

UEP 306: FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Course Topic: Food Systems & Food Justice

Fall 2018

T/Th 1:30-2:55pm

UEP Conference Room - 1882 Campus Rd.

INSTRUCTORS

Sharon Cech, MA Urban Planning; Rosa Romero, MEd

EMAIL

cech@oxy.edu and rromero@oxy.edu

OFFICE HOURS

by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This community based learning course explores a range of food systems issues from a food justice lens. The course examines how our food system has been restructured over the last century to benefit large-scale agriculture interests, creating a global food system that emphasizes convenience and fast-food solutions for consumers, often to the detriment of low-income people and communities of color. Through in-depth class discussions, on-site field trips, and in-class speakers, the class will delve into the environmental, economic, health, cultural, and social impacts of how food is grown, processed, manufactured, distributed, sold, and consumed in the U.S. The course will use the concepts of a “food system” and of “food justice” as its organizing principles, and will look at different policies, programs, political struggles, and the social and economic and cultural forces that influence and shape the food system and that generate food justice activism. The community based learning component of this course involves conducting background research for a “Fresh Food Access Guide” designed to serve low-income Los Angeles residents. Research will include a combination of academic methods as well as engagement with community partners and agencies.

Through the course, students will:

- Gain knowledge of today’s food system, including how food is produced, distributed, consumed, and disposed of and the nature of food system problems and their possible solutions.

- Develop analytic skills to make connections between the food system and economic development, community health, the environment, neighborhood and regional planning, labor, organizing and advocacy, and local, state and federal public policy.
- Identify how and why low-income communities of color are disproportionately affected by market and policy failures to produce and distribute healthy, safe food.
- Gain understanding of the current food landscape and policy debates in Los Angeles by talking with food justice activists, planners and policy.
- Examine the role of planners/practitioners/policy makers in either hindering or promoting food justice and critically evaluate efforts – including grassroots, policy, and planning attempts – to address food issues.
- Develop new strategies and action plans toward food justice.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course will be organized into two sections. The first half of the semester will take place in the classroom and involve discussions, guest speakers from the front lines of the food justice and food systems movements in Los Angeles, and critical reflections on course readings and lectures. The second half of the course will focus on work in the community through field trips and community partner projects. **Please note, when field trips are held, class will start early at 11:45am (the beginning of the lunch period).** Weeks with a long class will only have **one class per week**. See the class schedule for specific dates and details. Community partner projects will require at least one independent site visit. Instructors will work with students to identify site visit destinations that are accessible by public transportation, if needed.

COURSE/CAMPUS POLICIES & SUPPORT SERVICES

Classroom Responsibilities

The teacher and students share the responsibility of creating the space and stimulating enthusiasm for learning. Students are responsible for attending and participating in class and off site field trips, completing assignments in a timely manner, and being prepared to discuss readings and material in class and attending. Students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open, and thoughtful discussion with each other, the professors and community partners. In order to ensure open, honest, thoughtful, and respectful learning, teaching, class and community discussions please:

- Use laptops, tablet, or other electronic devices only for work directly related to what we are doing in class. Do not use cell phones to talk or text. Instructors reserve the

right to confiscate electronics used in a disruptive way and return them at the end of the class period).

- Inform the professor when you may have to arrive late or leave early with advanced notice when possible;
 - As this class is community based, all field trips and guest lectures are mandatory. If you are absent for these classes, an alternative assignment must be discussed ahead of time.
- Engage in active and courteous listening to other students and community partners and contribute respectfully to class and community discussions.

Academic Integrity

As stated in the Occidental College Student Handbook, intellectual honesty is “essential to the educational purposes and fairness of the academic enterprise. Occidental College assumes that students and faculty will embrace a high ethical standard for academic work. In all work, students shall behave conscientiously, taking and giving credit where credit is due, avoiding even an appearance of impropriety, and when in doubt, consulting the instructor or other knowledgeable persons as to whether particular conduct, collaboration, and/or acknowledgement of sources is appropriate. Academic misconduct occurs when a student misrepresents others’ work as her/his own or otherwise behaves so as to unfairly advantage her/himself or another student academically. Examples of misconduct include cheating and plagiarism. If this or other misconduct occurs to any extent in connection with any academic work, it will be subject to disciplinary action.” For further information, please see the [Occidental College Student Handbook](#).

Support Services

The college provides a set of resources to students to support them in learning. The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) provides writing assistance to students to develop ideas, draft, and revise papers. We encourage everyone to take advantage of this resource.

If you have specific physical or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let us know early in the semester so that we can meet your learning needs. The College’s mission is to support learning for all students and provides Disability Services for students with learning disabilities. Please contact Ericka O’Neal Howard, Associate Dean of Students at (323) 259-2969 and/or by email: or visit her in AGC 111. The Emmons Health and Counseling Center provides support for issues of stress, medical and mental health.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. PARTICIPATION – 30%

Class Engagement

As a community based learning course, class participation is critical. Students are responsible for attending and participating in class and off-site field trips, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to discuss readings and materials in class, and having questions prepared for guest speakers. Students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open, and thoughtful discussion with each other, the professors and community partners.

This Week in Food (6%)

During the first half of the course, each class will begin with a review of “This Week in Food.” Students will upload a food-related article to Moodle from a news source such as the LA Times, New York Times, or other reputable source. The article should relate to a topic that will be covered in class that week.

Assignment: Post the title and link to your article on Moodle the night before class and come prepared with a brief summary and personal reflection to discuss with the group.

Journal Reflections (14%)

A journal assignment will be due each week that will reflect on:

- Classroom presentations
- Field Trips
- Writing Prompts
- CBL Experience

Assignment: Post your journal reflections on Moodle responding to the listed prompt.

2. FOOD JUSTICE ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT – 30%

Midterm Research Paper- (20%)

On the second day of class, students will sign up to research a prominent food justice organization in the U.S. Findings will be analyzed in a 4-6 page paper that includes a minimum of five references (APA format - see details in assignment description). Papers should address the following topics and questions:

- Food justice / food system issue
- Mission and background of organization
- Analysis

** see assignment on Moodle for detailed description*

Due Dates:

- *Choose topic - 8/30/18*
- *Final paper due - 10/4/18*

PowerPoint Presentation- (10%)

This will be a 5-minute presentation summarizing your food justice organization research and analysis. The presentation should have 3-6 slides and include references.

Assignment: Presentations will be given in class on Thursday Oct. 11, and presentations must be posted to Moodle after class.

3. COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING PROJECT – 40%

Reimagining the Fresh Food Access Guide (30%)

For over 15 years, UEPI has published a *Fresh Food Access Guide* designed to connect food assistance recipients and other low-income shoppers to healthful food resources in Los Angeles. The *Fresh Food Access Guide* is a print resource and was last updated in 2013. For this community project, students will work in teams of 2-3 to re-envision and update a specific section of the guide. Topics and groups will be assigned in class on October 2nd. In addition to data collection, there will be a field research component of the project in which students are required to visit at least one relevant community partner or agency and conduct a minimum of one interview. Teams will first submit a project proposal (5%) and then a final version of their revised *Fresh Food Access Guide* sections (15%) as well as a summary of their interviews, site visits, and other research findings (10%). The reimagined section along with the field research summary will be shared with the class in a final presentation.

Group Presentation (10%)

This will be a 5- minute presentation summarizing the findings from the *Fresh Food Access Guide* research project. The presentation should have 5-10 slides and include references.

Assignment: Presentations will be given in class on Tuesday Dec. 4, and must be submitted on Moodle after class.

Due Dates:

- *Teams and Assignments - 10/2/18*
- *Project Proposal - 10/16/18*
- *Final Presentation - 12/4/18*
- *Final Fresh Food Access Guide Section & Research Summary - 12/6/18*

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 - 8/28 & 8/30

Tuesday Aug. 28

Topic: Class Overview

Thursday Aug. 30

Topic: Introduction to Food Systems and Food Justice

Assignments Due:

- “This week in food” #1 (due 8/29 before midnight)
- Journal Entry #1 (due 8/29 before midnight)

PART I: CLASSROOM

Week 2 - 9/4 & 9/6

Tuesday Sep. 4

Topic -- From the Rise of “Big Ag” to a Movement for “Local” Food: environmental, economic, and cultural shifts over the last century

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (**please note, all readings and media will be posted on moodle but are not listed in the syllabus*)
- “This week in food” #2

Thursday Sep. 6

Topic -- This history of agriculture in Los Angeles County

** Guest Speaker: Rachel Surls, UC Cooperative Extension*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Journal Entry #2

Week 3 - 9/11 & 9/13

Tuesday Sep. 11

Topic -- U.S. Food System: the debate over GMOs

** **Guest Speaker:** Megan Bomba, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- "This week in food" #3

Thursday Sep. 13

Topic -- The Farm Bill: implications for food assistance and food insecurity

** **Guest Speakers:** Jared Call, California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA)*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Journal Entry #3

Week 4 - 9/18 & 9/20

Tuesday Sep. 18

Topic -- The Industrial Global Food System: dietary implications, food environments, and the modern need for food system literacy

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- "This week in food" #4

Thursday Sep. 20

Topic -- Food insecurity and food assistance

** **Guest Speaker:** Frank Tamborello, Hunger Action Los Angeles*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Journal Entry #4

Week 5 - 9/25 & 9/27

Tuesday Sep. 25

Topic -- School Food & Institutional Purchasing: Higher Education

** Guest Speaker: Amy Munoz, Oxy Campus Dining*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- "This week in food" #5

Thursday Sep. 27

Topic -- School Food & Institutional Purchasing: Farm to School (K-12)

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Journal Entry #5

Week 6 - 10/2 & 10/4

Tuesday Oct. 2

Topic -- Labor in the food system & project check-in

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- "This week in food" #6

Thursday Oct. 4

Topic: Labor in the Food System

** Guest Speaker: Joann Lo, Food Chain Workers Alliance*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Food Justice Org Analysis Paper (due before midnight)

Week 7 - 10/11

Topic: Food Justice Organization Analysis Presentations

Tuesday Oct. 9 — FALL BREAK - NO CLASS

Thursday Oct. 11 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Assignments Due:

- Food Justice Topic Presentation

PART II: FIELD TRIPS & COMMUNITY PARTNER PROJECT

Week 8 - 10/16 & 10/18

Tuesday Oct. 16

Topic: Community Partner Projects

Assignments Due:

- Fresh Food Access Guide Project Proposal

Thursday Oct. 18

Topic: Food and Gentrification

Field Trip: York Blvd

* Host/Speaker: TBD

* Start on campus for Remsen Bird 1:30pm

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Journal Entry #6

Week 9 - 10/23

Tuesday Oct. 23 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Topic: Food Waste and Good Jobs

Field Trip: LA Kitchen

* Host/Speaker: Robert Egger & Elena Lopez

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Work on community partner projects
- Journal Entry #7

Thursday Oct. 25 — NO CLASS MEETING

Week 10 - 11/1

Topic: Community Food Access Solutions: Hunger & Homelessness

Tuesday Oct. 30 — NO CLASS MEETING

Thursday Nov. 1 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Field Trip: Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)

** Host/Speaker: Steve Diaz*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Work on community partner projects
- Journal Entry #8

Week 11 - 11/8

Topic: Urban Ag & Access to Land

Tuesday Nov. 6 — NO CLASS MEETING

Thursday Nov. 8 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Field Trip: South Los Angeles farms and markets

** Host/Speaker: TBD*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Work on community partner projects
- Journal Entry #8

Week 12 - 11/15

Topic: Food Waste and Food Pantries

Tuesday Nov. 13 — NO CLASS MEETING

Thursday Nov. 15 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Field Trip: Episcopal Diocese, Food Forward, Projecto Jardin

** Host/Speaker: TBD*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Work on community partner projects
- Journal Entry #10

Week 13 - 11/20

Topic: Gardens and Affordable Housing

Tuesday Nov. 20 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Field Trip: Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge and Services (WORKS)

** Host/Speaker: Francesca de la Rosa*

Assignments Due:

- Readings and media (on moodle)
- Work on community partner projects
- Journal Entry #11

Thursday Nov. 22 — THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY - NO CLASS

Week 14 - 11/27 & 11/29

Topic: Community Partner Projects

Tuesday Nov. 27 / Thursday Nov. 29 — NO CLASS MEETING

Assignments:

- Work on community partner projects and presentations
- Community partner check-in meeting with professors

Week 15 - 12/4

Topic: Community Partner Project Presentations

Tuesday Dec. 4 — LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)

Assignments Due:

- Final Group Presentation

Thursday Dec. 6 — FINALS - NO CLASS

Assignments Due:

- Fresh Food Access Guide - Final Project
- Research Summary
- Journal Entry #12