale and complexity of the processes involved in producing, distributing, and consuming food.

This course introduces some key issues and concepts for understanding food and agriculture in a period of profound change. In the first part of the course, we will discuss the historical processes that have led to the development of the global food system, including crop and animal domestication, colonialism, capitalism, globalization, industrialization, and corporatization. We will go on to explore the myriad challenges that characterize the contemporary food system (environmental harms, labour and human rights violations, public health concerns, inequalities of access, etc.) and the many forms of activism that have emerged in response to these problems (local and sustainable agriculture, food security and sovereignty, ethical consumption, etc.). Throughout, we will consider food as both an object of study, and as a lens through which to explore broader social, political, economic, and ecological phenomena.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and theories that have been used by geographers and scholars in related disciplines to investigate and analyze the global food system
- Identify the historical and contemporary developments and processes that have shaped/continue to shape the global food system
- Discuss the leading challenges facing the food system today, and some of the solutions that have been proposed to address these
- Critically reflect on your own daily engagement with the food system
- Develop and communicate opinions and arguments more effectively, both orally and in writing

III. TEXTS/WEBSITE

There is no required textbook for this course; instead, we will be reading a variety of articles from academic journals and the popular press. These readings will be available on the course website, which can be accessed by logging in to the UofT Portal and clicking on the course Quercus link. You are expected to come to class having completed the readings assigned for that day. If possible, please try to have access to the readings during class.
IV. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Podcast Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>July 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcast Analysis Reflection</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>July 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>August 9 (5 pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10% (5% online, 5% in class)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>TBD: August 15-22</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Detailed assignment instructions will be provided during the first few weeks of class.

All assignments must be submitted online by the beginning of class on their assigned due date, unless otherwise noted.

**Podcast Analysis – 20% (Due: July 18th – Week 3)**

This assignment asks you to select one of a subset of episodes from the podcast The Secret Ingredient. You will write a 1200-1400 word analysis of the episode, connecting it with the concepts and readings explored in class.

**Podcast Analysis Reflection – 5% (Due: July 25th – Week 4)**

You will be given some time in class to discuss your podcast analysis with a small group of your peers who have analyzed the same episode. You will write a two page reflection on this conversation and submit it one week after the original podcast assignment was due.

**Position Paper – 35% (Due: August 9th – Week 6)**

You will write a 2500-2800 word essay examining a contemporary controversial issue related to food. Topic options will be provided, but you may propose another topic if you wish.

**Course Participation – 10% (5% in class participation; 5% online participation)**

**In class participation (5%)**

Your participation in class will largely be assessed through short, informal writing exercises. These exercises will allow you some time to process your thoughts, which you will be encouraged to share in subsequent discussions. I will collect your responses at the end of each class, and they will be graded on a simple scale, from 0-2:

- 0 = no submission (i.e. you were not in class), or submission has no relation at all to the prompt
- 1 = submission adequately addresses the prompt
- 2 = submission thoughtfully addresses the prompt

Although I would like to keep the amount of paper we use to a minimum, I do ask that you write these responses by hand – it is simply too difficult to keep track of them otherwise.

I may also take attendance in class on occasion, and this will factor into your final participation grade.
**Online participation (5%)**

Your online participation grade will be based on your online activity on our course website. Beginning in Week 2, you are expected to submit the following on a weekly basis:

- At least one discussion question
- At least one response to a discussion question posted by one of your peers

In addition to these required participation components, your participation during lecture is valued and appreciated!

**Final Exam – 30% (Date: TBD – Exam Period: Aug 15-22)**

The final exam will take place during the exam period at the end of the semester. It will consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions, and will be based on material from lectures, tutorials, videos, assigned readings, and discussions.

I will post an exam guide on Quercus, and will give you a list of short and long answer questions prior to the exam – a selection of these will appear on the exam.

V. **COURSE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES**

**Assignment submission:**

Please submit assignments electronically via Quercus by the time specified (generally prior to class on the assignment due date). I will only accept hard copies in exceptional circumstances provided you have cleared this with me in advance.

**Late Work**

All assignments must be submitted by the beginning of class on their assigned due dates, unless otherwise noted. You will receive a 5% reduction on papers for every day past the initial due date (this includes weekend days, with Saturday and Sunday counting as separate days). Papers submitted more than one full week late will not be accepted.

Late work will only be accepted without penalty to accommodate accessibility requests (please see section VI. Course Expectations for more guidance on this) or in exceptional circumstances such as documented illness and family emergency. If such circumstances impede your ability to complete your work on time, I expect you to come forward as soon as possible, and usually no later than five days after the date in question. I will require documentation in order to accommodate late or missed term work, such as:

- University of Toronto Verification of Illness or Injury Form (available online: [http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php))
- Student Health or Disability Related Certificate
- College Registrar’s Letter
- Accessibility Services Letter
**Grade appeals**

Instructors and Teaching Assistants take grading very seriously and work diligently to be fair, consistent, and accurate. Nonetheless, mistakes and oversights occasionally happen. In the event of a mathematical error, please email the TA. More substantive appeals must adhere to the following steps:

1. Wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark;
2. Carefully re-read your assignment, the assignment guideline, marking scheme, and the grader’s comments.
3. Send the Instructor a grade appeal within 5 days of receiving the mark.

In your email, include one paragraph clearly indicating why you believe you should receive a regrade, and attach 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.

**Academic honesty**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University of Toronto courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others (i.e. submitting work you have done for another class) or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own (i.e. plagiarism) is “scholastic misconduct.” 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. Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for this course will result in a failing grade and a notation on your transcript.

**All work you submit must be your own.** When you use other people’s ideas in your assignments, you must acknowledge the source. We will discuss how to properly reference the work of others when we discuss the first assignment. Other useful resources:

- Academic integrity: [http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca](http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca)

If you have any questions or concerns about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please do not hesitate to speak with myself or the TAs. More information is also available at [https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity-osai/academic-misconduct](https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity-osai/academic-misconduct).

**VI. COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**Course Website**

You are expected to check the course website (available through Quercus) regularly for announcements and any modifications to the reading list (you will also be notified of these changes in class). All course materials – including the syllabus, assignments, and lecture slides – will be posted on the website. In addition, you can email me and the TAs through the site, and post questions and participate in online discussions about the course content.
Workload

You are expected to keep up with readings and assignments. This is a condensed summer course, in which a full term of material is covered in six weeks. Summer sessions can be a fabulous opportunity to immerse yourself in the material, but the course moves quickly; if you are aware of anything that will prevent you from attending class and/or completing the course requirements on time, consider taking 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, use a consistent, organized system to take notes. Make note of the main point being conveyed in each reading, the arguments used by the author to support that point, and any key terms you come across. This will help you keep track of what you have learned and assist with exam prep.
- Take notes in lecture and review them every week throughout the term.
- Review all assignment guidelines and due dates at the beginning of the term and schedule your time so that you begin working on the assignments well ahead of their due dates.

Class Conduct

For this class to be successful, we will need to create and maintain a positive learning environment. To this end, I expect your cooperation in at least four ways:

Attend lecture

- You are expected to be present at the beginning of class and stay until the end. If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for any course content you missed. In cases of valid absence, please consult with me as soon as possible so that we can work toward getting you caught up.

Respect the rights of others to learn

- If you have a cell phone, put it on silent and do not use it for anything other than class-related activities; if you must take/make a call re. an emergency situation, please leave the room
- Taking notes by hand is recommended as numerous studies have shown it facilitates better learning and information retention, but if you elect to use a laptop, please do so in a way that is not disturbing to your colleagues or distracting the instructor
- 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)
- Any discussions with your peers should be focused on course content
- Please do not arrive late to class, or start getting ready to leave before class is over

Contribute to an engaging and distinctive learning environment

- I want your thoughts, ideas, and experiences to help shape this class, but that can only happen if you actively participate in it. Ten percent of your grade is based on participation, and in order to participate meaningfully, you will need to complete the assigned readings so you can reflect on them both in class and online. If parts of the readings are unclear or they raise further questions for you, don’t get discouraged – working through these questions is part of the learning process!
**Acknowledgment and respect diversity**

- A respectful, tolerant, and safe atmosphere be maintained in the classroom at all times. Discussion of controversial issues is encouraged in this course. You will not agree with all the points of view of your instructor, TAs, guest lecturers, or fellow students, but as citizens of this class you are responsible for respecting all individuals as fair-minded persons. You will be asked to maintain an open mind to the differences around you, and place positive value on that diversity.

**Accessing Resources/Supports**

You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning. Sometimes circumstances in and outside of the classroom challenge our ability to learn to our fullest potential. There are many resources/supports available to assist you in addressing these challenges (including me!), but you need to be proactive about seeking these out.

**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 (http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as) as soon as possible: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca

If you are interested in being a volunteer note-taker to assist students in the course who require accommodation, please contact me ASAP.

**Mental health and personal safety**

If you have mental health concerns, you are not alone! Please contact the Health and Wellness Centre (http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc) for help. If you are experiencing distress, a threat to your personal safety, or sexual violence or harassment, this website has valuable contacts: http://safety.utoronto.ca

**English language supports**

Information about the English Language Learning program is available at http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell. The program offers a variety of free mini-courses and services as well as online resources.

**Writing supports**

There are numerous resources at your disposal at the University of Toronto to help you improve your writing (http://writing.utoronto.ca). I encourage you to make use of these. Of particular note:

- You can access personalized, in person writing advice via the Writing Centres: http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/
- Online writing tips can be found at: https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs/
Contacting the Instructor

If you have a question requiring more than a brief email response, please see me in person during office hours.* This will allow us to have a more productive and in-depth conversation. Please email me to schedule an appointment if my office hours conflict with your schedule.

You may email me with shorter questions, but please consult the course syllabus or Quercus prior to doing so to see if your question has already been addressed. If you do send me an email, please:

- Include the course code (GGR 329) in the email subject line
- Treat emails like any other professional communication
- Allow adequate time for me to respond (24-48 hours)

*If your question concerns a grade you have received, please schedule an appointment with the TA who has graded your work via email.

Consulting the Teaching Assistants (TAs)

The TAs will be grading the majority of your assignments. Their hours are limited, so they will not be holding regular office hours, but they are available to meet by appointment throughout the semester. Please feel free to email them if you would like guidance on an assignment, or if you require clarification on any grades you have received.
VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note: Some of the following readings may be changed as we proceed; please consult the course website for the most updated reading list. You will be notified of any changes in advance.*

### PART 1: INTRODUCTION

#### Week 1: Introduction; Food systems in historical perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 2-Jul | Syllabus review; An introduction to the global food system and systems thinking | Fraser, E., & Fraser, E. (2014). 10 things you need to know about the global food system. The Guardian. [https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/food-blog/10-things-need-to-know-global-food-system](https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/food-blog/10-things-need-to-know-global-food-system)  

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 4-Jul | The development and evolution of (industrial) agriculture | Ian Cook et al. (2004) Follow the thing: papaya. Antipode 36(4), 642-664  

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<tr>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 4-Jul | Ian Cook et al. (2004) Follow the thing: papaya. Antipode 36(4), 642-664  

#### Week 2: Food systems in historical perspective

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## PART II: FOOD PRODUCTION: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

### Week 3: The environmental and human costs of industrial agriculture

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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</table>

### Guest Speaker: Bryan Dale: Agroecology

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Mintz, Corey. 2018. Eating Dinner With Canada's Migrant Workers: For the people who work our fields, food is both a livelihood and a way to stave off isolation, The Walrus @ [https://thewalrus.ca/eating-dinner-with-canadas-migrant-workers/](https://thewalrus.ca/eating-dinner-with-canadas-migrant-workers/)  

### Assignments: Podcast Analysis due by beginning of class

### Week 4: Power, control, and justice; Food Insecurity

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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</table>
## PART III: FOOD CONSUMPTION: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Mintz, C. 2019. The History of Food in Canada Is the History of Colonialism. The Walrus @ https://thewalrus.ca/the-history-of-food-in-canada-is-the-history-of-colonialism/ | Podcast reflection due by beginning of class  | Final drop date: July 29  |
Hoey, Lesli & Sponseller, Allison. (2018). “It’s hard to be strategic when your hair is on fire”: alternative food movement leaders’ motivation and capacity to act. Agriculture and Human Values. 35.  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6:</th>
<th>The culture of consumption</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-Aug</td>
<td>Shifting diets - how we did, do, and could/should eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Podcast: ANTHRODISH 43: Can We Really Have a Global Diet? with Dr. Sarah Rotz @ <a href="https://www.anthrodish.com/episodes/">https://www.anthrodish.com/episodes/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick one of the following articles to read:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamann, Steffi and Pannu, Arvinder. 2019. Canada’s food guide is easy to follow if you’re wealthy or middle class, theconversation.com @ <a href="https://theconversation.com/canadas-food-guide-is-easy-to-follow-if-youre-wealthy-or-middle-class-114963">https://theconversation.com/canadas-food-guide-is-easy-to-follow-if-youre-wealthy-or-middle-class-114963</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8-Aug</td>
<td>The gendered and sexual politics of food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hart. 2018. Faux-meat and masculinity: The gendering of food on three vegan blogs. Canadian Food Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td>Final paper due on August 9 by 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination period: August 15-22</td>
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*Portions of this syllabus have been adapted from syllabi from previous semesters of GGR329 written by Bryan Dale, Melanie Sommerville, and Anelyse Weiler.*