

SOC 364: Agriculture and Global Society Spring 2016

Professor: Joshua Sbicca, PhD

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday (2:00-3:15 PM) and Thursday (2:00-3:15 PM)

Class Location: Engineering Building B101

Office Location: Clark Building B265

Office Hours: Tuesday (3:30-5:00PM) and Wednesday (2:45-4:15 PM) or by appointment

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Course Description

This course offers a critical sociological presentation and evaluation of the contemporary global food system, paying particular attention to the production and contestation of environmental degradation and social inequalities. We will be investigating such relationships in the context of how different food systems contribute to development and socioecological change both in the United States and around the world. In particular, we will look into how food and agriculture are embedded in intersecting systems of inequality at the point of class, gender, and race/ethnicity/nationality. On the other hand, we will explore why and how resistance arises to change food systems, as well as efforts to use food and agriculture as a means for social change. The course provides a wide-ranging theoretical and empirical analysis from seed to table to trashcan of ways to understand the food system, social change, and strategies and tactics adopted by food movements.

Course Objectives

- 1) Read scholarly texts that explore the role of food and agriculture in socioecological change in the United States and around the world.
- 2) Watch and listen to films, documentaries, video clips, and audio recordings that examine the sociological implications of class, gender, race/ethnicity/nationality, and geography in the food system.
- 3) Engage in critical, but respectful debate on a) why food and agriculture is central to socioecological change; b) how people supply, consume, and dispose of food; c) why this helps/hurts different social and non-human groups and the ecosystems upon which they rely and; d) how we might create and participate in social change through the use of food and agriculture.

Goals and Learning Outcomes

- 1) Understand and articulate the role of food and agriculture in socioecological change.
- 2) Develop analyses of the historical and geographical forces intersecting with food and agriculture.
- 3) Develop tools to dissect power relations between food-based social movements and countermovements in the context of systems of domination (e.g. white supremacy, patriarchy, imperialism) and exploitation (e.g. capitalism, slavery).
- 4) Critically evaluate claims made by authorities and in the media regarding issues pertaining to food and agriculture.
- 5) Link personal history to ongoing changes in food systems.
- 6) Realize the power of working with others across social boundaries to improve food systems.
- 7) Cultivate analytic, discussion, public speaking, research, and writing skills.

Reading Requirements

The required readings are a combination of books and readings. Below are the books and instructions for accessing the readings.

- Gray, Margaret. 2014. *Labor and the Locavore: The Making of a Comprehensive Food Ethic*. University of California Press
- Pachirat, Timothy. 2011. *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*. Yale University Press
- Sage, Colin. 2011. *Environment and Food*. Routledge
- Schurman, Rachel, and William A. Munro. 2010. *Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists versus Agribusiness in the Struggle over Biotechnology*. University of Minnesota Press

To access electronic readings:

- 1) Always consult syllabus to see what readings you need to complete for the week.
- 2) Go to Canvas for our class: <http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/login.aspx>
- 3) Once in Canvas go to “Files” on the left hand side of the page.
- 4) You will see a number of folders with different labels. Any electronic readings will be in the “Readings” folder.
- 5) Click on this folder. It will show you the files inside. You have the option to download.
- 6) Once downloaded open up the file.
- 7) My suggestion is to save all the PDFs to your computer. They are named to help you easily find the readings you have to read for each week. Just cross-reference the syllabus with the file names.

Assignments

Reading Comprehension – Discussion Questions – 5 points a week (70 points total)

- This is a reading intensive course. Starting week 2, you will come up with **two discussion questions a week**, which must relate to readings for the coming week (each question must be on a different reading/chapter). These questions need to be sociological, convey a thoughtful reading, and have the capacity to stimulate conversation and debate. These should not be answerable with a “yes” or a “no”, and should directly comment on or relate to the major themes. Do not ask questions about details and minutia. Make sure any questions about solving the problem relate to key themes. Questions are due **Monday evenings**.
- **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL READINGS BEFORE CLASS ON TUESDAY.**

Group Discussions and Participation – 120 points

- Most Thursdays, a small group of 1-2 people will facilitate the class in a discussion and/or a group learning activity on the topics covered that week. While the TA or I will assist in this process, you are responsible for coming up with the details. This will run the entire class period. Students will evaluate the group on how well they facilitated that class period, which will account for 10 points. **If you miss a discussion, you will lose 10 points off your discussion.** See handout on Canvas for details. (50 possible points)
- I will take regular attendance beginning the second week. (5 points a class, 70 possible points)

Food Documentary Paper – 50 points

- You will write one reaction paper on a food documentary. Food films have become a common way to educate the public on a range of topics. This paper requires that you investigate the strengths and weaknesses of your chosen film and tie in your thoughts on the film to course materials. This paper must be **four pages**. A list of films is in the handout on Canvas. Read this for further details. You can find the films online or in the library. **Due February 12.**

On Campus Food Worker Paper – 80 points

- Without the many hands that feed us we would be responsible for planting, harvesting, processing, and preparing our own food. As students on tight budgets and tighter schedules, you often grab food to go on campus. Who are those that help you eat? This assignment requires you to interview an on-campus food worker and to write fieldnotes on an observation of an on-campus dining location. This is part of a larger research project, so the questions are already set. You must record and fully transcribe the interviews. Before you conduct the interview you must complete the Human Subjects Training by **February 26**. Then you will write a **four-page paper** that answering questions about CSU's on-campus dining environment, the experience of the interviewed food worker, and how this relates to related course content. Read handout on Canvas for specific details. **Due March 13**.

Final Research Project – 150 points

- This is due as an entire portfolio by **May 8**. In short, you are required to write a **twelve page double-spaced paper** on a food related topic of your choice. Specifically, you must pick a particular problem somewhere in the food system, sociologically analyze why it is a problem, and research how food movements are responding to solve that problem. Read handout on Canvas for specific details. This will consist of the following parts, due at different times throughout the semester:
 - 1) A brief **one-page** proposal of your project: **Due February 19**.
 - 2) A **four-page** discussion of social problems: **Due April 1**.
 - 3) A **three-page** media analysis of contested nature of chosen food topic: **Due April 22**.
 - 4) A **five-page** analysis of food movement strategies and solutions: **Due May 8**.

Instructions for Turning in Assignments on Canvas

All assignments must be turned in using Canvas. Login: <http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/login.aspx>
The syllabus page shows a table-oriented view of the course schedule. You can click on the link for the assignment and complete it through this portal.

You can also go to "Assignments." Click on assignment and complete.

For more information on this system, including troubleshooting:

<http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/student-resources.aspx>.

For support go to the IT Help Desk or <http://lib.colostate.edu/services/computers/technical-support-helpdesk>.

Assignment Standards

Assignments need to be double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins. All assignments are due by **11:59 PM** unless otherwise noted. All assignments except discussion questions need a title page including name of assignment, date, and student name. I expect people to use the American Sociological Association, MLA, or APA standards of citation. Make sure to be consistent. Please visit the following websites for citation details:

<http://www.calstatela.edu/library/guides/3asa.pdf>,

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/mla>,

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa>.

I will assist any student who needs help. Another great library resource in sociology can be found at:

<http://libguides.colostate.edu/sociology>.

For assistance with writing go to CSU's Writing Studio: <http://writing.colostate.edu/>.

LATE WORK REQUIRES OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION TO RECEIVE FULL POINTS.

Otherwise, you will lose 5% off the final grade for each day that it is late.

Grades and Point System

94 – 100	A	Reading Comprehension –	70 points (15%)
90 – 93	A-	Group Discussion and Participation –	120 points (25%)
87 – 89	B+	Food Documentary Paper –	50 points (11%)
83 – 86	B	On Campus Food Worker Paper –	80 points (17%)
80 – 82	B-	Final Project –	150 points (32%)
76 – 79	C+		
70 – 75	C	Total =	470 points
60 – 69	D		
59 and below	F		

Academic Integrity

This course will adhere to the [CSU Academic Integrity Policy](#) as found in the [Student Conduct Code](#). At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services.

Remember that the CSU Honor Code states: *As a student at Colorado State University, I recognize my active role in building a Campus of Character. This includes my commitment to honesty, integrity, and responsibility within the campus community. As such, I will refrain from acts of academic misconduct.*

It is in the interest of learning and skill development that you do all your own work, and refrain from cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession or dispossession of academic materials, falsification, and facilitation.

Disabilities Statement

If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation. You may also want to contact Resources for Disabled Students. Phone: 970-491-6385. <http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/RDS/>.

Religious Holidays

Colorado State University has a legal and moral obligation to accommodate all students who must be absent from classes in order to observe religious holidays. You will not be penalized for missing class due to religious observance. You are responsible for notifying me in advance of any conflicts.

Final Notes

- 1) I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any time. I will make sure that students are clear on what changes occur.
- 2) Use of smart phones, texting, and perusing the internet is prohibited. This includes laptops. This class requires your undivided attention and participation. You actually take better notes when you write instead of type: <http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/taking-notes-by-hand-benefits-recall-researchers-find/51411>. If you bring a laptop, it must only be used for class purposes.
- 3) There are times when you might miss class. If you are going to be absent, you need to provide adequate evidence for your absence if you are to receive points that would be missed otherwise.

Weekly Readings	Assignments & Holidays
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 1 – January 19, 21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introduction to a Socioecology of Food and Agriculture</p> <p>Carolan (2012) Sage (Ch. 1)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 2 – January 26, 28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Global Food System</p> <p>Sage (Ch. 2)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 3 – February 2, 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Agroecology and Types of Primary Food Production</p> <p>Sage (Ch. 3)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Weeks 4 – February 9, 11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ecological Impacts of the Global Food System</p> <p>Sage (Ch. 4)</p>	Documentary Paper Due 2/12
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 5 – February 16, 18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sociotechnical and Cultural Transformations of Food</p> <p>Sage (Ch. 5) Bobrow-Strain (2008)</p>	Proposal for Final Project Due 2/19
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 6 – February 23, 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Border Politics, (Im)migration, and Agriculture</p> <p>Ngai (2014) Holmes (2013)</p>	Human Subjects Training Deadline 2/26
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 7 – March 1, 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Im)migrant Farmworkers, Growers, and Social Boundaries</p> <p>Gray (Introduction, Ch. 1-2)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 8 – March 8, 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Im)migrant Farmworkers, Growers, and Social Boundaries</p> <p>Gray (Ch. 3-5)</p>	Food Worker Paper Due 3/13
SPRING BREAK – March 14-18	SPRING BREAK
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 9 – March 22, 24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Human and Animal Exploitation on Factory Farms</p> <p>Pachirat (Ch. 1-4)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 10 – March 29, 31</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Human and Animal Exploitation on Factory Farms</p> <p>Pachirat (Ch. 5-7, 9)</p>	Food System Problems Discussion Paper Due 4/1
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 11 – April 5, 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Contestation Over Biotechnology</p> <p>Schurman and Munro (Ch. 1-3)</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">Week 12 – April 12, 14 Contestation Over Biotechnology</p> <p>Schurman and Munro (Ch. 4-5, Conclusion)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 13 – April 19, 21 Hunger and Food Security</p> <p>Sage (Ch.6 (pp. 210-241)) Freeman (2007: (Part I-III)) Taylor and Ord (2015: 102-109; 113-129))</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Media Analysis Due 4/22</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 14 – April 26, 28 The Many Faces of the Food Movement</p> <p>Allen (2014) Renard (2014) Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Week 15 – May 3, 5 The Future of Food Justice Movements</p> <p>Slocum and Cadieux (2015) Minkoff-Zern (2014) Myers and Sbicca (2015)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Final Project Due 5/8</p>

Course Bibliography

- Allen, Patricia. 2014. "Divergence and convergence in alternative agrifood movements: Seeking a path forward." In DH Constance, MC Renard, & MG Rivera-Ferre (Eds.), *Alternative agrifood movements: Patterns of convergence and divergence*. Wales, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Bobrow-Strain, Aaron. 2008. "White bread bio-politics: purity, health, and the triumph of industrial baking." *cultural geographies*. 15(1): 19-40.
- Carolan, Michael. 2012. "Introduction." In *The Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Freeman, Andrea. 2007. "Fast food: Oppression through poor nutrition." *California Law Review*. 95:2221-2259.
- Gray, Margaret. 2014. *Labor and the Locavore: The Making of a Comprehensive Food Ethic*. University of California Press
- Holmes, Seth. 2013. "Introduction: Worth Risking Your Life?." In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Holt Giménez, Eric and Annie Shattuck. 2011. "Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation?." *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. 38(1): 109-144.
- Minkoff-Zern, Laura-Anne. 2014. "Challenging the Agrarian Imaginary: Farmworker Led Food Movements and the Potential for Farm Labor Justice." *Human Geography*. 7(1): 85-101.
- Myers, Justin Sean and Joshua Shicca. 2015. "Bridging good food and good jobs: From secession to confrontation within alternative food movement politics." *Geoforum*. 61: 17-26.
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- Pachirat, Timothy. 2011. *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*. Yale University Press
- Renard, Marie-Christine. 2014. "Alternative Agrifood Movements and Social Change." In DH Constance, MC Renard, & MG Rivera-Ferre (Eds.), *Alternative agrifood movements: Patterns of convergence and divergence*. Wales, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
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- Slocum, Rachel and Kirsten Valentine Cadieux. 2015. "Notes on the practice of food justice in the US: understanding and confronting trauma and inequity." *Journal of Political Ecology*. (22): 27-52.
- Taylor, Dorceta E. and Kerry J. Ard. 2015. "Food Availability and the Food Desert Frame in Detroit: An Overview of the City's Food System." *Environmental Practice*. 17(02): 102-133.