ANTH. 199: CONSUMING AGENDAS: FOOD AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM*

**Professor Information:**
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**Course Description**

Foreign politics, land politics, racial, sexual, and religious politics are common in the media today, but food politics? What's that? What's so political about food? Hunger, obesity, land reform, pollution, biotechnology, transnational corporations, and sustainable agriculture are all political issues tied to the production, distribution, and consumption of food.

This course examines a variety of issues surrounding the food we eat such as alternative agriculture, the food industry's influence on government food policy and its contribution to the obesity crisis in the U.S. The course will introduce social movements and activism focusing on diet, nutrition and agriculture and aspects of food and agricultural technology. We will also critically examine ways in which our food and diet are influenced by government policies.

Seminar goals for student learning are to:

1. Learn about social activism and food issues.
2. Understand the relationship between food and current health issues.
3. Understand economic and political forces that affect hunger and food insecurity.
4. Learn about food production and agricultural issues.

These issues are interrelated and build on each other; consequently we will return to and reexamine the material throughout the quarter. Since this is a seminar course much of the work will be done by class participants both individually and in a group context. You will be provided with core readings and themes; however these are designed to facilitate your own explorations. The format of the seminar is designed to improve critical thinking skills, as demonstrated in oral and written communication.

*If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodation in this course please contact me soon. Please also contact Ms. Molly Sirois, (346-1155; disabsrv@uoregon.edu) for assistance and request a letter be sent verifying your disability.*
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Operating as a seminar of adult learners we will seek to obtain a better understanding of food, nutrition and social activism by seeking answers to some of the following questions:

1. Where does our food come from? Is there an agricultural crisis in our country? What are alternative agriculture, sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty?
2. What is a sustainable food system? How are local groups working toward a sustainable food system? What activities are happening locally?
3. What is the slow food movement? The 100 mile diet? The Eat Local Movement?
4. What are the relationships among food production, consumption practices and nutritional status? Is there a conflict between the elimination of hunger and environmental sustainability? How do we move from charity to justice, and responsible living? Why are people talking about an epidemic of obesity and the large number of people who go hungry in the U.S. at the same time?
5. What is GMO food? Does GMO food affect our health?
6. How do we construct our dietary beliefs? What is a healthy diet? What are the psychological and political factors that shape our beliefs about appropriate food habits and eating patterns?
7. How do we define malnutrition and hunger? How has hunger come to be perceived as a social issue in the U.S. today? What is the extent and nature of hunger and malnutrition in the U.S.? In Oregon? In Lane County? In Eugene?

Although these are the primary questions which have informed the development of this class, each one will undoubtedly spark many questions for you. These personal questions or agendas will be integrated into the class discussions and readings as they arise.

REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS (TENTATIVE)

This course is developed around several types of work:

1. Assignment Discussion.: Since this is a seminar class I expect that you will have read the appropriate assigned material and come prepared to discuss the material in class.
   - You will participate in a group activity on the articles at various times during the quarter. (Approximately 4 times = ~ 40 point). Some Possible Activities are:
     - What Should We Have For Dinner Activity (Group Activity)
     - Agricultural Fallacies Activity (Group Activity)
     - Menu Label & Twinkie Tax Activity (Group Activity)
     - Food Pyramid/Guideline Activity (Group Activity)
     - Hunger Public Service Announcement (Group Activity)

2. Individual Essay on Class Activities: (45 points)
   a. Field Trips Essay –
      Each field trip will involve a 2-3 page written essay (15 points each)
      • Farmer’s Market Survey: Sat. Oct 10 - 9:00 – 10:30 am (10 points)
      • Grass Roots Garden: TBA/ During Class time Oct. 7
      • Food For Lane County: TBA/ During Class time

3. Essays & Movie Reviews (45 points)
   a. Food Citizen Essay (Individual) (15 points)
   b. Movie Reviews: (30 Points)
4. Term Project: Local Food Week @ Carson Dining Hall!

The project will be discussed in class in more detail and posted on the class web site. 100 points

**Term Project: These will be discussed in class in more detail and posted on the class web site. Points = TBA**

- Local Food Week@ the UO: An in depth project focusing on a week long event during which the UO food service will highlight local foods in the dining halls and on campus. The menus during the week will highlight pizza made from tomatoes that were harvested and cooked by 9 freshmen during a 4 day summer event called “Project Tomato” and Shepherd’s grain flour from Washington.

For this project the class group will:

- Research the history of the tomato, the politics of tomato production and distribution.
- Using the information obtained during the class and through their research the group will:
  - Develop and work on the publicity for the event,
  - Assist with the organization of the event
  - Organize public showing of a video - (Possibly: Good Food) and arrange for the filmmakers to be present and have a panel discussion
  - Organize a panel of farmers who participated in “Project Tomato” - perhaps have them attend one dinner at which the pizza is served.
- Local Food Tasting Table
  - Provide information about the food item
  - Set up and be at the table to talk about topics
- Develop information to be used during the event. The information will focus on the project itself and about the importance of local/regional food.
  - Brochures
  - Media/press releases
  - Posters/flyers
  - Power point presentations/ Informational Posters
    - All About Pizza
    - The Buy Local Movement
    - Sustainable food in University Dining halls

EAT PIZZA!!
TENTATIVE GRADING FORMAT
Your Final Class Grade will be calculated using the following points:

1. Term Project                          TBA
2. Class Activities (Group)             40 points
3. Class Field Trip Essays             45
3.    Essays                           45 points

Total                              TBA points

REQUIRED READINGS
Articles are available on the class blackboard site. The assignments are indicated in the course topics and readings section of the syllabus.

BASIC CLASS POLICIES

1. Attendance and active participation in class are two basic components of the course.
2. Readings for the week/class should be completed BEFORE coming to class. Keeping up with the readings will be essential participation in the class discussions. Remember this is a seminar class that is based on class discussion and participation.
3. Late work will not be accepted, unless arrangements have been made with me before the due date.
4. Students who have special needs are encouraged to contact me or/and office of Disability Services.
5. Assignments will NOT be accepted by e-mail.
6. I will hold regular office hours. I encourage you to come with questions or just to discuss the material. If my regular hours are not compatible with your schedule, please make an appointment. I encourage students to meet with me. I feel that professor-student contact and communication are very important and allows for discussion that the classroom does not permit because of time constraints. Please come see me to talk about any questions you might have about reading or lecture material, to discuss plans/questions you might have about becoming an anthropology major/graduate student, or ideas you might have about biological anthropology.
CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

PART I. EVERYONE EATS BUT WHERE DOES OUR FOOD COME FROM?

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION: Assignment for Monday: Think about the project and develop some ideas for how you would like to participate

WEDNESDAY- SEPT. 30: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

WEEK 2: FOOD PROCUREMENT/FARM POLITICS AND ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE

MONDAY OCT. 5, 2009

FOOD SERVICES/DINING HALL TOUR

WEDNESDAY, OCT 7, 2009

GRASS ROOTS GARDEN TOUR

SAT. OCT 10, 2009: FARMERS MARKET 9:30- 10:30 {Weather dependent}

WEEK 3: FOOD PROCUREMENT/FARM POLITICS AND ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE

MONDAY OCT 12, 2009  (VIDEO: THE REAL DIRT ON FARMER JOHN)

WEDNESDAY OCT 14, 2009
1. Allen, P. and J. Guthman 2006 From “old school” to “farm-to-school”: Neoliberalization from the ground up. Agriculture and Human Values 23: 401- 415.
SECTION II: EVERYBODY EATS, BUT WHAT DO WE EAT?  
FAST FOOD AND SLOW FOOD

WEEK 4: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: SOCIAL ACTIVISM/FOOD POLITICS
MONDAY: OCT. 19, 2009-
2. BBC 2008 Six Families –Shopping Lists

WED. OCT 21: SLOW FOOD - WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT TO PROTECT THE TWO HOUR LUNCH

Guest Speaker: T. Barkin: Slow Food

WEEK 5. THE QUESTION OF THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC
MONDAY OCT 26, 2009

WEDNESDAY OCT. 28, 2009
FINAL WORK ON LOCAL FOOD WEEK PROJECT

WEEK 6: NOV 2 - 4 TBA LOCAL FOOD @ UO PROJECT
TBA
SECTION III: EVERYBODY EATS, BUT HOW MUCH SARE WE EATING?

WEEK 7: THE QUESTION OF THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC
MONDAY NOV. 9, 2009


WEDNESDAY NOV. 11, 2009: ACTIVISM AND THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC

1. Menu Labeling Map. See Black Board
5. LCHAY 2009 Nutrition Information in Lane County Fast Food and Chain Restaurants. *LCHAY REPORT*

WEEK 8: ACTIVISM AND THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC
MONDAY NOV 16, 2009


SECTION III: WHO EATS AND WHO DOESN’T

WEDNESDAY NOV. 18, 2009 HUNGER AND OBESITY


FOOD FOR LANE COUNTY TOUR

WEEK 9:
MONDAY NOV. 23, 2009

DISCUSSION: FOOD SECURITY & VIDEO: TBA
WEDNESDAY NOV. 25, 2009 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
WEEK 10 CHARITY, JUSTICE AND SOCIAL ACTION
MONDAY: NOV. 30, 2009

WEDNESDAY DEC. 2, 2009: FINDING SOLUTIONS