

UEP 306: FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Course Topic: Food Systems & Food Justice

Fall 2021

T/Th 1:30-2:55pm

INSTRUCTORS

Sharon Cech, MA Urban Planning

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she/her/hers

Office hours: by appointment

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MOODLE

All readings and supplemental media will be available on the course Moodle site:

<https://moodle.oxy.edu/course/view.php?id=30629>

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.

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/CAMPUS POLICIES & SUPPORT SERVICES

Online Learning Environment & Responsibilities

Professors and students share the responsibility of creating the space and stimulating enthusiasm for learning, including engagement in an online learning environment. Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, 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:

- Inform the professors when you may have to arrive late or leave early with advanced notice when possible. As this class is community based, all 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.
- When you're not speaking, mute yourself to avoid background noise for others.
- When possible, keep your camera on. We realize that circumstances may arise where this is not always possible, but encourage students to engage visually to contribute to an engaged and discussion-based atmosphere.
- If issues come up around engaging in remote learning, such as connectivity, timing, or ability to engage, please let us know so that we can work together to find a solution.
- As a student participating in an online learning environment, you must abide by all College rules and regulations including, but not limited to, rules in the applicable course syllabus/outline, the Student Code of Conduct Policy, the Policy on Sexual

Harassment and Discrimination, as well as any applicable laws. Any violation of these rules may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the College, and/or legal action.

- Online classes may be recorded by your instructor. This means that the audio-visual and chat portions of each class may be recorded and then stored on the College's servers. Recordings will be made available through Moodle (or another secure platform), but only for the express and sole use of those registered in the course. The recorded material will be removed at the end of the semester. No other recording of classroom instruction is permitted. The sharing, altering, or distorting of any audio-visual capture of a class session is not permitted. All content contained in the records shall be subject to the College's Policy on Intellectual Property.

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, and when in doubt, consulting the instructor or other knowledgeable persons as to whether particular conduct, collaboration, and/or acknowledgement of sources as 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 Student Handbook](#).

As many of you are learning from home this semester, you may have family around who are willing and able to provide you with support. While general support is necessary and welcomed by many, in order to protect your academic growth and ensure the integrity of this course, this statement serves as a reminder that your work must be your own. While office hours are always available for students, they will not be available for parents/guardians/family members. As always, if your parent/guardian has concerns, they are welcome to [contact the Dean of Students office](#).

Academic Support Resources

The College has a wide range of [Student Academic Support Resources](#) to support students in learning.

- The **Writing Center** offers opportunities to work on all forms of writing for any class or other writing tasks such as personal statements, senior comprehensives, etc. We offer peer-to-peer consultations with knowledgeable Writing Advisers and sessions with Faculty Writing Specialists. For fall 2020, all of our appointments will be remote: either synchronous virtual meetings or asynchronous writing feedback. See the [Writing Center website](#) for more information about our fall hours and how students can sign up for appointments. We will update our information again for spring 2021. Please contact the Writing Programs-Center Director, Julie Prebel (jprebel@oxy.edu; x1307) for more information on how the Center can work with you.
- If you'd like to take advantage of the College's **Academic Coaching** resource, which offers one-on-one sessions focused on supporting your time management skills, online learning strategies, and other study skills, you may schedule an academic coaching meeting by sending an email to academiccoaching@oxy.edu. Share what you'd like to work on, and an academic coach will schedule an appointment with you within a few days.
- The **Center for Digital Liberal Arts** (CDLA) offers [library research consultations](#) and [discipline-specific peer tutoring for coursework](#) and [language learning](#). We also offer peer-to-peer [support for learning technologies](#) from Moodle and Zoom to Adobe, app making, and ProTools.

Intercultural Community Center (ICC)

The Intercultural Community Center (ICC) seeks to uplift and support the experiences of students who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, low income or first generation college students. The ICC also aims to reduce institutional barriers for minoritized groups through intersectional programming, identity-specific services and structural resources. To learn more, contact icc@oxy.edu, or reach out directly to Chris Arguedas, at carguedas@oxy.edu.

Emmons/ Student Health

Your health and well-being has always impacted learning and academic success, and this reality is only heightened as we learn and live through a global pandemic. Symptoms such as anxiety, depression, loss of motivation, difficulty concentrating, and strained relationships can occur. Emmons Counseling staff are committed to supporting the mental health needs of all of our students, regardless of where you're located. Emmons provides virtual walk-ins, crisis support, and consultation to all students, and ongoing individual telecounseling to students residing in California. All students residing outside of California will have access to ongoing telecounseling through a national telecounseling service. Emmons also assists students with finding local therapy referrals. All students continue to have access to the 24/7 confidential hotline at (323) 341-4141. To get connected to any of

the free, confidential services at Emmons call (323) 259-2657 or schedule an appointment online at <https://myhealth.oxy.edu> using your Oxy login credentials.

Special Accommodations/Learning Differences

No matter the mode of course instruction, approved academic accommodations remain in effect. Students with documented disabilities and learning differences who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester, or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who has, or thinks they may have, a physical, learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at accessibility@oxy.edu to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>.

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website:

<https://www.oxy.edu/office-religious-spiritual-life>

Title IX

All Occidental faculty are mandatory reporters. In the event that you choose to write or speak about having experienced sexual or interpersonal violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual harassment, as designated Responsible Employees, professors must notify the Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at Oxy and reporting options both on and off-campus.

If you do not want the Title IX Office notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus:

- Marianne Frapwell, Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (young@oxy.edu)

The sexual misconduct policy, along with additional resources, can be found at: <http://www.oxy.edu/sexual-respect-title-ix/policies-procedures>. If you would like to contact the Title IX Office directly, you can email Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at afulcher@oxy.edu or call 323-259-1338.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy:

We strive to foster an inclusive classroom environment. Consistent with College policy on [discrimination, harassment, and retaliation](#), we seek to maintain an environment of mutual respect among all members of our community. Please come to us with any concerns.

Lived Name Policy

Occidental College seeks to provide an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment by making it possible for students to use [a lived first name](#) and pronouns on college records when a legal name is not required. Students are encouraged to use Zoom to display their lived name and pronouns.

Land Acknowledgement.

- *Occidental College sits on the traditional territory and homelands of the Tongva people. Please click through to read more about the [Gabrielino-Tongva tribe](#) and about the practice of [land acknowledgement](#).*

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

UEP 306 is a 4-unit course. It is expected that students in this class on average will devote at least twelve (12) hours a week to class activities (including in-class time). Letter grades for the course are assigned according to the following table.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
93-100	90-93	87-90	83-87	80-83	77-80	73-77	70-73	67-70	63-67	0-63

Grades for the course will be determined according to the criteria described below.

1. PARTICIPATION – 30%

As a community based learning course, class participation is a primary focus of the class. The participation grade is based on the following categories.

Class Engagement & Attendance – (13%)

Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, being prepared to discuss readings and materials with the group, 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.

We understand that circumstances this semester may present challenges beyond a student's control in terms of class attendance. Please let us know as soon as possible if you will need to miss a class. We may be able to provide a makeup assignment. Throughout the semester, we also offer several opportunities for extra credit assignments.

This Week in Food – (5%)

On Tuesdays, class will generally 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 the topic indicated in the assignment, which 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 – (12%)

A journal assignment will be due each week that will reflect on the week's readings, classroom presentations and discussions, guest speakers, coursework etc. Note, late assignments will receive half credit.

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

2. FOOD JUSTICE ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT – 30%

Midterm Research Paper – (20%)

At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up to research a prominent food justice organization in the Los Angeles area or their hometown. Students will research the organization's background and focus and must also conduct an interview with a key employee at the organization. Findings will be analyzed in a 4-6 page paper that includes a minimum of five references. Two references must be from journals or other academic sources (APA format - see details in assignment description). A summary of the interview must also be included as an appendix. 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 and Suggested Timeline:

- Choose an organization -9/2/20 (in class)
- Identify and reach out to the person you would like to interview - 9/8/20 (suggested)
- Confirm your interview and have questions ready - 9/16/20 (suggested)
- Complete your interview - 9/30/20 (suggested)
- Food Justice Org Midterm paper due - 10/7/21

PowerPoint Presentation- (10%)

This will be a 5-minute presentation summarizing your food justice organization research and analysis. The presentation should have 5-7 slides and include references.

Assignment: Presentations will be given in class on Thursday Oct. 14 The PowerPoint or pdf must be posted to Moodle before midnight on **Wed Oct 13**.

3. COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING PROJECT – 40%

Farmers' Market Price Comparison (30%)

For this community based learning project, students will support SEE-LA to investigate the relative affordability of their farmers' markets for food assistance customers. Groups of two to three students will be assigned to each of SEE-LA's five farmers' markets. Each group will first gather some basic statistics about the neighborhood where the market is located and the community it serves. Next, each group will visit their farmers' market and document the prices of standard produce items, as well as any additional incentives offered to food assistance customers. Groups will also identify 2-3 grocery stores serving the same community (depending on the neighborhood; one discount, one mid-range, and one high end). Groups will then document the prices of these same items at each of the stores. We will provide info sheets that can be printed and used to note prices and other information in the field at markets and grocery stores. All final data will be submitted via a google form.

Group Presentation (10%)

This will be a 5-10 minute presentation summarizing the team's project findings. The presentation should have 5-10 slides and include references, when applicable.

Assignment: Presentations will be given in class on Thursday November 30th, and must be submitted on Moodle the night before.

Due Dates:

- *Project Teams - 10/19/21*
- *Final Project Data or Draft - 11/18/21*
- *Final Presentation - 11/30/21*

CLASS SCHEDULE - 2021

PART I: CLASSROOM

Week 1 — Overview & Introduction

Tue Aug. 31	Topic: Class Overview
Thu Sep. 2	<p>Topic: <i>Introduction to Food Systems and Food Justice</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media <i>(*please note, all readings and media will be posted on Moodle, but are not listed in the syllabus)</i> • Journal Entry #1 (due 9/1 before midnight) • Choose and organization for your Food Justice Org assignment

Week 2 — Agriculture in the U.S.

Tue Sep. 7	<p>Topic: <i>The history of agriculture in Los Angeles County</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Rachel Surls, UC Cooperative Extension- Los Angeles County</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #1 (due Mon 9/6 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 9	Topic: <i>From the Rise of “Big Ag” to a movement for “Local” food: the Farm Bill and environmental, economic, and cultural shifts over the last century</i>

	<p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #2 (due Thu 9/8 before midnight) • Identify and reach out to the person you plan to interview for your Food Justice Org paper (suggested).
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Week 3 — BIPOC Farmers and Workers in the U.S. Food System

Tue Sep. 14	<p>Topic: <i>Systemic Exclusion of BIPOC Farmers in the U.S.</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #2 (due Mon 9/13 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 16	<p>Topic: <i>Labor in the Food System</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Jose Lopez , Food Chain Workers’ Alliance</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #3 (due Thu 9/16 before midnight) • Confirm your Food Justice Org interview and have questions ready (suggested)

Week 4 — The Corporate Food System & Food Policy Solutions

Tue Sep. 21	<p>Topic: <i>The corporate food system; an examination of consolidation, diet trends, and diet-related illness</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #3 (due Mon 9/20 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 23	<p>Topic: Healthy Food Access in Los Angeles</p>

	<p>Guest Speaker: Christine Tran, Los Angeles Food Policy Council</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #4 (due Thu 9/23 before midnight)
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Week 5 — *Food & Climate and Los Angeles Food Policy*

Tue Sep. 28	<p>Topic: <i>Food & Climate</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #4 (due Mon 9/28 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 30	<p>Topic: Hunger, food assistance, and policy</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Frank Tamborello, Hunger Action Los Angeles (HALA)</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #5 (due Thu 9/30 before midnight) • Complete your Food Justice Org interview (suggested)

Week 6 — *School Food & Institutional Purchasing*

Tue Oct. 5	<p>Topic: Institutional Food Purchasing</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Amy Muños, Occidental Campus Dining</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #5 (due Mon 10/4 before midnight)
Thu Oct. 7	<p>Topic: <i>Farm to School</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Food Justice Org Papers due (Thu Oct. 7 before midnight)
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Week 7 — Midterm Presentations

Tue Oct. 12	FALL BREAK — NO CLASS MEETING
Thu Oct. 14	<p>Topic: Midterm Presentations</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Justice Org presentations due Wed 10/13 before midnight

Week 8 — Field Trip #1

Tue Oct. 19	Topic: Introduction to Community Partner projects
Thu Oct. 21	<p>LONG CLASS (12pm - 2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #6 (due Thu 10/21 before midnight)

Week 9 — Field Trip #2

Tue Oct. 26	<p>LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Community Services Unlimited (CSU)</p>
Thu Oct. 28	NO CLASS MEETING

	Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #7 (due Thu 10/28 before midnight)
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Week 10 — *Field Trip #3*

Tue Nov. 2	NO CLASS MEETING
Thu Nov. 4	LONG CLASS (12:30pm-2:55pm) Topic: Seeds of Hope Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #8 (due Thu 11/4 before midnight)

Week 11 — *Field Trip #4*

Tue Nov. 9	LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm) Topic: TBD
Thu Nov. 11	NO CLASS MEETING Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #9 (due Thu 11/11 before midnight)

Week 12 — *Field Trip #5*

Tue Nov. 16	NO CLASS MEETING
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Thu Nov. 18	<p>LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Urban Agriculture & Access to Land — LA Encounters Bus Tour</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #10 (due Thu 11/18 before midnight) • Submit final project data (due Fri 11/19)
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Week 13 — *Final Project Check-ins*

Tue Nov. 23	<p>Topic: Class Feedback & Project Check-ins</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on final presentations
Thu Nov 25	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY — NO CLASS

Week 14 — *Final Presentations*

Tue Nov. 30	<p>Topic: Final Presentations</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Presentations (due Mon 11/29 before midnight)
Thu Dec. 2	<p>Topic: Final Presentations and Takeaways</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal #11 “Final Reflection” (due Friday 12/3 before midnight)