

ANTH 338: FOOD, PLACE AND POWER

Dr. Catarina Passidomo
Office hours: By appointment
passidomo@olemiss.edu

Fall 2018
Mondays 1-3:30pm
Honor's College: 311

Course Description:

What do you know about where the food you eat comes from? Every day we consume food that is produced hundreds or even thousands of miles away. For breakfast, we may eat oranges from Florida, jam that was packaged in England, granola that contains nuts grown in Hawaii, or drink coffee made from beans that grow in Brazil. Or, we might be eating eggs from our backyard chickens or peaches grown by a local farmer. **In any case, the “act of eating” links us into geographic networks of food production, distribution, consumption, and, ultimately power** (who decides what those networks look like? Who profits from this system?).

Each time we eat, we are connected by complex **commodity chains** to growers in Latin America, processors in Europe, labor leaders in the Caribbean, trade negotiators in Washington, D.C., and their counterparts in dozens of countries. Meanwhile, the modern food system relies upon considerable **social dislocation** and **environmental disruption**. The rise of international markets for foodstuffs is closely linked to the history of **colonialism** and empire, as well as to **agricultural, industrial, technological, and social revolutions**. Entire national economies have been formed based on the export of single commodities such as coffee or sugar.

Objectives:

This course is intended to inform you about the “where” of your food, stimulate your curiosity about where your food comes from, and illustrate how people, places, governments, and economies are connected to one another in the production, distribution, and consumption of food, and how those connections are made possible. In addition to considering the modern food system, we’ll consider alternatives to it, and how those alternatives are also made to account for social, political, and ecological concerns. Some of the questions we will consider are:

1. How does place (constituted by its natural resources and climate, political economy, history, culture, and social relations) influence food practices (including the way food is grown, exchanged, prepared, and eaten)?
2. How do everyday food practices structure our lives and create places?
3. How does food activism and resistance transform places?

Expectations:

- Full and engaged participation. While there will be some lecturing, I expect all students to participate by coming to class prepared to discuss the week’s readings.
- Students will take turns leading discussion. With my assistance, if necessary, student leaders will prepare questions to help guide our discussion of the readings for the week.
- Come to each class, on time, prepared to stay for the duration. I will start class and end class on time.
- Be prepared for each class by bringing with you: the week’s readings (and/or your notes); open willingness to listen and to speak; curiosity; respect and generosity for yourself, your classmates and your instructor.

Required books and other materials:

- Joassart-Marcelli, Pascale, and Fernando J. Bosco, eds. *Food and Place: A Critical Exploration*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017. (J-M&B in schedule).
- Mintz, Sidney. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.
- Bobrow-Strain, Aaron. *White Bread: A Social History of the Store-Bought Loaf*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2012.
- ~~Alkon, Alison Hope and Julian Agyeman. *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011.~~
- Other readings and required materials (including podcasts, films, etc.) available on Blackboard.

*** Reading assignments are to be read for the day in which they appear on the syllabus, before the start of class. ***

Assessment:

Grades for this course will be based on the following:

	Due	Points	Percentage of Grade
Proposal for final paper	10/29	10	5%
Contribution to Group Project*	11/26	100	30%
Final Paper	12/3	100	30%
Presentation of Final Paper	12/3	10	10%
Weekly writing	Weekly	10 ea	15%
In-Class participation, discussion lead	N/A	50	10%

- **Group Project: Mapping Our Local Food System**
This project will be a class collaboration. You will work with a partner or team to document one aspect of our “local” (Oxford/Lafayette/University) food system. Teams will take on one of the following:
 - Production:* Farmers and farm sites
 - Distribution:* Retail (stores, farmers’ markets, etc)
 - Distribution:* Emergency/Hunger Relief (food pantries, free meal programs, etc)
 - Consumption:* Restaurant sites, chefs/cooks
 - Distribution and Consumption:* University sites

Documentation may include audio interview, film, photography, and/or written report. Throughout the semester, we will share each team’s progress on the group project.

* Team members will assess their own and other team members contribution to the group project. Individual grades will combine self and peer assessment and the instructor’s assessment of the team contribution. *Details to follow.*

- **Individual Paper:**
As a final assessment of your engagement with the material discussed in this course, you will be required to: write a 7-10 page (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font) research paper on a topic of your choosing.

The paper will be evaluated based on how well it integrates class concepts with your chosen topic. You and I will discuss the paper throughout the semester, and I will provide as much guidance as you need throughout the process.

- A 1-page written proposal for your paper or project is required by October **29**. (~~You may elect to change your topic after this time, but please keep me informed as to any changes~~). It is, of course, in your best interest to begin working on the final paper or project early, rather than waiting until the last minute!!
 - Your paper should include proper citation format (Chicago, MLA, ASA are all fine; just be consistent), and should reference at least 10 sources. If you need help finding sources, or citing them, please ask. But don't put this off!
 - The final paper or project will be due at the end of the semester (12/3).
 - You will also be required to give a 10 minute presentation of your paper or project during our end-of-semester potluck on December 3 (12-3pm). (There will be no other final exam during this exam period.)
- **Discussion Lead:**
 - Each week, two students will be responsible for leading the week's discussion.
 - Each student will sign up to co-lead discussion two times.
 - Discussion leaders should begin the class with a presentation that addresses the following questions:
 - What is/are the author(s)' professional or disciplinary background?
 - What is the author's agenda? (What does he/she hope to accomplish?)
 - What is the author's approach to studying food?
 - What is the relationship of the primary reading to other assigned readings or assignments (for this particular class and past classes)?
 - What is the importance or relevance of the arguments or problems posed?
 - What did you find most intriguing or exciting or problematic about this reading?
 - Discussion leaders will also prepare and distribute hard copies of an outline of the readings (roughly 1 page, single-spaced), which focuses on key points:
 - Identify *keywords* in the text.
 - Identify the *thesis* and/or *arguments* of the reading.
 - Discuss the *analytical framework* of the reading. (What assumptions are axiomatic to this thesis or argument? Does the author have particular interlocutors or draw on other theoretical interventions?)
 - Consider the *conceptual/methodological framework* of the reading. (Does it call for us to conceptualize a disciplinary method in new ways? Does it envision different sources or a new use of established sources?)
 - Discuss the kinds of sources that the author uses.
 - *Note: Not every question will apply to every text.*
 - **Extra Credit** opportunities will be announced throughout the semester.

Grading scale:

A	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D	60-69%
A-	90-92%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	F	<59%
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%		

A Qualitative Description of Grades:

A	An A student actively and regularly participates in class, demonstrates an excellent working knowledge of the readings, actively participates in discussions, and hands in (on time) complete, well written and creative papers
B	A B student regularly participates in class, demonstrates average knowledge of the readings, participates in discussions, and turns in a well written, but partially complete (or late) papers
C	A C student infrequently participates in class, demonstrates partial knowledge of the readings, rarely participates in discussions, and turns in incomplete and/or poorly written (and/or late) papers
D	A D student has little to no participation in class, demonstrates very little knowledge of readings, does not participate in discussions, and turns in incomplete and poorly written (and/or late) papers
F	A failing student has failed to deliver anything on two or more aspects of evaluation in the class (attendance, assignments, discussions)

Other Policies and Useful Information

Course Website: The course website is available on **Blackboard**. I will use Blackboard to post announcements and grades, as well as information and resources I find useful and interesting. Please note that your gradebook in Blackboard shows a weighted total (i.e., accurate and current) grade for you; the percentage weight for each assignment listed in the “breakdown of grades” section of the syllabus are factored into the gradebook in Blackboard. You should consider Blackboard a valuable resource for connecting with your classmates as well as accessing material and other information. If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard, take some time to explore the website and seek assistance if you need it. Plan on checking the course page on Blackboard regularly.

Syllabus Disclaimer: This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Your patience, good humor, and attentiveness are appreciated.

Classroom Conduct: Students should contribute to an **environment of learning** while in the classroom. Please respect this environment, your classmates, and your instructor by refraining from any disruptive behavior, which may include: arriving late to class, using a cell phone, surfing the internet, reading newspapers or magazines, talking out of turn, sleeping, or any other disruptive behavior. If you are disrupting the class or disrespecting me or your fellow classmates, you will be asked to leave.

Please observe the following simple rules for maintaining a positive learning environment for everyone in the class.

- *Come to class on time and don't leave early unless you have notified me in advance of a need to do so.
- *Turn off cell phones and put them away.
- *Listen and participate.

Laptops: Laptops in the classroom are a privilege, not a right. If I feel that people are not using their laptops for class related things, I will not allow them to be used in class.

Attendance: Attendance is **required**.

Contacting me/Questions: Many questions you have may be answered quickly and easily by (1) consulting the syllabus; (2) posting a question on Blackboard; and/or (3) asking a classmate. For clarifications on course material, justified grievances, or if you'd just like to chat, **you are encouraged to contact me**. Please feel free to contact me by email (passidomo@olemiss.edu) to set up an appointment.

Topics for Discussion and Corresponding Readings:

DATES	TOPICS AND READINGS	NOTES
Week 1 Aug. 20	<i>Why study food?</i> Introduction to the course Reynolds and Agyeman. 2015. "Food studies is not as frivolous as you might think." Miller, Jeff, and Jonathan Deutsch. "Food Studies." In <i>Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods</i> , 3–10. Oxford; New York: Berg Publishers, 2009.	
Part I: Food and Place		
Week 2 Aug. 27	J-M&B, Chapters 1-2* Whatmore, Sarah. "From Farming to Agribusiness: The Global Agro-Food System." In <i>Geographies of Global Change: Remapping the World</i> , edited by Peter J. Taylor, Michael J. Watts, and R.J. Johnston, 2nd Ed., 36–49. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.	(*I have scanned the first two chapters of the J-M&B text and uploaded them to Blackboard. Please acquire the book as soon as possible, as I will not scan other sections.)
Week 3	<i>Labor Day: No Class</i>	(Continue reading for next two weeks!)
Week 4 Sept. 10	<i>No Class: Attend SFA Graduate Student Conference, Keynote by Kyla Thompkins</i> Read Thompkins, Introduction to <i>Racial Indigestion</i>	** SFA Graduate Student Conference: Sept. 10-11 ** Film: <i>Food, Inc.</i> (extra credit)
Part II: Food Regimes and Commodity Chains		
Week 5 Sept. 17	J-M&B, Part I (Chapters 3-7) Cook, Ian. "Follow the Thing: Papaya." <i>Antipode</i> 36, no. 4 (September 2004): 642–64.	
Week 6 Sept. 24	Mintz, Chapters 1-3	
Week 7 Oct. 1	Mintz, Chapters 4 and 5	
Part III: Foodscapes and Food Discourse		
Week 8 Oct. 8	J-M&B, Part II (Chapters 8-11)	

DATES	TOPICS AND READINGS	NOTES
Week 9 Oct. 15	Bobrow-Strain, Introduction and Chapters 1-3	
Week 10 Oct. 22	Bobrow-Strain, Chapters 4- Conclusion	
Part IV: Bodies		
Week 11 Oct. 29	J-M&B, Part III (Chapters 12-16)	Proposal for Final Paper DUE
Week 12 Nov. 5	<p>Castro, Josue de. "The Taboo of Hunger." In <i>The Geography of Hunger</i>, 3–27. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952.</p> <p>Jarosz, Lucy. "Defining World Hunger." <i>Food, Culture & Society</i> 14, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 117–39.</p> <p>White, Monica. "Collective Agency and Community Resilience: A Theoretical Framework to Understand Agricultural Resistance." <i>Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development</i> 7, no. 4 (2017): 17–21.</p> <p>SFA Gravy podcast: Fighting for the Promised Land</p> <p>[Additional readings TBD]</p>	
Part V: Beyond Food		
Week 13 Nov. 12	<p>Passidomo, Catarina. "Going 'Beyond Food': Confronting Structures of Injustice in Food Systems Research and Praxis." <i>Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development</i>, August 12, 2013, 1–5.</p> <p>[Additional readings TBD]</p>	
Week 14 Nov. 26	No reading assignments: work on group project	Team Contribution to Group Project Due
Dec. 3 12-3pm		Final paper due. ** Potluck and Presentations **