

## 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:**

(1) Raj Patel, 2008, *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System* (Melville).

+

(2) [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-being-a-foodie-isnt-  
elitist/2011/04/27/AFeWsnFF\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-being-a-foodie-isnt-elitist/2011/04/27/AFeWsnFF_story.html)

+

(3) [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/29/opinion/29schlosser.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/29/opinion/29schlosser.html?_r=2)

+

(4) <http://www.economist.com/node/18200618>

+

(5) [http://www.grist.org/article/2011-03-10-debunking-myth-that-only-industrial-agriculture-can-feed-  
world](http://www.grist.org/article/2011-03-10-debunking-myth-that-only-industrial-agriculture-can-feed-world)

+

(6) <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0291e/i0291e00.pdf>

+

(7) [http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308\\_a-hrc-16-49\\_agroecology\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308_a-hrc-16-49_agroecology_en.pdf)

+

(8) [http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-28/poor-in-india-starve-as-politicians-steal-14-5-billion-of-  
food.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-28/poor-in-india-starve-as-politicians-steal-14-5-billion-of-food.html)

**Week 3:**

(1) 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).

+

(2) Jane Brody <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/23/health/23brody.html>

+

(3) Faustine Régnier and Ana Masullo, 2009, "Obesity, Taste and Dietary Consumption," *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 50-4, pp. 747-773 here translated by Rosemary Kneipp and repaginated as pp. 1-34 and distributed by Faustine Régnier at Feast/Famine: The Colloquia of the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health, New York University, on 11/18/2011.

**Recommended: On Related Issues**

A graphic display of industrial organic  
<http://www.msu.edu/%7Ehowardp/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](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/01/04/100104fa_fact_paumgarten)

US Dietary Guidelines: <http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

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](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  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/print/2011/05/the-joy-of-not-cooking/8442/>

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

Alan Warde, et.al. 2007. "Changes in the Practice of Eating" *Acta Sociologica*, 50 (4): 363-385 (find in BOBST Databases)

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

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

Week 4:

(1) James Watson and Melissa Caldwell, 2005, *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating. A Reader*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing (pp. 1-12, 54-103, 144-162, 180-196 = Intro + Trinidad + China + China + France + Russia)

AND

(2) Taco Bell in India:

[http://online.wsj.com/article\\_email/SB10001424052702303410404575151603119264826-IMyQjAxMTAwMDAwMTEwNDEyWj.html](http://online.wsj.com/article_email/SB10001424052702303410404575151603119264826-IMyQjAxMTAwMDAwMTEwNDEyWj.html)

AND

(3) Food TV in India

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/03/29/the\\_top\\_chef\\_for\\_indias\\_real\\_housewives?page=full](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/03/29/the_top_chef_for_indias_real_housewives?page=full)

AND

(4) David Sutton and Leonidas Vournelis, 2009, "Vefa or Mamalakis: Cooking Up Nostalgia in Contemporary Greece" *South European Society and Politics*, 14: 2, pp. 147-166, available on Informaworld.com on Bobst databases.

AND

(5) On Food Television

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/02/magazine/02cooking-t.html?scp=2&sq=pollan&st=cse>

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

Week 5:

(1) Sasha Issenberg, 2007, *The Sushi Economy. Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy*, New York: Penguin (Gotham Books), pp. ix – 129, 253 - 281.

AND

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

AND

(3) <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/27/magazine/27Tuna-t.html>

AND

(4) Charles Clover, 2008, *End of the Line*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (pp. 1-251).

AND

(5) <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/27/science/earth/27fish.html>

AND

(6) <http://www.worldfishcenter.org/wfcms/HQ/article.aspx?ID=1242>

### **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>

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/>

AND

(6) Suzanne Wasserman, "Hawkers and Gawkers: Peddling and Markets in New York City," in *Gastropolis* (pp. 153-173).

AND

(7) Krishnendu Ray, 2011, "Dreams of Pakistani Grill and Vada Pao in Manhattan: Re-inscribing the Immigrant Body in Metropolitan Discussions of Taste," *Food, Culture & Society* 14, 2 (June): 243-273.

AND

(8) <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/24/business/worldbusiness/24peso.html>

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

Week 7:

(1) The Foodie Indictment of Feminism

[http://www.salon.com/life/broadsheet/2010/05/26/foodies\\_and\\_feminism](http://www.salon.com/life/broadsheet/2010/05/26/foodies_and_feminism)

AND

(2) <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/print/2011/05/the-joy-of-not-cooking/8442/>

AND

(3) Rachel Lauden, 2001, "In Defense of Culinary Modernism," *Gastronomica* (Locate in Bobst database)

AND

(4) Nathan Myhrvold, 2011, "The Art in Gastronomy. A Modernist perspective," *Gastronomica*, 11, 1 (Spring): 13-23.

AND

(5) Heather Paxon, 2008, "Post-Pasteurian Cultures: The Microbiopolitics of Raw-Milk Cheese in the United States," *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 23, Issue 1, pp. 15-47.

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

Week 8:

(1) Mirko Zardini, edited, 2005, *Sense of the City. An Alternate Approach to Urbanism* (Montreal: Canadian Center for Architecture and Lars Muller Publishers) = pp. 14-93, 268-331.

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](http://icc.fla.sophia.ac.jp/global%20food%20papers/pdf/2_3_FARRER.pdf)

AND

(4) Brooklyn: The Brand [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/15/dining/15brooklyn.html?\\_r=1&ref=dining](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/15/dining/15brooklyn.html?_r=1&ref=dining)

AND

(5) The Anti-Foodie

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/print/1969/12/the-moral-crusade-against-foodies/8370>

AND

(6) **Source URL:** <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/food-rules-134932>

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:

(1) Wolfgang Schivelbusch, 1993, *Tastes of Paradise. A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants*, New York, Random House, pp. 3-95.

AND

(2) Carolyn Korsmeyer, ed., 2007, *The Taste Culture Reader. Experiencing Food and Drink*, Oxford: Berg, pp. 25-85, 103-122, 131-192, 195-248.

### **Theme X: Managing Affluence in the New City**

Week 10:

(1) Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, 1998, *Ben & Jerry's Double-Dip*, Simon & Schuster (pp. 1-107).

AND

(2) Woody Tasch, 2008, *Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money*, White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing (pp. 1-119).

AND

(3) Boaz Hillebrand. New Urbanism & Food Issues. Lecture/Discussion.

### **Theme XI: The Persistent Problem of Global Hunger. Political-Economy of Food**

**Week 11: The Problem of Hunger**

(1) Gary Gardner and Brian Halweil, 2000, *Underfed and Overfed: The Global Epidemic of Malnutrition*, World Watch Paper 150;

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

(4) Per Pinstrup-Andersen. Ed. 2010. *The African Food System and Its Interaction with Human Health and Nutrition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (pp. 1-33; 182-198; 261-278).

**Recommended:**

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/GFA17/>

Gillespie, Stuart, Lawrence Haddad and Robin Jackson, 2001, *HIV/AIDS Food and Nutrition Security*, accessed

<http://www.ifpri.org/themes/HIV/acscsn2001en.pdf>

Nullis, Clare, 2006, "Africa faces growing obesity problem" (November 29<sup>th</sup>)

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061129/ap\\_on\\_he\\_me/diet\\_overweight\\_africans](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061129/ap_on_he_me/diet_overweight_africans)

Jennifer Clapp and Marc J. Cohen, eds., 2009, *The Global Food Crisis.*

*Governance Challenges and Opportunities*, Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

**Week 12: A Political-Ecology of Famine: The Making of the Third World**

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

**AND**

(2) Fischer, Edward F and Peter Benson, 2006, *Broccoli and Desire. Global Connections and Maya Struggles in Postwar Guatemala*. Stanford University Press. (Read as much of the book as you can).

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

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

(1) Peter Pringle, 2005. *Food Inc.: Mendel to Monsanto*, New York: Hudson Street Press  
(Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6 & 10).

**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:

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=12804>

**AND**

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

<http://www.theatlantic.com/food/archive/2010/04/the-science-of-gm-crops-a-new-fair-report/39649/>

**AND**

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

**AND (may be)**

(5) James McWilliams, 2008, "Food Policy, Half-Baked," *New York Times*,

[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>

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

(1) Foer, Jonathan Safran. (2009). *Eating Animals*. NY: Little, Brown and Co.

**AND**

(2) [http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2009/11/09/091109crbo\\_books\\_kolbert](http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2009/11/09/091109crbo_books_kolbert)

## **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](http://www.nyu.edu/csd)

## **Bibliography (books in approximate order of usage):**

Raj Patel, 2008, *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System* (Melville).

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).

James Watson and Melissa Caldwell, 2005, *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating. A Reader*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing.

Sasha Issenberg, 2007, *The Sushi Economy. Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy*, New York: Penguin, Gotham Books.

Charles Clover, 2008, *End of the Line*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Annie Hauck-Lawson & Jonathan Deutsch, 2009, *Gastropolis. Food and New York City*. NY: Columbia University Press.

Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, 1998, *Ben & Jerry's Double-Dip*, Simon & Schuster.

Woody Tasch, 2008, *Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money*, White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.

Mirko Zardini, edited, 2005, *Sense of the City. An Alternate Approach to Urbanism*. Montreal: Canadian Center for Architecture and Lars Muller Publishers.

Jennifer Fisher. 1999. "Performing Taste." In Barbara Fischer, ed., 1999. *Foodculture: Tasting Identities and Geographies in Art*. Toronto: YYZ Books (pp. 29-47).

Gary Gardner and Brian Halweil, 2000, *Underfed and Overfed: The Global Epidemic of Malnutrition*, World Watch Paper 150.

Per Pinstrup-Andersen. Ed. 2010. *The African Food System and Its Interaction with Human Health and Nutrition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mike Davis, 2001, *Late Victorian Holocausts*. London: Verso.

Frances Moore Lappé and Anna Lappé, 2003, *Hope's Edge. The Next Diet for a Small Planet*. NY: Putnam.

Peter Pringle, 2005. *Food Inc.: Mendel to Monsanto*, New York: Hudson Street Press

Jonathan Safran Foer. (2009). *Eating Animals*. NY: Little, Brown and Co.

**Other interesting stories on the web:**

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/22/101122fa\\_fact\\_bilger](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

[Burkhard Bilger, A Reporter at Large, "Nature's Spoils," The New Yorker, November 22, 2010, p. 104](#)

Read more [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/22/101122fa\\_fact\\_bilger#ixzz18IDRarjT](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/22/101122fa_fact_bilger#ixzz18IDRarjT)