

FST 102 Food Fights: Contemporary Food Issues
Day and Time
Building and Room

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Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 1-3pm
and by appointment

Prerequisite: None

Course Description

Introduction to key issues of the contemporary food system. Explores various social, political, economic, and environmental dimensions of food production, distribution, and consumption with a focus on the United States.

Course Overview

In this course we examine contemporary food issues. We assume a critical view of the contemporary food system and start from an understanding that globalized industrial food is deeply problematic for a variety of reasons. We begin the semester with an overview of the contemporary food system. Second, we will examine some of the key contemporary issues associated with food, including human health, social, and environmental impacts. Finally, we end the course by examining ways in which people are working to address these concerns and briefly explore possible futures.

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify the defining features of the contemporary food system
- Recognize the contradictions produced by the contemporary food system
- Understand the social, political, economic, and environmental dimensions of food systems
- Appreciate the complexity of everyday food experiences
- Critically assess information about contemporary food and agriculture issues

Required Materials

1. Guptill, Amy, Denise Copelton & Betsy Lucal. 2013. *Food and Society: Principles and Paradoxes*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
2. Subscription to *The New York Times* (either print or digital)
3. Readings posted to the course blackboard site. See full reference list at end of syllabus.

Please visit nytimes.com/CollegeRate to subscribe. Rates vary depending on the type of subscription you order. If you get a print edition, please be sure to select an option with Sunday. All print subscriptions include digital subscriptions so you will be able to access all online content. Print editions can be delivered to your residence, dorm, or to various drop-off locations throughout campus. If you have any questions please see me.

We will utilize email and blackboard during this course (<http://blackboard.syr.edu>). Please monitor the site, as you are responsible for anything posted or sent via email.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Evaluation	Points	Grade Scale
Attendance	100	94 – 100%..... A
News Article Reflections	250	90 – 93.9%..... A-
Food Journals	250	87 – 89.9%..... B+
MidTerm Exam	200	83 – 86.9%..... B
Final Exam	200	80 – 82.9%..... B-
Total Points.....	1000	77 – 79.9%..... C+
		73 – 76.9%..... C
		70 – 72.9%..... C-
		65 – 69.9%..... D
		64.9% or below..... F

This grade scale is firm. It is up to the student to monitor grade progress.

Attendance (100 Points)

Attendance is required and will be taken during each class meeting. Readings will be completed as assigned BEFORE class. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence and can still earn full attendance points. Each subsequent unexcused absence results in a 5-point deduction; late arrival to class 2.5 points. Excused absences must be supported with appropriate documentation and effort must be made to notify me in writing in advance. Among the reasons absences are considered excused include but are not limited to: participating in university authorized activity (e.g., sporting event), death or major illness in a student’s immediate family, illness of a dependent family member, religious holiday, serious injury or illness, or interview for job or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Cell Phones and Laptops

Cell phones and laptops may not be used in class. Cell phones are to be turned off (not vibrate) in class. Your final attendance grade will be lowered 10 points if you use a cell phone in class without permission. No warnings.

Article Reflections (250 Points)

5 reflections during the semester

During this class you are asked to become a consumer of news and current events by *regularly* reading *The New York Times*. Throughout the semester you are required to submit *FIVE* critical reflection papers discussing a food- and agriculture-related article from *The New York Times*. These are to be short *critical* reflections (1-2 double-spaced pages). You are *not* to summarize, but to engage the article through questions or issues you find particularly interesting. Please submit the original news article with your essay. You will submit 5 reflections worth 50 points each, for a total of 250 points of your final grade.

Reflection Paper Questions

Use these questions below to help *guide* your reflection papers. You do not need to answer all of the following questions directly but should use one or two to help get you started. While writing your article reflection consider: what issues are raised by the article; what questions do you have about the article; what needs further clarification; what are the key points of the article; what important issues were neglected by the article; and how does the article relate to course content and assigned readings?

Food Journals (250 Points)

Students will keep a food journal for a weekend during the semester as indicated on the course schedule below. In your journal, you will track your food consumption habits and address questions raised during this course. You will receive a detailed handout for the food journal assignment, which is designed to encourage students to interrogate their everyday food practices. The food journals are worth 250 points of your final grade.

The **Writing Center** is available to all students for assistance with assignments in 101 H.B. Crouse Hall (wc.syr.edu). I am also available to assist students with any part of the course, thus I keep open office hours. Students are advised to seek assistance *before* work is due.

Exams (400 Points)

There will be two exams in FST 102: Food Fights. Exam material will be pulled from both readings and class meetings and students will be given a study guide prior to the exam. The exams are worth 200 points each, for a total of 400 points of your final grade.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Late Work & Make-Up Policy

Assignments will be deducted 1/2 letter grade for each day late. Make-up exams will not be offered unless dire circumstances exist. I reserve the right to offer make-up exams or accept late assignments without penalty. If I excuse a late assignment or offer a make-up exam, I must be notified in advance and all requests must be supported with appropriate documentation.

Academic Conduct

This course will cover controversial issues, which may invoke strong opinions. It is expected that **RESPECT** will be shown to all students and myself at all times. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated, nor is assisting someone to cheat. The submission of any work in this class is taken as a guarantee that the thoughts and expressions are the student's own unless properly cited. Breaking this policy on any assignment will, at a minimum, result in a failing grade for that assignment and will likely lead to a failing grade for the course. Students are expected to be familiar with Syracuse University's policy of Academic Integrity (see below).

Plagiarism and cheating will NOT be tolerated. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will FAIL the assignment and possibly the ENTIRE COURSE.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity Statement

Syracuse University sets high standards for academic integrity. Those standards are supported and enforced by students, including those who serve as academic integrity hearing panel members and hearing officers. The presumptive sanction for a first offense is course failure, accompanied by the transcript notation "Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy." Students should review the Office of Academic Integrity online resource "Twenty Questions and Answers About the Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy" and confer with instructors about course-specific citation methods, permitted collaboration (if any), and rules for examinations. The Policy also governs the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. Additional guidance for students can be found in the Office of Academic Integrity resource: 'What does academic integrity mean?'

Related Links:

- The Academic Integrity Policy:
<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>
- Twenty Questions and Answers about the Academic Integrity Policy:
<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/faculty-resources/>
- What does academic integrity mean?:
<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/what-does-academic-integrity-mean/>

Disability Statement

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services(ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Syracuse University and I are committed to your success and to supporting Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This means that in general no individual who is otherwise qualified shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, solely by reason of having a disability.

You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs although I cannot arrange for disability-related accommodations. If you have an authorized disability-related accommodations you should provide me with a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS and review those accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester

Religious Observances Policy

SU's religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the *end of the second week of class*.

Course Schedule

Date and Reading	Topic
Week One	
Day 1	Course Introduction
Day 2	Why Study Food?
Week Two	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapter 1	
Day 1	Food Systems
Day 2	Contemporary Food Issues
Week Three	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapters 2 AND 3	
Day 1	Culture and Identity
Day 2	Spectacle Submit Article Reflection #1
Week Four	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapter 6	
Tuesday, September 18, 2012	Peasant Production
Thursday, September 20, 2012	Industrial Production
Week Five	
Reading: Michael Klare, "The Hunger Wars in Our Future" (blackboard)	
Day 1	Food Crisis
Day 2	Historical Perspective Submit Article Reflection #2
Week Six	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapter 7	
Day 1	Globalization
Day 2	Free Trade
Week Seven	
Day 1	Midterm Exam
Day 2	Land
Week Eight	
Reading: Elizabeth Royte, "Fracking our Food Supply" (blackboard)	
Day 1	Environmental Concerns
Day 2	Climate Change Submit Article Reflection #3
Week Nine	
Reading: Eric Schlosser, "The Chain Never Stops" (blackboard)	
Day 1	Labor: Farmers & Farmworkers
Day 2	Labor: Processing & Distribution Submit Article Reflection #4

Course Schedule (continued)

Date and Reading	Topic
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Week Ten	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapter 8	
Day 1	Food Access
Day 2	Consumption
	Food Journals Assigned
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Week Eleven	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapters 4 AND 5	
Day 1	Nutrition and Health
Day 2	Hunger and Obesity
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Week Twelve	
Reading: Michael Pollan, "The Food Movement, Rising" (blackboard)	
Day 1	The Future of Food
Day 2	Food Movements
	Food Journals Due
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Week Thirteen	
Reading: <i>Food and Society</i> , Chapter 9	
Day 1	Human Rights
Day 2	Food Justice & Food Sovereignty
	Submit Article Reflection #5
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Week Fourteen	
Reading: Josh Viertel, "Beyond Voting with Your Fork" (blackboard)	
Day 1	Food Politics for the Future
Day 2	Final Thoughts
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Final Exam	
Date, Time, Place	
As assigned by university	

Additional Required Reading

Note: The following articles are required in addition to the required book and subscription to the *New York Times*, as indicated in list of required materials above. The readings are all posted to the course blackboard site and are to be completed for class on the days indicated in the schedule above.

Klare, Michael. 2012. "The Hunger Wars in Our Future." New York, NY: *TomDispatch*, The Nation Institute. Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/175579/>).

Pollan, Michael. 2010. "The Food Movement, Rising." *The New York Review of Books*, June 10. Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2010/jun/10/food-movement-rising/?pagination=false>).

Royte, Elizabeth. 2012. "Fracking our Food Supply." *The Nation*, December 17. Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://www.thenation.com/article/171504/fracking-our-food-supply#>).

Schlosser, Eric. 2001. "The Chain Never Stops." *Mother Jones*, 26(4). Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2001/07/dangerous-meatpacking-jobs-eric-schlosser>).

Viertel, John. 2012. "Beyond Voting with your Fork." *Food First Backgrounder*, 18(1). Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://www.foodfirst.org/en/movement+building>).