

Geography 310

The Global Food System

Thurs 11-1:45, MS 304
Dr. Victoria Randlett

Ofc hrs Thurs 2-4
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Books to buy:

Paul Roberts, *The End of Food*, 2008
Erik Millstone & Tim Lang, *The Atlas of Food* (2008)
C Harper & B LeBeau, *Food, Society & Environment* (1st ed)
Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*

Assignments

1. **Eating and reading journal (30%)** The journal has 3 components:
 - a. Discussion of the week's reading assignments
 - b. Discussion of a 'current events' item relevant to the global food system (newspaper article, NPR story, ad, etc)
 - c. Your Food Diary: make notes on several about some of what you eat during the week. What do you know about this food – where it comes from, who grows and/or processes it, how traceable or transparent is the chain from agriculture to you, etc. The foods in your diary entries must involve more than one meal during the week, and should represent a mix of breakfast, lunch, & dinner. You may include beverages.

As the semester progresses, you should be able to get increasingly specific about the food you're eating and its relationship to the supply chains, history, and geographies you're reading about in course materials. You may also use your journal (incl your Food Diary) to support your work on your term project.

BRING YOUR COMPLETED JOURNAL EACH WEEK! I will be collecting your journals twice during the semester (a few a week, at random times) and once at the end. You will receive only one grade, at the end, evaluating your semester's work.

All journals must have a Table of Contents/Checklist for all Reading Assignments and News Items.

NUMBER your journal pages and indicate on your checklist where you're discussing what. See sample checklist attached.

2. **Term Project (30%).** In this project, you will "peel the food onion," as described in the Introduction to *Food, Society & Environment*, for 3 of the meals you eat during the semester. You will research and analyze:
 - the historical and geographical provenance of your foods and how it came to be part of your available diet
 - the travels of your particular food items – where was it raised or grown, where processed or prepared, how far did it's components travel to be assembled, how far did it then travel to you, etc.
 - What methods were used to grow, produce, and process your food – a small-scale organic farm? a industrialized feedlot, chicken 'factory,' or hog farm? organic agri-biz facility? Chinese or Brazilian processing or packing plant? Fair-trade coffee co-op? etc.
 - Do your foods definitely or probably contain GMOs, or not?
 - What kind of social, economic, political, and environmental regimes produce your foods?
 - What are the implications of the above information for your own health and for food supply. security, and cost? Are there also important environmental or even geopolitical implications?
 - How hard was it to find all this stuff out? Explain how & why? What are the implications, if any, of *that*?
3. **Quizzes (20%)** We will have a short quiz on each segment.
4. **Class Attendance and Participation (25%).** This is a seminar, so it depends entirely on your informed participation. You are expected to show up and to be prepared to discuss the week's readings, news items, etc

Topics and Segments (Subject to Change)

Wk 1 Jan 22 Course introduction

What is the global food system?

Wks 2-4 Jan 29- Feb 12 How the modern global food system came to be

Global food trade

Food and exploration (spices, sugar, tea, etc)

Proving Malthus wrong Grain and potatoes

Second Agricultural Revolution & the global food system

Wk 5 Feb 19 Industrialization of agriculture

Wks 6-8 Feb 26- Mar 12 Aspects of the contemporary GFS

Petrochemicals

Green Revolution

GMOs

Wk 9 Mar 19 SPRING BREAK

Wk 10 Mar 26 Organic food and agriculture

Wk 11 Apr 2 Fast Food Nation

Wk 12 Apr 9 Food security

Wks 13-15 Apr 16-30 The End of Food?

2008 Food Crisis – is it over?

Agricultural and trade policies

Fossil fuels and food

Climate change and food

All Journals due Apr 30!

Wk 16 May 7

Final project due

Sample Checklist (Note: not the real assignments!)

<u>Wk</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>	<u>4 Pp</u>	<u>News Item</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Pp</u>	<u>Food 4</u>	<u>Pp</u>
2	FSE Intro & Ch 1 3	1-2	Nutrisystem ad	3	6	3	7-8
	EoF, Prologue, Ch 1	3	3-5				
3	EoF Ch 2	3	9-11	CNN article	3	14-15	3 16-20
	Atlas pp 2-20	3	11-14				
4	FSE Ch 3	3	15-17	NPR 2/4/09	3	20	3 21-23
"	Botany Ch 4	3	17-19				