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ENST 480.01: Food, Agriculture, and Environment

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EVST 480: FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND ENVIRONMENT
SPRING 2013. TUES. AND THURS. AT 11:10-12:30
LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING, ROOM 138

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Office hours: If I can be of assistance, please come see me during my office hours by signing up for a meeting time on the sheet posted across from my office door in Rankin. My office hours are: **Mondays 1:00-2:40 and Wednesdays 10:20-11:40**. If these are impossible for you, please contact me to make an appointment.

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

According to Wendell Berry, “eating is an agricultural act.” Food is central to our lives, and it has the capacity to profoundly connect us with nature and the place where we live. But most of us know very little about how the food we eat each day is produced, how production processes might impact the environment and human health, or how our food reaches our plates.

Overall, the purpose of the course is to introduce you to some of the contemporary issues in the study of food and agriculture in the U.S. and to demonstrate an approach to interdisciplinary study and practice. We will look at the conditions created by the dominant, “industrial” food and agricultural system, as well as investigate emerging alternatives – such as “sustainable agriculture,” “organic farming,” and “local food systems.”

You will have the opportunity to improve your critical thinking, writing, and oral communication skills through class discussions and a series of assignments aimed at encouraging you to engage with the readings and other course materials. Through a term paper assignment, you will hone your research and presentation skills.

REQUIREMENTS

Readings: A proposed “menu” (sorry, I just can’t resist!) of the readings is attached. Readings will be posted on the Moodle site for this course, which you can access through the UM homepage. You will need your Net/ID and your password to login. Once logged into Moodle, if you are enrolled in the course, you can access it through “My Courses.”

In addition, please get these books, which will be available in the bookstore:

Estabrook, Barry. 2012. *Tomatoland: How Modern Industrial Agriculture Destroyed Our Most Alluring Fruit*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, Inc.

Winne, Mark. 2008. *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Class Participation and Attendance: One of your main tasks in this course is to do each reading thoughtfully before class and then to help us discuss it in class. Please bring hard copies of the readings to class! I hope you will enjoy attending class. Please know that I expect you to attend class consistently because if you are not in class you cannot benefit from hearing the discussion of the material, nor can you contribute to the group’s learning together.

I understand that active participation in class discussions is not easy for everyone, but I encourage you to give it a try. I may choose to give you a little extra credit at the end if you have been an active and thoughtful participant in class. Please treat each other with respect when expressing your views and help us to create space so that everyone has a chance to speak.

Analytic Essays: The course is divided into two sections with an essay assignment due at the end of each section. The assignments will ask you to think critically about what you read, to synthesize the material covered, and perhaps do some extra research or activity. I will distribute the question(s) and specific guidance at least two weeks before it is due. Typically, these papers should be five pages, typed, and double-spaced with normal margins and fonts. I expect these papers to be well organized, grammatically correct, and completely referenced.

Late Papers: If you do not turn in an essay assignment on time for whatever reason, you can turn it in as much as one week later – but no later than that – for five fewer points than it would have received had it been on time.

Term Papers and Presentations: To provide you with an opportunity to research a topic of interest to you in greater depth, each student will produce a term paper and report on their findings in a brief oral presentation to the class at the end of the semester. The goal of a research paper is not to simply summarize what others have said about a topic. Rather it requires that you spend time investigating, evaluating, and interpreting those sources. In other words, you will draw on what others have said and engage them in a meaningful and thoughtful way in order to offer a unique perspective on the issue at hand. You may decide to collect some of your own data. I will say more in class about possible research topics, appropriate sources, style guidelines, and expectations for final product.

Undergraduates will produce term papers that are 12-15 pages in length, including references. Graduate students will produce papers that are 15-18 pages in length, including references, and I expect they will exhibit a greater level of theoretical and methodological sophistication.

Paper Proposals: You will submit a term paper proposal on **Tuesday Feb. 26**. The more specific you are, the more helpful I can be in giving you feedback. I am happy to help you think about ideas during my office hours. As you think about what you want to look at, remind yourself that you can only do so much in this brief period of time. I suggest you define your topic as narrowly and specifically as you can. Please include the following in two to three pages:

- (1) Identify the specific research topic or question you want to explore.
- (2) Discuss briefly why you think it is significant;
- (3) Describe what you will do to answer the question of interest;
- (4) Include a preliminary bibliography.

Outlines and Bibliographies: An outline of your term paper and an updated and annotated bibliography is due on **March 19**. I will say more in class about how to develop and present an effective outline, and what an annotated bibliography should look like.

Presentations: During the last few weeks of the semester, you will also make a short, formal presentation on your research/project to the class. Be creative!

Final papers are due during our final session (see note on Schedule re: Monday May 13).

Graduate students: I expect a greater level of sophistication and synthesis in your papers. In addition, each graduate student will have responsibility for taking a leadership role for 30 minutes in one class session (as part of your participation requirement). This might involve: (1) facilitating a discussion using specific questions that help clarify and engage with the central points in the readings, (2) making a short presentation that augments the assigned readings, and/or (3) creating a participatory exercise that engages the class participants in some unique way. Let me know which sessions you are interested in ASAP.

Grading: There are a total of 250 possible points; letter grades will be assigned accordingly.

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
➤ Class participation (i.e., attendance, contributions to class discussions, leadership)	50
➤ Two analytic essays (0-50 points each)	100
➤ Term Paper – presentation	50
➤ Term Paper	50

A note on plagiarism: Academic honesty and integrity are essential. The student code of conduct expressly forbids plagiarism, which is the representation of another person’s work as your own. It will not be tolerated in this course, and any student whom I suspect of plagiarizing will be subject to the procedures and consequences described in the student conduct code.

Guest Speakers: Several guest speakers may be added as appropriate.

Other Activities: If there is sufficient interest among the members of the class, we may want to organize a field trip, participate in a service project, and/or have a potluck.

COURSE MENU
SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF NECESSARY

1. Tues., Jan. 29 – What’s on Our Plate?

PART ONE: AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIALIZATION

2. Thurs., Jan. 31 – Agrarianism and Industrialism

Lyson, Thomas. 2004. “From subsistence to production.” Pp. 8-29 in *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford, MA: Tufts University Press.

Berry, Wendell. 2001. “The whole horse.” Pp. 63-79 in *The New Agrarianism: Land, Culture, and the Community of Life*, edited by Eric T. Freyfogle. Washington: Island Press.

Mon. February 4 – Please attend one or both of these lectures by Anna Lappé, and be prepared to discuss them on Tuesday in class. Take notes on the following questions: (1) What were her main points and overall message? (2) What new information did you take away from the lecture(s)? (3) What questions did the lecture(s) raise for you? (4) Do you think her messaging is effective? Why or why not?

"Eat the Sky: Connecting the Dots between Climate, Food, and the Future of Farming"
Seminar at 3:10-4:30 PM, Gallagher Business Building, Room 123

"Sustainability, Sustenance, and Social Change: How Sustainable Food and Farming Can Nourish the World and Transform Communities" 8:00 PM, Dennison Theatre.

3. Tues. Feb. 5 – Discussion on Lappé

The lectures are a great opportunity for you, so I strongly encourage you to attend. Her biography is posted on our Moodle site.

If you absolutely cannot, read the Myth #1 Companion Reading Guide, posted on Moodle. Also, check out foodmyths.org and watch the video on the home page. Answer the questions listed above. Even those of you who do attend may want to read these materials and check out her website.

4. Thurs., Feb. 7 – Agricultural Development: Structure and Markets

Lyson, Thomas. 2004. “Going global.” Pp. 30-47 in *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford, MA: Tufts University Press.

Ogburn, Stephanie Paige. 2011. Cattlemen struggle against giant meatpackers and economic squeezes. *High Country News* March 21. Pdf is available on Moodle. Or go to this link and check out the photos and full story: http://www.hcn.org/issues/43.5/cattlemen-struggle-against-giant-meatpackers-and-economic-squeezes/article_view?b_start:int=1&-C=

Supplemental:

Hendrickson, Mary and Mara Miele. 2009. “Changes in agriculture and food production in NAE since 1945.” Chapter 2.1, Pp. 20-29 in *Agriculture at a Crossroads: North America and Europe (NAE) Report*. International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development (IAASTD).

5. Tues., Feb. 12 – Credit to Modern Ag

Hanson, Bob. 2010. "Give modern ag credit for full bellies, good stewardship." *Great Falls Tribune* Feb. 10. Opinion-Editorial page.

McGovern, George. 2001. "A strategy to defeat world hunger." Pp. 19-45 in *The Third Freedom: Ending Hunger in Our Time*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

6. Thurs., Feb. 14 – Tomatoland pp. xiii-middle of page 51 (break)

7. Tues., Feb. 19 – Tomatoland pp. 51-95

8. Thurs., Feb. 21 – Tomatoland pp. 97-152

9. Tues., Feb. 26 – TERM PAPER PROPOSALS DUE. We will meet briefly in class. That evening at 7PM please attend this lecture:

"Lessons from the World's Oldest Tea Farmer: Small-Scale Farming and Kenya's Environmental Renaissance," by Joy W'Njuguna, Founder & Chief Operations Officer, Royal Tea of Kenya. North Underground Lecture Hall.

See Moodle for more information about Joy and her work. If you cannot attend, please let me why know in advance.

10. Thurs., Feb. 28 – Tomatoland pp. 153 - 197

11. Tues., March 5 – ESSAY #1 DUE

PART TWO: CONSIDERING THE ALTERNATIVES

12. Thurs., Mar. 7 – Historical Context: Alternative Agrifood Movements

Allen, Patricia. 2004. "Perspectives of alternative agrifood movements." Pp. 21-49 in *Together at the Table: Sustainability and Sustenance in the American Agrifood System*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

13. Tues., Mar. 12 – Ecological and Organic Agriculture

Magdoff, Fred. 2007. "Ecological agriculture: Principles, practices, and constraints." *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 22(2): 109-117.

Masumoto, David Mas. 1999. "Learning to fail." Pp. 191-200 in *At Home on the Earth: Becoming Native to Our Place, A Multicultural Reader*, edited by David Landis Barnhill. Berkeley: UC Press.

Greene, Catherine, Edward Slattery, and William D. McBride. 2010. "America's organic farmers face issues and opportunities." *Amber Waves* 8(2): 34-40.

14. Thurs., Mar. 14 – People, Food, and Place

Kloppenborg, Jack R., Jr., John Hendrickson, and G.W. Stevenson. 1996. "Coming in to the foodshed." *Agriculture and Human Values* 13(3):33-41.

LaDuke, Winona. 2007. "Ricekeepers: A struggle to protect biodiversity and a Native American way of life." *Orion Magazine*. July/August. Retrieved online at: <http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/305/>

15. Tues., Mar. 19 – TERM PAPER OUTLINES AND BIBLIO'S DUE.

In-class video

16. Thurs., Mar. 21 – Montana Innovators

Western, Sam. 2005. "A new green revolution: In Montana's dying farm country, 'vanguard agriculture' puts people back on the land." *High Country News* 37(24): 8- 13, 19

Haynes, George. 2011. "More Montana farmers are venturing toward the organic marketplace." *Montana Business Quarterly* 49(2):10-14.

Cohen, Betsy. 2009. "Raised on grass: Adapting to cattle markets, caring for Blackfoot Valley sustains generations of Mannix family." *Missoulian*. September 13.

17. Tues., Mar. 26 – *Closing the Food Gap* Pp. xi – 49

18. Thurs., Mar. 28 – *Closing the Food Gap* Pp. 50 - 81

SPRING BREAK: Week of April 1

19. Tues., April 9 – *Closing the Food Gap* Pp. 85-149

20. Thurs., April 11 – *Closing the Food Gap* Pp. 148-193

21. Tues., April 16 – TBD

22. Thurs., April 18 – ESSAY #2 DUE

23. Tues., Apr. 23 – Work Session

24. Thurs., Apr. 25 – PRESENTATIONS

25. Tues., Apr. 30 – PRESENTATIONS

26. Thurs., May 2 – PRESENTATIONS

27. Tues., May 7 – PRESENTATIONS

28. Thurs., May 9 – PRESENTATIONS

29. Monday May 13 8:00-10:00 – Exam period. FINAL TERM PAPERS DUE.

Note: If it works for everyone, we will probably select another time to meet and have a final gathering and reflection on the course.