

Sustainable Food: Politics, Policy and Ethics

11:374:289, Spring 2017

Monday & Wednesday, 2:15 – 3:35
Cook Office Building, Rm. ---

Professor	Department	Contact*	Office Hours
Ethan Schoolman	Human Ecology, SEBS	ethan.schoolman@ rutgers.edu 848-932-9203	Mondays 1-3 & by appt. in Cook Office Bldg. (COB) # 208

*Please put “SF” in the subject line of all course-related emails

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Walk through a grocery store, and the range of options for “eating ethically” can seem overwhelming. Organic, free-range, antibiotic-free, humanely-raised, local, fair trade, product of the USA, GMO-free, grass-fed... the list goes on. Individual consumers and big organizations increasingly want their choices about food to reflect their values about sustainability, equality, and social justice. But as any philosopher will tell you, it’s not easy to know what our values obligate us to do. And where food is concerned, we don’t just want to feel good about making an “ethical” choice. We also want to know if our ethical choices are making a difference—if they are succeeding in making the world a better place.

In this course, we explore how “food systems” can be made more environmentally sustainable and socially just. Specifically, drawing on tools from social and environmental sciences, we undertake an in-depth examination of four major food-related social movements: organic farming, local food, fair trade, and animal welfare. Each of these "food evolutions" has political, economic, and social dimensions, and is the result of efforts by government, citizens groups, and food producers to accomplish certain goals (and block others). Therefore, for organic farming, local food, fair trade, and animal welfare, we ask: Where does it come from? What are its goals? What problems is it meant to solve? What is working—and what is not? Who is benefiting—and who is left out? And especially: Given the strengths and weaknesses of existing attempts to transform food systems, what should be the focus of the next generation of responsible, food-literate citizens—like the students in this class?

LEARNING GOALS

This course has three main learning goals for students. First, students will develop an in-depth understanding of how social trends and governance approaches have both contributed to the current state of food systems, and shaped alternative food movements aimed at changing these systems. Second, a major goal of the course is to give students the conceptual and

methodological tools required to identify, evaluate, and effectively communicate their own thinking regarding, policies and plans that seek to make contemporary food systems more sustainable. Finally, course assignments have been designed to enable students to sharpen their writing abilities. Writing assignments are both frequent and relatively short, and the professor will, in meetings with students, offer regular constructive feedback. It is expected that many students will experience significant improvement in their writing over the course of the semester.

For EPIB majors. This course counts as part of the Food, Health and Disease cluster.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignment	Percent of Final Grade
Class participation	15
Response papers	40
Peer feedback memo	10
Office hours visits	5
Presentation	10
Final Exam (take-home)	20

Course Grade	Minimum Points (out of 100)
A	90
B+	85
B	80
C+	75
C	70
D	60
F	<60

Class Participation. Learning happens through interactions between people who hold different views. Therefore, it is important that everyone actively participate in discussions during class. I am sympathetic towards the fact that people learn in different ways, and I understand that some people will talk in class more than others. However, every student should make an effort to verbally participate at least once a week.

Response Papers. From January 23rd to April 19th, there are 21 class sessions for which readings are assigned. Students are required to write a “response paper” for 8 of these sessions. The format for response papers will be discussed in detail in a separate handout posted on Sakai. Briefly, response papers will be between 500 and 750 words long. Each response paper will first summarize the main points of the readings for that class session, and then offer the author’s critical reaction to these points. It is up to each student which class sessions she writes response papers for. Response papers for a Monday class are due Monday by 8am. Response papers for a Wednesday class are due Wednesday by 8am. Papers will be graded either ✓+ (95), ✓ (85), or ✓- (75 or below). Students will have the opportunity to revise 4 of their response papers to attain a higher grade.

Peer Feedback Memo. In April, each student will read three of the response papers of another student, and write a memo offering generous, constructive feedback on both the views expressed in these papers, and the ways in which these views are expressed through the writing of the author. The goal of this memo is for students to help each other hone their arguments and become more effective communicators. The peer feedback memo will be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.

Office Hour Visits. Each student is expected to visit with the professor during office hours, or by appointment, AT LEAST TWICE over the course of the semester. Office hours visits are the best way for students and the professor to have one-on-one discussions, during which students are free to ask any questions they wish, and the professor can discuss response papers and class topics with students. This is a pass-fail requirement; students who come to office hours AT LEAST TWICE will receive a grade of 100% for this part of the course, while students who do not meet the requirement will receive a grade of 0%.

Presentations. At the end of the course, each student will make a 7-minute “lightening presentation” on a topic of interest related to course material. Like good writing, engaging public speaking is an essential skill. These presentations will offer students an opportunity to communicate their ideas in a different way than response papers. We will discuss in class the elements of a good presentation—including the best way to use (not abuse) powerpoint!

Final Exam. There will be a take-home final exam on all of the course material. All questions will be short answer, and will utilize the writing skills developed through the response papers.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Papers. No credit will be given for late response papers. Instead, ask me to read drafts of your work before it is due. Late peer feedback memos will be docked 10 points for each day they are late. Late take-home exams will be docked 5 points for each hour they are late.

Missing Class. Students are expected to attend all classes. *If you will miss a class, deadline or exam due to illness or emergency, notify me on or before the due date.* Send me an email (with “SF” in the subject line) AND report your absence to: <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>.

Disabilities. Rutgers welcomes students with disabilities into all of the university's educational programs. The policies and procedures for the Office for Students with Disabilities (ODS) are at: <http://ods.rutgers.edu/>. If you have a disability that necessitates special arrangements in class, you must provide ODS with documentation; documentation guidelines can be found at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with me as early as possible. To begin this process, please complete the ODS registration form: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Learning Environment. Some of the topics we discuss may provoke debate. We ask that everyone treat each other with respect.

**Finally... please consider TURNING OFF YOUR PHONE
during class. You won't believe the difference it makes... for
you and for everyone around you.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

DO YOUR OWN WORK! The point of college is to learn to do things yourself. This includes developing the skills to *judge* sources that you use and to use them properly. If you cheat or plagiarize, you will be investigated through the Rutgers Academic Integrity process and may fail the class.

The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that

- everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments.
- all student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

STUDENT WELLNESS

Just In Case Web App <http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

READINGS

Readings for this class are either in a **coursepack** (CP), or posted on **Sakai** (S). Using the Class Schedule below, you should come to each class having read the readings to the right of the class

topic. For instance, for Class 4 on Jan. 30, you should come to class having read chapters 4-6 of Marion Nestle's book, *Food Politics*.

There are three ways to get the coursepack: 1) Order it at Upublishing.com (search by course name) and have it shipped; 2) Order it from Upublishing.com and pick it up in person at 302 Ryders Lane; 3) Buy a copy at the downtown New Brunswick Barnes and Noble.

To get the online readings, log onto Sakai at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/>. Find course handouts, readings, and other materials under "Resources."

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please see the following pages.

Class	Date	Unit	Topic	Materials
1	Jan. 18	Where we are, how we got here	Course overview: What is a "food system"?	Syllabus; Course handouts
2	Jan. 23		Farming in the U.S. before and after WWII	Paul Conkin, "The traditional family farm: A personal account" and "WWII and its aftermath: A family report," pp. 31-49, 77-96 in <i>A Revolution Down on the Farm</i>
3	Jan. 25		Agribusiness: Growing, making, and moving food	Thomas Lyson, "Going global" and "The global supply chain," pp. 30-60 in <i>Civic Agriculture</i>
4	Jan. 30		Barriers to change	Marion Nestle, <i>Food Politics</i> , chapters 4-6
5	Feb. 1	Food and Environment: Organic Agriculture	The environment and modern agriculture	Paul Conkin, "Agriculture and the environment," pp. 168-173 in <i>A Revolution Down on the Farm</i> ; Michael Wines, "Behind Toledo's water crisis, a long-troubled Lake Erie" in <i>New York Times</i>
6	Feb. 6		Visions of environmentally responsible farming	Aldo Leopold, "The land ethic," pp. 201-226 in <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> ; Stephen R. Gliessman, "The agroecosystem concept," pp. 23-34 in <i>Agroecology</i>
7	Feb. 8		Organic food: From counterculture to mainstream	George Kuepper, "A brief overview of the history and philosophy of organic agriculture," from the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture
8	Feb. 13		How do we know it's organic?	Peter Laufer, "Uncertified and self-certified: A sojourn to Costa Rica" and "The Oregon tilth certification routine," pp. 71-86, 171-180 in <i>Organic: A journalist's quest to discover the truth behind food labeling</i>
9	Feb. 15		The rise of "big organic": Do small farmers still have a place? Can GMOs be organic?	Wenonah Hauter, "Organic food: The paradox," pp. 98-115 in <i>Foodopoly</i> ; Stephanie Strom, "Has 'organic' been oversized?," in <i>New York Times</i>
10	Feb. 20		Guest lecture from an organic farmer, farm inspector, etc.	<i>No readings.</i>
11	Feb. 22	Food and Community: Local Food	Agrarianism, small towns, and American ideals	R. Douglas Hurt, "Agrarianism," pp. 72-77 in <i>American Agriculture</i> ; Wendell Berry, "The idea of a local economy" in <i>Orion Magazine</i>
12	Feb. 27		Why do people want to "eat local"?	Wendell Berry, "The pleasures of eating," pp. 145-152 in <i>What Are People For?</i> ; Jack Kloppenburg, "Coming into the foodshed" in <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>
13	Mar. 1		"Know your farmer, know your food": The organized local food movement	Thomas Lyson, "Civic agriculture and community agriculture development," pp. 84-98 in <i>Civic Agriculture</i> ; U.S. Department of Agriculture, "The what and why of local and regional foods"
	Mar. 6	Is local food for everyone? Local food and food justice	Patricia Allen, "Realizing justice in local food systems" in <i>Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society</i> ; Christine Grace, "Barriers to using urban farmers markets" in <i>Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition</i>	

14	Mar. 8		SPRING BREAK	<i>No readings.</i>
15	Mar. 13		SPRING BREAK	<i>No readings.</i>
16	Mar. 15		Can local food "scale up"? Food hubs, direct-to-institution sales, and other innovations	Michigan Good Food, "The Michigan Good Food Charter: A Summary"; Watch in class: "City Farmers" (https://youtu.be/K5zP4WPgcqY)
17	Mar. 20		Guest lecture from a local food organization	<i>No readings.</i>
18	Mar. 22	Food and Labor: Fair Trade	Food production and global inequality	"Product of Mexico," article series in <i>LA Times</i> ; Watch in class: "The Dark Side of Chocolate" (https://youtu.be/6st1PH8gy40)
19	Mar. 27		The fair trade movement	Daniel Jaffee, <i>Brewing Justice</i> , chapters 1-4
20	Mar. 29		How fair is fair trade?	Daniel Jaffee, <i>Brewing Justice</i> , chapters 7-9; Harriet Lamb, "Scale without compromise," pp. 187-204 in <i>The Fair Trade Revolution</i>
21	Apr. 3		Is organic fair? Is "local"?	Daniel Jaffee, <i>Brewing Justice</i> , chapter 5; Bren Smith, "Don't let your children grow up to be farmers," in <i>New York Times</i>
22	Apr. 5		Guest lecture from a fair trade coffeeshop manager	<i>No readings</i>
23	Apr. 10	Food and Animals: Animal Welfare	The industrialization of raising animals for food	Peter Singer, "Down on the factory farm," pp. 95-158 in <i>Animal Liberation</i>
24	Apr. 12		Can we kill to eat?	Tom Regan, "The case for animal rights," pp. 13-26 in <i>In Defense of Animals</i> ; David Petersen, "Modern Hunting, Ancient Philosophy" in <i>Mother Earth News</i>
25	Apr. 17		Vegetarian-vegan ethics	Frances Moor Lappé, "Diet for a small planet," pp. 59-114 in <i>Diet for a Small Planet</i>
26	Apr. 19		Living a meat-eating life to its fullest	Michael Pollan, "An animal's place" in <i>New York Times</i> ; Meredith Leigh, "Introduction: The ethical meat eater," in <i>The Ethical Meat Handbook</i>
27	Apr. 24		Guest lecture from a cow/lamb farmer	<i>No readings.</i>
28	Apr. 26	Putting it all together	Class presentations	<i>No readings.</i>
29	May 1		Class presentations	<i>No readings.</i>