SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Contemporary Issues in Food Studies (FOOD-GE 2017.001)
Department of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health

This course introduces you to the major issues surrounding the current food system and culture. We will engage with a broad range of texts written by academics and serious journalists highlighting current concerns about food consumption, production and distribution. We will begin with a juxtaposition of the global scope of the food system and an apparently private pathology of eating disorders. Then we will problematize the relationship between the US and the world, heading outwards from the US as it shapes the rest of the world while being fashioned by the challenges and opportunities associated with an increasingly globalized system.

By the end of the course, students will be able to: identify the key economic, social, demographic, environmental, and ethical issues that currently shape our system of food production, distribution, and consumption.

Week 1: Intro + Rules

Readings:
Theme I: The World and the Body
Week 2:
+ (4) [http://www.economist.com/node/18200618](http://www.economist.com/node/18200618)

Week 3:
**Theme III: Americanization/Hybridization/Mediatization**

Week 4:

AND

(2) Taco Bell in India:
http://online.wsj.com/article_email/SB10001424052702303410404575151603119264826-IMyQJAxMTAwMDAwMTEwNDEyWj.html

AND

(3) Food TV in India

AND


AND

(5) On Food Television

**Theme IV: Pleasures and Costs of Global Consumerism**

Week 5:

Recommended: On Related Issues

- A graphic display of industrial organic
  http://www.msu.edu/~howardp/organicindustry.html

- A graphic display published in NYTimes
  http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/03/19/when-big-business-eats-organic/

- Long New Yorker profile of Whole Foods CEO
  http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/01/04/100104fa_fact_paumgarten


- Recommended critique: Special Issue of *Gastronomica* 7/3 (Summer 2007); especially “Can’t Stomach It: How Michael Pollan et al. Made Me Want to Eat Cheetos,” by Julie Guthman, pp. 75-79 (you can find in BOBST database)

- The Foodie Indictment of Feminism
  http://www.salon.com/life/broadsheet/2010/05/26/foodies_and_feminism

- Laura Shapiro’s critique of both Guthman and Pollan
  http://www.slate.com/id/2180504/

- The Joy of Not Cooking

- See ASFS debate (especially Warren Belasco’s critique) of Pollan (you can find archived on NYU lists)


- British Survey of over 3,000 respondents
  http://www.food.gov.uk/science/socsci/surveys/foodandyou/foodyou10

AND

(2) Short story on the most expensive tuna auctioned: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8440758.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8440758.stm)

AND


AND


AND


AND


**Theme V: Immigrant Labor & Entrepreneurship**

Week 6:

(1) Immigrant farmers [http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_serfs_of_arkansas%20](http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_serfs_of_arkansas%20)

AND

(2) Immigrant Farm Labor [http://www.economist.com/node/17722932](http://www.economist.com/node/17722932)

AND

(3) Immigrant farmers [http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_serfs_of_arkansas%20](http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_serfs_of_arkansas%20)

AND

(4) Hudson Valley Farmworker Report is online and there's an executive summary and then someone can poke around:

(5) [http://events.adelphi.edu/news/farmworkers/](http://events.adelphi.edu/news/farmworkers/)

AND


AND


AND


**Theme VII: Intriguing Departures -- Modernism and Microbiopolitics**

Week 7:


AND


AND


AND


AND


**Theme VIII: City, Culture, Media**

Week 8:

AND
(2) Annie Hauck-Lawson & Jonathan Deutsch, 2009, *Gastropolis* = Chapters 5, 7, 16
AND
(3) Eating the West and Beating the Rest
http://icc.fla.sophia.ac.jp/global%20food%20papers/pdf/2_3_FARRER.pdf
AND
(4) Brooklyn: The Brand
AND
(5) The Anti-Foodie
AND
AND
(7) Food as Youth Culture http://nymag.com/print/?/restaurants/features/foodies-2012-4/

**Theme IX: Duration & Densities: Sociologies and Philosophies of Taste**
Week 9:
AND

**Theme X: Managing Affluence in the New City**
Week 10:
AND
AND

**Theme XI: The Persistent Problem of Global Hunger. Political-Economy of Food**
Week 11: The Problem of Hunger
AND
(2) This is a short but interesting article about how food security is assessed:
Chris Barrett, Measuring Food Insecurity, Science (Feb 2010), pp 825-828.
http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/short/327/5967/825
AND
(3) Uplifting East Africa’s Rural Smallholder Farmers
The One Acre Fund’s Stephanie Hanson explains how her organization is creating service models for rural smallholder farmers in Kenya and Rwanda to help them acquire tools needed to feed their families and increase their incomes.
Read: Uplifting East Africa’s Rural Smallholder Farmers by Stephanie Hanson
AND
**Week 12: A Political-Ecology of Famine: The Making of the Third World**

1. Mike Davis, 2001, *Late Victorian Holocaus ts*, Verso (pp. 1-16, 23-64, 117-121, 279-312) (Note: These page numbers often end in the middle of chapters).

AND


**Theme VIII: New Technologies Assuaging Hunger?**

**Week 13: Genetically modified foods: problems and prospect**


AND

2. The National Academy Committee on the Impact of Biotechnology on Farm Level Economics and Sustainability and the National Research Council published a document in 2010 titled *Impact of Genetically Engineered Crops on Farm Sustainability in the United States*. It's supposed to be the most comprehensive and unbiased assessment of GMOs in the U.S. It's too bad they don't discuss the global impact as well. Here's the link to the website:


AND

3. And here's the link to the Atlantic's blog post about the book:


AND (may be)

4. [http://www.latimes.com/features/food/la-fo-calcook6-2010jan06,0,6888223.story](http://www.latimes.com/features/food/la-fo-calcook6-2010jan06,0,6888223.story)

AND (may be)


   [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/05/opinion/05mcwilliams.html?_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/05/opinion/05mcwilliams.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

AND (may be)

6. On Monsanto [http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/05/monsanto200805](http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/05/monsanto200805)

**Week 14: The Ethics of Eating Animals**


AND

Grading
10% - Participation will be based on
   (a) attendance
   (b) rate of participation in class – i.e. once every class = 100%
   (c) quality of participation – relevance, complexity, depth, comparative scope;
   (d) one way to demonstrate good participation is to bring a recently published article (relevant to
      the assigned readings for the day) to class (as often as possible) and present it to your peers

90% - Three, 4-page (single-space, 12-font) response (summary and critique) to any 3 reading cluster
      submitted the week it is discussed in class. Late papers will NOT be accepted.

Note: You are expected to read about 200 pages of text of varying density per week

The 4-page (single-space, 12-font) Response Paper
The paper must do the following:
   1. Have a title
   2. Summarize the main argument/s of the author/s
   3. Concentrate on one or a few of the arguments in the response
   4. Justify the selection of that particular argument
   5. Critique:
      a. Tell me what is good and compelling about it
      b. Tell me why it is so - evidence, logic, language, voice, analysis, etc.
      c. Tell me what is weak
      d. Tell me why it is so
      e. Tell me what else you would have liked to know about the subject, why?
      f. You may do the above by comparing with another reading from the curriculum or
         outside of it.

To get full points for the response papers you have to do the above in the following manner:
1. No errors of language and grammar
2. Original critical insight
3. Eloquence
4. Compelling argument
5. Capacity to develop critical distance from own argument

Note: Any student who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or
      learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with
      Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 240 Greene Street, www.nyu.edu/csd

Bibliography (books in approximate order of usage):

Joan Jacob Brumberg, 2000, Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia Nervosa, New York, Vintage (pp. 1-99,
124-138, 161-204 OR Chapters 1,2,3,5,7).
Michael Pollan, 2006, The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals. Penguin (pp. 1-184, 277-
411).


**Other interesting stories on the web:**
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/22/101122fa_fact_bilger

A Reporter at Large
Nature’s Spoils
The underground food movement ferments revolution.
by Burkhard Bilger November 22, 2010

Read more http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/22/101122fa_fact_bilger#ixzz18IDRarjT