

## **Community, Food and Agriculture: A Survey**

CSUS 811

Fall 2023

Wednesdays, 11:50 to 1:10pm (Wells Hall B104) and online (D2L)

3.0 credit hours

## **Part 1: Course Information**

Instructor: Phil Howard

316 Natural Resources

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:30 to 2:30pm, and by appointment

**Course Description:** This graduate interdisciplinary course in the Department of Community Sustainability examines a range of philosophical, environmental, socio-economic and political issues related to food and farming, with a focus on the US context. This course is designed as the introductory course for Community Sustainability students specializing in the area of Community, Food and Agriculture, as well as others interested in a wide variety of local, national and global food and farming issues. It also serves as an introductory social science course for students in the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (SAFS) specialization.

### **Required Texts:**

Carolan, Michael. 2022. *The Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. 3rd Edition. New York: Routledge.

Stone, Glenn Davis. 2022. *The Agricultural Dilemma: How Not to Feed the World*. New York: Routledge.

(both available electronically through the library, additional readings as assigned in course management system)

Key course themes that are addressed from diverse disciplinary and conceptual frameworks include: sustainability; the industrialization and corporate control of US food and farming; food and globalization; localized and place-based agriculture; governance of the agrifood system; and, food democracy, security and sovereignty.

Students are expected to draw upon their experiences and backgrounds, to expand their reading in the area of community, food and agriculture, and to explore a specific issue or theme from an intellectually-grounded conceptual framework.

## **Part 2: Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

The primary learning objectives for this course are:

- provide students with an overview of the literature addressing local, national and global issues

in community, food and agriculture

- develop an understanding of various conceptual perspectives used to address issues in the area of community, food and agriculture, and
- develop a scholarly capacity for analyzing food and farming problems from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

**Course Approach:** The course is organized as a small seminar with a commitment to developing collaborative learning among all who participate. In the spirit of creating an intellectual community around community, food and agricultural issues, participants are encouraged to share their concerns about the learning environment and to shape our efforts to explore these issues.

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Weekly readings, participation in class discussions and written reflections
- Critical review of a scholarly book (due Oct. 18)
- Final annotated bibliography and presentation (draft due Nov. 1, final due Dec. 6)
- Self-evaluation (due Dec. 15)

### **Part 3: Course Outline/Schedule**

Aug. 30 - introduction; readings: Carolan, Introduction, Part I

Sept. 6 - readings: Carolan, Part II

Sept. 13 - **no class**

Sept. 20 - readings: Carolan, Part III and IV

Sept. 27 - readings/guest: Phil Warsaw, Community Sustainability

Oct. 4 - readings: Stone, preface to chapter 4

Oct. 11 - readings: Stone, chapters 5 to 7

Oct. 18 - **critical review due**, readings/guest: Katherine Alaimo, Food Science & Human Nutrition

Oct. 25 - readings/"guest": Phil Howard, Community Sustainability

Nov. 1 - **three annotation entries due**, readings/guest: Abby Bennett, Fisheries & Wildlife

Nov. 8 - readings/guest: Helen Veit, History

Nov. 15 - readings/guest: Jahi Chappell, Center for Regional Food Systems

Nov. 22 - **no class meeting**, Thanksgiving holiday

Nov. 29 - readings/guest: Chris Bardenhagen, MSU Extension

Dec. 6 - **annotated bibliography due**, final presentations

Dec. 15 - **self-evaluation due** at 9:45 am

## Part 4: Grading Policy

### Graded Course Activities

- Weekly readings, participation in class discussions and written reflections - 100 points
- Critical review of a scholarly book (due Oct. 18) - 100 points
- Final annotated bibliography and presentation (draft due Nov. 1, final due Dec. 6) - 100 points
- Self-evaluation (due Dec. 15) - 100 points

Grading scale for the course (by percentage of the 400 points obtained):

The table below describes the relationships between letter grades, percent, and performance. The first column describes the letter grade. The second column describes the percentage associated with that letter grade. The third column describes the performance represented by that letter grade and percentage.

<i>Grade Point</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Performance</i>
4.0	96 to 100%	Excellent Work
3.5	90 to 95%	Above average
3.0	84 to 89%	Good Work
2.5	78 to 83%	Mostly Good Work
2.0	72 to 77%	Average work
1.5	66 to 71%	Below average work
1.0	60 to 65%	Poor work
0	0 to 60%	Failing work

**Weekly readings, class discussions and written reflections** - you are expected to answer the following questions about the weekly readings in class (Wednesdays):

*a. what did you agree/disagree with the most? and/or what did you find most useful?*

*b. what did the readings potentially leave out?*

Then by Monday you will answer the following questions in D2L forums:

*a. what question(s) did the readings and class discussion raise?*

*b. what were you able to uncover about this question? (This will require that you seek out and read at least one additional scholarly article or chapter in an effort to answer your question. It's OK if you're not able to answer the question, just include citation information for the reading and share what you learned in the process.)*

By the Wednesday after this written assignment is due you will read other students' posts, and briefly respond to at least one post.

**Critical review of a scholarly book** - choose a book addressing the topics of community, food and agriculture of interest to you. Read carefully and write a critical review of approximately 1000 words. You may choose from among the references in the Carolan text, suggestions in the assignment folder, or meet with me to discuss some possibilities you're considering. Be sure to look at a number of examples of book reviews in scholarly journals, such as *Agriculture and Human Values*, to get a sense of what is expected. Typical elements include bibliographic information, a brief summary of the book, a critique, and a suggested audience. Keep in mind the purpose of the review is to help readers decide if it is worth their time to read the book. Due Oct. 18.

**Annotated bibliography** - You will choose a very focused topic related to community, food and agriculture, and create an annotated bibliography with 20 to 25 entries (at approximately 150 words per entry). The majority of the entries should be peer-reviewed journal articles, but some book chapters (e.g. edited books) and reports are OK. A summary/synthesis paragraph preceding the entries is encouraged, but not required. An informal, three to five minute presentation summarizing your findings will be delivered during the final week of class. For more see: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/common\\_writing\\_assignments/annotated\\_bibliographies/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/annotated_bibliographies/index.html) and examples posted in D2L. An early draft with just 3 annotations is due Nov. 1. Final is due Dec. 6.

**Self-evaluation** - A one page description of what you learned, accomplished and plan to do with this knowledge and experience in the future. Due Dec. 15.