

FOOD LITERACY FOR ALL

ENVIRON 305.003

NRE 639.038

Winter 2017, 2 credit hours

- Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Blesh
Office: 2572 Dana
Office hours: by appointment
Phone: 734.763.2470
E-mail: jblesh@umich.edu
- Community partner:** Malik Yakini
Executive Director
Detroit Black Community Food Security Network
E-mail: myakini@dbcfsn.org
- Course design collaborator:** Lilly Fink Shapiro, MPH
Program Manager
UM Sustainable Food Systems Initiative
E-mail: finkshap@umich.edu
- Student assistant:** Katie Grantham
Master's student, SNRE
E-mail: granthk@umich.edu
- Meeting time and location:** Tuesday evenings from 6:30 - 8pm
Angell Hall, Auditorium B
-

Course Summary

Concurrent food, energy, water, and climate crises, and a global rise in obesity amidst widespread hunger and undernutrition, have re-focused public attention on the deficiencies and complexities of the global food system. Yet, a diversity of 'alternative' food systems demonstrates that food systems can be nutrition sensitive, socially just, and conserve natural resources. Transforming food systems will require coordinated effort across scales, drawing upon diverse disciplinary and practical perspectives, and understanding how value systems shape food and agriculture. Linking theory and practice is also essential, involving the full range of actors moving food from farm to fork.

This new course offers a unique opportunity for students to gain an interdisciplinary introduction to food system issues through a weekly seminar series bringing high profile speakers to campus from diverse sectors: policy, academia, grassroots movements, public health, conservation, and more. Students will integrate theory and practice through this partnership course that connects campus and community, led by a UM faculty member together with a community partner

working to develop urban agriculture and enhance food justice and food sovereignty in Detroit. Students will develop competencies and cognitive skills in the area of food system sustainability including critical and systems thinking, community engagement, creativity, and analytical ability.

This course is being offered as one component of a broader UM “Food Citizenship Project,” which is made possible by a Higher Education Challenge (HEC) grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The overarching goal of the project is to increase diversity and inclusion in sustainable food systems education. *This course is presented by the [UM Sustainable Food Systems Initiative \(SFSI\)](#), with generous co-sponsorships from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), LSA Instructional Support Services (LSA-ISS), the Office of the Provost, the International Institute, the Institute for the Humanities, The Institute for Research on Women and Gender (IRGW), Graham Sustainability Institute, the Center for Engaged Academic Learning (CEAL), and the Nutritional Sciences Department.*

Learning Objectives, Approaches, and Outcomes

Community engagement, experiential learning, and inclusivity are all core components of this course. With support from a UM New Initiatives/New Infrastructure (NINI) grant we will video record all presentations and make them available to the public on the SFSI website; livestream several presentations to the UM Detroit Center; and moderate live audience questions via Twitter. These digital resources and technologies will help transform a large lecture course into an engaged, active learning environment while also strengthening relationships with community members and food systems practitioners in Ann Arbor, Detroit, and beyond. We have reserved seats each week for community members to attend the seminars.

Specific student learning objectives are:

- 1) study the characteristics, outcomes, objectives, and values of different contemporary food systems in the Global North and South;
- 2) gain a foundational understanding of key aspects of and current debates related to food system sustainability
- 3) practice communicating ideas about food systems in an online discussion forum and through written reflections;
- 4) participate as a member of a multidisciplinary learning community linking scholars and practitioners;
- 5) engage with food systems stakeholders in a classroom setting, with exciting opportunities to interact with practitioners in Detroit or to meet visiting speakers one-on-one or in small groups outside of the classroom
- 6) explore their own and other diverse values and viewpoints about food systems

Required Materials: i>clicker

Each student is required to purchase an i>clicker to bring to class each week. The i>clickers will be used to actively engage students during weekly lectures and to track participation and learning throughout the course. Each speaker will be asked to build in several questions throughout their presentation for students to electronically respond to during the course. Students should respond to these questions to receive full participation points.

i>Clicker Registration

In order to activate your i>clicker for this course, you will need to register your i>clicker on Canvas. To do this, go to Canvas and click the i>Clicker Registration tool in your course navigation menu. Then enter the 8-character remote ID, as listed under the barcode label on

your i>clicker. After registering, you will see a verification table. This will confirm your i>clicker course registration.

We consider bringing a fellow student's i>clicker to class to be cheating and a violation of the University Honor Code.

Evaluation

Students will be graded on participation and attendance at the weekly seminars (as assessed using i>clickers), 10 postings on the course Canvas discussion board, and one-page reflective essays in response to 4 of the presentations of their choosing, due at intervals throughout the semester (see course schedule on page 4).

Grading

Participation & attendance:	60 points
Canvas discussion postings (10):	20 points (2 points each)
Reflective essays (4):	20 points (5 points each)
Total points possible:	100 points

Letter grades will be assigned based on the following cut-offs:

A+	97% or greater
A	93-96.9%
A-	90-92.9%
B+	87-89.9%
B	83-86.9%
B-	80-82.9%
C+	77-79.9%
C	73-76.9%
C-	70-72.9%

The course has a pass/fail option

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Weekly Speakers	Due
1	January 10	Course introduction; logistics; setting the stage	
2	January 17	Frances Moore Lappé Author and Co-founder of The Small Planet Institute	
3	January 24	Ricardo Salvador Director and Senior Scientist, Food & Environment Program, Union of Concerned Scientists	
4	January 31	Raj Patel, Writer, Activist, and Academic Research Professor, Lyndon B Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Austin and a Senior Research Associate at the Unit for the Humanities, Rhodes University (UHURU), South Africa	
5	February 7	Thaddeus Barsotti Co-Owner of Farm Fresh to You and Capay Organic	Reflective essay 1
6	February 14	Ari Weinzweig Co-Owner and Founding Partner, Zingerman's	
7	February 21	Tim Crews Director of Research and Lead Scientist, The Land Institute	
8	February 28	No class - spring break	
9	March 7	Linda Jo Doctor Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation	Reflective essay 2
10	March 14	Saru Jayarman Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United) and Director of the Food Labor Research Center at University of California, Berkeley	
11	March 21	Monica White Assistant Professor of Environmental Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Madison	
12	March 28	Michael Twitty Author and Culinary Historian	Reflective essay 3
13	April 4	Wayne Roberts Food Policy Analyst and Writer, Former Manager of the Toronto Food Policy Council (2000-2010)	
14	April 11	Kelly Brownell Dean, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University	Reflective essay 4
15	April 18	TBD	

Suggested Readings (files are available on the course Canvas site)

Week 1: January 10, Course introduction

None

Week 2: January 17, Frances Moore Lappé

Lappé, F. M., & Collins, J. (2015). *World Hunger: Ten Myths. Revised*. Grove Press, NY. (Specific chapters posted on Canvas).

Week 3: January 24, Ricardo Salvador

Salvador, R. J. 2013. Food Choices: Modernity and The Responsibility of Eaters. *Green Fire Times* 45:11-12, 29, 33.

Salvador, R. J. 2012. Accessibility to Food. Exploring Health and Environmental Costs of Food: Workshop Summary. *Institute of Medicine. National Academies Press* 42-45.

Week 4: January 31, Raj Patel

Patel, R. (2007). *Stuffed & starved*. Black Inc. (Chapters posted on Canvas)

Week 5: February 7, Thaddeus Barsotti

Guthman, J. (2014). *Agrarian dreams: The paradox of organic farming in California*. Univ of California Press.

Week 6: February 14, Ari Weinzwieg

Week 7: February 21, Tim Crews

Glover, J. D., Culman, S. W., DuPont, S. T., Broussard, W., Young, L., Mangan, M. E., ... & Ferris, H. (2010). Harvested perennial grasslands provide ecological benchmarks for agricultural sustainability. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, 137(1), 3-12.

Glover, J.D. et al. 2010. Increased food and ecosystem security via perennial grains. *Science* 328(5986):1638-1639.

Jackson, W. 1980. *New Roots for Agriculture*. Friends of the Earth, San Francisco, CA.

Week 8: Spring break- No classes

Week 9: March 7: Linda Jo Doctor

<http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Building-the-Case-for-Racial-Equity-in-the-Food-System.pdf>

Week 10: March 14: Saru Jayaraman

Jayaraman, S. (2016). *Forked: A New Standard for American Dining*. Oxford University Press.

Jayaraman, S. (2013). *Behind the kitchen door*. Cornell University Press.

Week 11: March 21: Monica White

White, M. M. (2011). ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS & CASE STUDIES: D-Town Farm: African American Resistance to Food Insecurity and the Transformation of Detroit. *Environmental Practice*, 13(04), 406-417.

Week 12: March 28: Michael Twitty

Twitty, M. W. (2013). An Open Letter to Paula Deen. *Afroculinaria: Exploring Culinary Traditions of Africa, African America and the African Diaspora*. Wordpress, 25.

Week 13: April 4: Wayne Roberts

Roberts, W. 2014. Food for City Building: A Field Guide for Planners, Actionists, and Entrepreneurs.

Week 14: April 11: Kelly Brownell

Brownell, K. D., & Warner, K. E. (2009). The perils of ignoring history: Big Tobacco played dirty and millions died. How similar is Big Food?. *Milbank Quarterly*, 87(1), 259-294.

Roberto, C. A., Swinburn, B., Hawkes, C., Huang, T. T., Costa, S. A., Ashe, M., ... & Brownell, K. D. (2015). Patchy progress on obesity prevention: emerging examples, entrenched barriers, and new thinking. *The Lancet*, 385(9985), 2400-2409.

Brownell, K. D. (2012). Thinking forward: the quicksand of appeasing the food industry. *PLoS Med*, 9(7), e1001254.

Week 15: April 18

TBD