

COURSE SYLLABUS
Planting Justice

**Means of Food Production and Meanings of Food Consumption:
Mapping the Intersections of Anthropology/Ecology,
Action/Knowledge, Local/Global, and Security/Sustainability**

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT

This course is designed to explore the intersections of local and global processes towards community security and ecological sustainability. As food lives at the intersections of human cultures and ecological systems, the relations of power which shape humans' means of food production, distribution, and consumption becomes central to the political, economic, ecological, and social relevance of our times. Through postcolonial, feminist, and poststructural frameworks, this course examines dynamics of race, class, gender, and national privilege within dominant agricultural practices which differently shape humans relations to food. By exploring subaltern food practices around the globe and participating in local processes growing and sharing nutritious and culturally relevant foods, students will explore ways in which to intervene upon the alienation, violences, and injustices experienced within dominant systems of agricultural production and consumption. In this course, rigorous engagement with deconstructive understandings of development, of the promises of democracy, and of the processes towards ecological justice blend with experiential educational practices to elucidate the intersections of anthropology and ecology, space and power, action and knowledge, responsibilities and possibilities.

SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Through activities, lectures, readings, and discussions, this course intends to empower and enable students to take back means of food production and meanings of food consumption.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

% of Class Time

Cognitive/Didactic (Lecture, Discussion)	30 + 20
Experiential (Group process, thinking, reflection)	20
Practical/Applied (Research, fieldwork, writing, case presentation)	30

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Throughout the course, students are expected to participate within and carry out research on a chosen community movement surrounding issues of social justice linked to cultural and ecological sustainability. Students are required to turn in monthly reports summarizing methodological processes and critically analyzing urgent issues. The course culminates in a portfolio project and presentation outlining the students' participatory action research. All monthly reading assignments will be discussed in small groups and in relation to the lectures.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January: History and Context

Introductions

Lecture and Discussion

This section explores histories of social relations surrounding food systems. How may an excavation of past agricultural practices and policies contribute to an understanding of humans' present relations to food and land? What are the relations of power that exist within various forms of governance shaping the disparate conditions of access to nutritional food? What are the ways in which urban areas have become alienated from the means of production and dependent upon unsustainable forms of consumption? How do the legacies of colonialism, the effects of capitalism, and the processes of violence that exist within dominant food systems contribute to inequitable conditions of living within urban areas and across the Global South? What are the ways in which historical analyses attentive to dynamics of power enable a re-thinking of self-determination and ecological justice?

Readings:

- Berry, Wendell. *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*.
- Marx, Karl. *Das Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, Vol. 1, Part VIII
- Nash, Roderick Frazier. *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics*

Activity:

Deconstructing conceptions of food and farming

February: Food Justice

Lecture and Discussion

This section intervenes upon the violences of dominant food systems through exploring the social realities and complexities of food justice movements.

Readings:

- Boucher, Douglas, ed. *The Paradox of Plenty: Hunger in a Bountiful World*.
- Shiva, Vandana. *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in a Time of Climate Crisis*.
- Wekerle, Gerda. *Food Justice Movements: Policy, Planning, and Networks*.

Activity:

Compost the Empire

March: Reframing Development

Lecture and Discussion

This section critically explores the complexities of what is development through postcolonial, feminist, and poststructural frameworks. What are the social, cultural, ecological, and political impacts of dominant development practices? How can we critically look at practices in development as mediated through the dynamics of race, class, gender, power, and place? What are the ways in which narratives of 'modernity' and 'progress' legitimate realities of violence and disparity experienced through dominant development practices? How can we reframe notions of development which make visible the concerns of marginalized communities? What are the engagements of social movements and the efforts of disenfranchised communities which speak to the possibilities of micro and macro shifts toward participatory sustainable development?

Readings:

- Bodley, John. *Victims of Progress*, 5th edition.
- Kabeer, Naila. *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*.
- Illich, Ivan. *Needs*. *In The Development Dictionary*.

Activity:

Seeding: a life giving force that all genders can give, all nations should enable, and all ethnicities practice.

April: Methodology

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Shapiro, Richard. *Power, Alliance, and the Problematics of Intervention*.
- Chatterji, Angana and Richard Shapiro. *Knowledge Making as Intervention: The Academy and Social Change*. *In A Collection on Environmental Justice and Human Rights*.
- Fals-Borda, Orlando, and Mohammad Anisur Rahman. *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action Research*.

Activity:

Fieldwork in students' sites

May: Ecology

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Merchant, Carolyn. *Ecology: Key Concepts in Critical Theory*, 2nd Edition.
- Outwater, Alice. *Water: A Natural History*.
- Gliessman, S.R. *Agroecology: The Ecology of Sustainable Food Systems*.
- Foster, John Bellamy. *Ecology Against Capitalism*

Activity:

Fieldwork in students' sites

June: Power/Violence

Lecture and Discussion

How are the contours of violence, the everyday, epic, epistemic, and performative violences, mediated by historical continuities and discontinuities? How has the institutionalization and normalization of violence legitimated certain statist forms of violence while rendering other forms as illegal/immoral? How can a critical reflection upon the role of states and the international community intervene upon systemic and everyday forms of violence and reframe understandings of human rights? How can a critical understanding of the process and discourse of violence reframe our understanding of food systems and enable new ways of thinking about food?

Readings:

- Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College De France, 1977-1978*.
- Shiva, Vandana. *Violence of the Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics*.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Philippe Bourgois. Introduction: *Making Sense of Violence*. *In Violence in War and Peace: an Anthology*.
- Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*.

Activity:

Power Shuffle exercise and field analysis

July: Local/Global

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Shiva, Vandana. *Manifestos on the Future of Food and Seed*.
- Altieri, Miguel A. *Small Farms as a Planetary Ecological Asset: Five Key Reasons Why We Should Support the Revitalization of Small Farms in the Global South*.
- Clay, J. *World Agriculture and the Environment: a Commodity-by-Commodity Guide to Impacts and Practices*.

Activity:

Space and Power: Explicating the Complexities of the Field

August: Feminisms

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*.
- UC Davis Small Farm Center. *Outstanding in their Fields: California's Women Farmers*.
- Bollinger, Holly. *Women of the Harvest: Inspiring Stories of Women Farmers*.
- Braidotti, Rosi with Ewa Charkiewicz, Sabine Hausler, and Saskia Wieringa. *Responses to the Crisis: Challenges and Contradictions within Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism*. *In Women, the Environment, and Sustainable Development*.

Activity:

Transplanting and Food as Medicine

September: Postcolonial Understandings

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- La Duke, Winona. *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming*.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Can the Subaltern Speak*.
- Cesaire, Aime. *Discourse on Colonialism*.

Activity:

Practices in Counter-Memory

October: Politicizing Food Practices/Social Movements

Lecture and Discussion

How to politicize relations to food

Readings:

- Slocum, Rachel. *Anti-racist Practice and the Work of Community Food Organizations*.
- Pollan, Michael. *An Open Letter to the Farmer in Chief*. *New York Times Magazine*, October 9.
- UN Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. www.un.org/Overview/rights.html
- UN World Commission on Sustainable Development, 2007. www.un.org/esa/sustdev/
- Imhoff, Daniel. *Food Fight: The Citizen's Guide to a Food and Farm Bill*

Activity:

Policy Brief

November: Permaculture

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Mollison, Bill. *Permaculture: A Designer's Manual*.
- Imhoff, Daniel. *Farming with the Wild: Enhancing Biodiversity on Farms and Ranches*.

Activity:

Water is Life

December: Cultural Notions of Food

Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

- Menzel, P. and F. D'Aluisio. *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats*.
- Rumi, Mowlana Jalaluddin. *Bowls of Food ghazal*.
- Margolin, Malcolm. *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area*.

Activity:

Class Presentations of Fieldwork, including Reflections on Self in Relation to the World, Archival Research, and Advocacy in Community

RELEVANT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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2008 *Small Farms as a Planetary Ecological Asset: Five Key Reasons Why We Should Support the Revitalization of Small Farms in the Global South*. Food First Institute, May 9.

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Bodley, John H.

2008 *Victims of Progress*, 5th edition. New York: Altamira Press.

Bollinger, Holly

2007 *Women of the Harvest: Inspiring Stories of Women Farmers*. Voyagur Press

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Carson, Rachel

1962 *Silent Spring*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

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1955 *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chatterji, Angana and Richard Shapiro

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2007 *Sustainable Development*. Electronic document, <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/>.

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