

CSUS 343: Community Food and Agricultural Systems

Department of Community Sustainability

Spring 2022

Section 730, online

3.0 credit hours

Part 1: Course Information

Instructor: Phil Howard

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1 to 2pm (zoom), and by appointment

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Course Description: Food and agricultural systems. Inputs, production, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal. Industrialization, globalization and centralization of power. Community goals including ecological sustainability, social justice, economic viability and democracy.

Required Text:

Where Am I Eating? A Journey Through the Global Food Economy. Kelsey Timmerman. 2013. Wiley.

Course Requirements

- Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)
- Access to *Desire2Learn (D2L)*

Course Structure

This course will be delivered online through the course management system and you will need your MSU NetID to login to the course from the *D2L homepage* (<http://d2l.msu.edu>).

In *D2L*, you will access online lessons, course materials, and additional resources. Activities may consist of readings, discussion forums and other online activities.

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

- Visit the [MSU Libraries Discovery Services Site \(https://lib.msu.edu/dls/\)](https://lib.msu.edu/dls/)
- Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site \(https://help.d2l.msu.edu/\)](https://help.d2l.msu.edu/)
- [Visit the MSU IT Help & Support Site \(https://tech.msu.edu/support/help/\)](https://tech.msu.edu/support/help/), call (517) 432-6200 or toll free (844) 678-6200, or email ithelp@msu.edu

Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)

[To make an appointment with a specialist, contact \(517\) 353-9642 or TTY: \(517\) 355-1293](#)

- [RCPD Get Started Info: https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/get-started](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/get-started)

Part 2: Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The primary learning objectives for this course are:

Investigate the paths food takes from fields to forks, both here and abroad
Explore the intersections of community, food, agriculture and the environment
Analyze dominant trends in food systems, and responses to these trends
Critically assess strategies to achieve sustainable food systems

Learning outcomes:

By successfully completing this course, you should be able to

- Investigate the paths food takes from fields to forks, both here and abroad
- Explore the intersections of community, food, agriculture and the environment
- Analyze dominant trends in food systems, and responses to these trends
- Critically assess strategies to achieve sustainable food systems

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

- Weekly readings, reflection and commentaries
- Weekly reflections on presentations or field trips
- Two reviews: book “Where Am I Eating?,” **due February 16** and a book of your choice (or 3 films), **due March 30**
- Final self-evaluation, **due May 2**

Part 3: Course Outline/Schedule

Week 1

- Introduction to Food Systems
- Personal Introductions
- Why Chicken Doesn't Taste Like Chicken Anymore. Mark Schatzker. *New York Post*, April 26, 2015.
- The Extraordinary Science of Addictive Junk Food. Michael Moss. *The New York Times Magazine*, February 20, 2013.
- Optional reading: Scrinis. Gyorgy. 2016. Reformulation, fortification and functionalization: Big Food corporations' nutritional engineering and marketing strategies. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(1), 17-37
- Film: *King Corn*

Week 2

- The Farm Bill Drove Me Insane. Marion Nestle. *Politico*, March 17, 2016.
- Linux for Lettuce. Lisa M. Hamilton. *VQR*, Summer 2014.
- Optional reading: Patel, Raj & Jim Goodman. 2020. The Long New Deal. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 47(3), 431-463.
- Presentation: Consolidation in the Food System

Week 3

- Power Steer. Michael Pollan, *The New York Times Magazine*, March 31, 2002.
- The Burger That Shattered Her Life. Michael Moss. *The New York Times*, October 3, 2009.
- Optional reading: Lander, Brian, Mindi Schneider, & Katherine Brunson. 2020. A history of pigs in China: From curious omnivores to industrial pork. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 79(4), 865-889.
- Field Trip #1

Week 4

- Undercover in a Chicken Factory. Steve Striffler. *Utne Reader*, January/February 2004.
- JBS: The Brazilian Butchers Who Took Over the World. Andrew Wasley et al., *Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, July 2, 2019.
- Optional reading: Stull, Donald D. 2020. Making meat in the time of COVID-19, *Anthropology Now*, 12(2), 5-17.
- Presentation: “Politics in Action: The Environment of Food Choice” by Marion Nestle, August 28, 2013.

Week 5

- Food Waste of the Pandemic. David Yaffe-Bellany and Michael Corkery. *The New York Times*, April 11, 2020.
- Are Dairy Digesters the Renewable Energy Answer or a 'False Solution' to Climate Change? Gosia Wozniacka. *A Greener Life, A Greener World*, May 1, 2020.
- Optional reading: Bajželj, B., Quested, T. E., Rööös, E., & Swannell, R. P. 2020. The role of reducing food waste for resilient food systems. *Ecosystem Services*, 45, 101140.
- Presentation: Alternatives to the Hourglass?

Week 6

- Product of Mexico: No Way Out. Richard Marosi. *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 2014.
- In Florida Tomato Fields, a Penny Buys Progress. Steven Greenhouse. *The New York Times*, April 24, 2014.
- Optional reading: Sbicca, Joshua, Laura-Anne Minkoff-Zern, & Shelby Coopwood. 2020. “Because they are connected”: Linking structural inequalities in farmworker organizing. *Human Geography*, 13(3), 263-276.
- Film: *McLibel*

- Critical Review of “Where Am I Eating” due.

Week 7

- The Playbook for Poisoning the Earth. Lee Fang. *The Intercept*. January 18, 2020.
- Escaping the Pesticide Trap: Non-Pesticide Management for Agricultural Pests. Gerry Marten. *The EcoTipping Points Project*, June 2005.
- Optional reading: Luna, Jessie K. 2020. ‘Pesticides are our children now’: cultural change and the technological treadmill in the Burkina Faso cotton sector. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 37(2), 449-462.
- Field Trip #2

Week 8

- No Bar Code. Michael Pollan. *Mother Jones*, May/June 2006.
- The Family Peach Farm that Became a Symbol of the Food Revolution. Dan Charles. *The Salt (NPR)*, March 15, 2015.
- Optional reading: Meek, David, & Colin R. Anderson. 2020. Scale and the politics of the organic transition in Sikkim, India. *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 44(5), 653-672.
- Film: *Agroecology: Various Approaches in Europe*

Week 9

- Food Co-ops Grow Up. Gail Nickel-Kailing. *GoodFood World*, December 9, 2010.
- How Employee Ownership Helped Phoenix Coffee Survive Covid-19. Mark Oprea. *Cleveland Scene*, December 31, 2020.
- Optional reading: Open Markets Institute. 2020. Redeeming the Democratic Promise of Agricultural Cooperatives. September.
- Presentation: Emerging Ecolabels

Week 10

- Flour Power. Liz Carlisle. *Yes! Magazine*, Winter 2020.
- Building the Mecca of Heritage Poultry in Kansas. Twilight Greenaway. *Civil Eats*, August 23, 2018.
- Optional reading: Pilling, Dafydd, Julie Bélanger & Irene Hoffmann. 2020. Declining biodiversity for food and agriculture needs urgent global action. *Nature Food*, 1(3), 144-147.
- Field Trip #3

Week 11

- Portland’s Food Truck Heaven. Abby Quillen. *Yes! Magazine*, January 17, 2014.
- Follow the Vegetable Box. Vivian Winterhoff. *The Food Lab*, December 18, 2014.

- Optional reading: Hendrickson, Mary K., Sarah Hultine Massengale & Randolph Cantrell. 2020. “No money exchanged hands, no bartering took place. But it's still local produce”: Understanding local food systems in rural areas in the US Heartland. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 78, 480-490.
- Presentation: Carolyn Steel. March 30, 2016.
- Critical Review of 1 book or 3 films due (select from https://creator.zoho.com/howardp/books-and-films/#View:CFA_books_and_films_View)

Week 12

- This City Made Access to Food a Right of Citizenship. Frances Moore Lappe. *Yes! Magazine*, January 29, 2019.
- Incredible Edible. Yorkshire Town's Food-Growing Scheme Takes Root Worldwide. Naomi Larsson. *The Guardian*, May 9, 2018.
- Optional reading: Blesh, Jennifer, Leslie Hoey, Andrew D. Jones, Harriet Friedmann & Ivette Perfecto. 2019. Development pathways toward “zero hunger”. *World Development*, 118, 1-14.
- Presentation: Slow Food

Week 13

- A Side of Grasshoppers. Eric Gomez. *ESPN*, April 13, 2018.
- Inside Lab-Grown Meat Start-Ups. Olga Khazan. *The Atlantic*, April 29, 2019.
- Field Trip #4
- Optional reading: Santo, R. E., Kim, B. F., Goldman, S. E., Dutkiewicz, J., Biehl, E., Bloem, M. W., & Nachman, K. E. 2020. Considering plant-based meat substitutes and cell-based meats: A public health and food systems perspective. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 4, 134.

Week 14

- The Chef Restoring Appalachia's World Class Food Culture. Eric J. Wallace. *Atlas Obscura*, January 10, 2020.
- Hold the Salt: The Promise of Little Fresh Fishes. Paul Tullis. *Hakai Magazine*, August 24, 2020.
- Optional reading: Naylor, R. L., Hardy, R. W., Buschmann, A. H., et al. Bush, 2021. A 20-year retrospective review of global aquaculture. *Nature*, 591(7851), 551-563.
- Film: *Regreening the Desert*

Week 15

- The War on Milk. Emily Sohn. *Thirty Two Magazine*, January 31, 2013.
- The Secret Resistance Behind the World's Most Dangerous Cheese. Mark Hay. *The Outline*, March 31, 2020.

- Optional reading: Reisman, Emily & Madeleine Fairbairn. 2020. Agri-Food Systems and the Anthropocene, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, DOI:10.1080/24694452.2020.1828025

Final Exam: Self-Evaluation

Part 4: Grading Policy

Graded Course Activities

(100 points each, 400 points total)

- Weekly readings, reflection and commentaries
- Weekly reflections on presentations or field trips
- Two reviews: book “Where Am I Eating?,” **due February 16** and a book of your choice (or 3 films), **due March 30**
- Final self-evaluation, **due May 2**

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.

Grade Point	Percentage	Performance
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

Viewing Grades

Grades for all assignments are viewable in the D2L gradebook.

LATE POLICY: if you are occasionally a few minutes past the 5pm deadlines don't worry, no points will be deducted unless it becomes a habit.

You are allowed ONE late assignment with no penalty (submitted up to one week late, but before the course ends April 26) - however, you must inform me which one you are submitting late so that I know to go back and grade it without penalty.

Late assignment penalty is minus 50% of total points, but only up to **one week** after the deadline. Submissions more than a week late will receive no credit. Note that mathematically you can score a zero on one or two weekly assignments during the course and still achieve a 4.0.

I highly recommend checking the course schedule and noting all deadlines, particularly the two critical reviews (50 points each) and the self-evaluation (100 points). You will need to obtain and read your books/view films well before these deadlines (also in bold above) in order to complete them successfully.

ADVICE: Try to submit well before the deadlines if possible, there is no reason not to work as far ahead as you can - other than commenting on two other student's posts for the readings assignments (if enough other students haven't also submitted ahead of the deadline).

Part 5: Course Policies

Diversity Equity and Inclusiveness

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are important, interdependent components of everyday life in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) and are critical to our pursuit of academic excellence. Our aim is to foster a culture where every member of CANR feels valued, supported and inspired to achieve individual and common goals with an uncommon will. This includes providing opportunity and access for all people across differences of race, age, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, migratory status, disability / abilities, political affiliation, veteran status and socioeconomic background. (See the full CANR statement: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/canr-statement-on-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>)

Commit to Integrity: Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the [Academic Freedom Report](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not

submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

From the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Participation and Engagement

During all classes, the instructor expects students to be fully engaged and prepared to discuss reading assignments. Students are encouraged to ask questions of the instructor, guest speakers, and their peers.

Active participation includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Asking and answering questions of the instructors, peers, or guest speakers
2. Bringing forth new ideas, information, or perspectives to academic conversations
3. Discussing your readings and reflections with instructors and peers
4. Meeting with the instructors to discuss your interests, assignments, or project
5. Questioning information presented and discussed
6. Participating in small group discussions and activities
7. Assuming responsibility for personal behavior and learning

While working on group projects, students should be mindful of other students in their group; therefore, it is important for all participants to exercise:

- Respect for themselves, each other
- Openness and a positive attitude toward new ideas and other's ideas
- Flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity
- Good communications amongst themselves.

Complete Assignments

Assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through *D2L* unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor before the due date. Extensions will not be given beyond the next

assignment except under extreme circumstances.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect the student's grade.

PART 6: GENERAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

All other general college and university policies applicable to this course are available at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/academics/courses/policies> . Please review these policies.

Topics covered in these general policies include:

- Students with disabilities, Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) and accommodations
- Student rights under the family educational rights and privacy act (FERPA)
 - Student release authorization form
- Religious holiday policies
- Grief absence policies
- Students in distress policies
- MSU student athlete policies
- Course add-drop policies
- Honors options
- Course Management system policies
- Final exam policy and attendance
- Grade dispute policies
- Academic honesty and integrity, plagiarism, and disciplinary procedures
- Disruptive behavior
- Harassment and discrimination policies
- RVSM University reporting protocols
- Limits to confidentiality
- Social media policy
- Web accessibility policies
- MSU Code of Teaching Responsibility
- SIRS
- Commercialization of lecture notes
- University Learning Goals