**ENVS 464**

**Food Politics and the Environment**

**Class description**:

Interdisciplinary study of agrifood systems and food sovereignty movements in domestic and global contexts with specific interests in their goals, strategies, and outcomes through the methods and materials of ethnography, agroecology, and political ecology.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe food sovereignty issues and solutions
2. Assess how different political, social, cultural, and disciplinary perspectives frame problems and solutions of food sovereignty
3. Compare and contrast different local and global responses and social movements pertaining to food sovereignty
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies used by communities in pursuit health and equity

**Teaching Philosophy:**

Critical Pedagogy: This class is your class. I consider myself a co-learner and facilitator of the learning process in this course, and I need your participation and contribution to accomplish that. In this class, we will take a critical approach to environmental studies through critical reading, thinking, self-reflection, and respectful dialogue. I believe learning occurs through collaboration with others. I expect you to be open to and respectful of others' experiences and perspectives, but most importantly to be critically reflective of your own perspectives and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with all the voices put forth in this class, but I ask that you seek to gain an understanding of other perspectives, ideas, and ways of thinking about the world and sustainability. I also expect you to reflect on your own biases (we all have them) and how your biases influence your reading and discussion experiences.

I value following student interests and needs as much as possible. This means that the course is continually evolving as we co-create it with our collective insights, interests, and knowledge.

Applied Learning and Research: I believe that the best learning occurs when students and instructors are able to make connections between theory and practice. Direct hands-on experience deepens ones understanding of course materials (i.e. readings and lectures) and places the concepts of the curriculum into the context of “real-life” situations. I incorporate experiential learning through in-class and out of class activities that will help challenge students to become culturally aware and civically engaged.

**Outline and Description:**

Week 1: Introduction to sustainability and sustainable foods

Week 2: Introduction to the concepts of food justice and food sovereignty

Week 3: Food production and empire

Week 4: Food and labor in the colonial Americas

Week 5: Producing insecurity and the colonial legacy of the industrial food system

Week 6: Racialization and food systems

Week 7: Food regimes and the crisis of food

Week 8: Social, cultural, environmental consequences of the standard American diet

Week 9: Globalization form below, the roots of food sovereignty and peasant movements

Week 10: Food sovereignty in the developed world

Week 11: Food sovereignty and the pursuit of community controlled outcomes

Week 12: Goals and outcomes: farming methods and seed saving

Week 13: Goals and outcomes: culturally appropriate foodways

Week 14: Community organizing and social movement

Week 15: Diets, food, and health

Week 16: Finals

**Required Texts:**

1. Trauger, Amy. 2017. *We Want Land to Life.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
2. Peña, Devon G., Luz Calvo, Pancho McFarland, and Gabriel R. Valle. 2017. *Mexican-Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: Decolonial Perspectives*. Fayetteville, AR; University of Arkansas Press.

**Recommended Texts:**

1. Calvo, Luz and Catriona Esquibel. 2015. *Decolonize Your Diet: Plant-Based Mexican American Recipes for Health and Healing*. Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press.

**Students will be evaluated based on the following:**

1. **Contribution:** 30 pts.

A portion of this class will be based on discussions, activities, and group projects. I have labeled this category as contribution instead of participation because we will be learning from each other in this course and you are required to contribute your ideas, thoughts, questions, perspectives, and experiences to the class. It is essential that you be present in both body and mind to create a positive learning environment for you and everyone. You will be evaluated on your contribution through occasional in-class assignments, online discussion forums, and by demonstrating your engagement with the readings, thoughtful questions, and willingness to engage respectfully with others.

Please keep in mind that because this class relies heavily on student contributions and group work. You will be missed when absent. Your experience and the overall course will be better if you are an active participant and to be an active participant you need to be present.

1. **Reading Responses**: 70 pts. (10 pts. each)

These will let me know what you are getting out of the reading, what you find interesting, and what might need more explanation. These responses also let me know how you are comprehending and synthesizing course content.

* 1. Each critical response is based on the previous 2 weeks of reading. Each response should be approx. 300-500 words. Due on CC Fridays, by 11:59pm.

1. **Discussion Forum:** 10 pts.

Throughout the semester there will be several discussion forums for students to respond to. Each response should be a well throughout out paragraph that encourage more thought providing ideas and questions for the class. Individual responses will not be graded, rather grades will be based on your overall contribution throughout week 1-8 and 9-16.

1. **Op-Ed Essay**: 40 pts.

Throughout the semester we have read several op-ed pieces, now it is your turn to give it a try. the project is designed to promote awareness and civic participation. Your op-ed will be based on current events related to food sovereignty, and include an application of the concepts we are learning in class. This will let you form an opinion on a current issue, and make a strong, persuasive argument for your point of view, backed up by factual evidence. 800-1000 words.

1. **Final Project**: 60 pts.

A synthesis project, based on a food politics topic of your choice. This project is your opportunity to explore your specific interests in more depth. Be creative and find creative ways to express your project - it can be in the style of a traditional research paper or a case study (8-10 pages or 2,000-2,500 words). It could also be a creative or community-based exercise with a reflection paper, or it may include cooking, gardening, or volunteering in a food related industry or organization. It may be a community cook book reviving traditional foods. The limit is your imagination. Add photos, videos, or foods into these projects to make them more personal. *More details will be provided as well as frequent group and prof discussions.*

Breakdown:

Paper 40 pts

Presentation 20pts

Total 60pts

**Grades are calculated as follows:** A=>93; A-=90-92.9; B+=88-89.9; B=83-87.9; B-=80-82.9; C+=78-79.9; C=73-77.9; C-=70-72.9; D+=68-69.9; D=63-67.9; D-=60-62.9; F<60.

**Per the University Credit Hour Policy:** Students enrolled in face to face courses should spend at least six hours per week engaged in study for the class. Further, ***students should note that the All University Writing Requirement mandates each student write 2500 words in this three-unit course***. This is satisfied through writing assignments, exams and your final research paper (see above for specifics).

**Technology:** I *do* allow the use of laptops and tablets, but I ask those who wish to use them be mindful that technology can be distracting for other students. If the use of computer or other devices becomes distracting, I may alter my policy as necessary.

Please *turn off or silence your cell phone* and put it away for the entirety of the class. If you must make a call or text, please leave the classroom. Be respectful of your classmates.

**Cougar Courses:** You are expected to check Cougar Courses and your email associated with your Cougar Courses account so that I can communicate with each of you electronically. All materials should be *typed and double-spaced with 12pt font using Times New Roman font*.

**Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are due electronically using Cougar Courses.** All assignments are due and should be uploaded to the Cougar Courses webpage unless they are scanned notes or other written materials including in-class activities, field notes, sketches etc.

**Late work and absence:** In order to maximize the benefit to you, I am committed to correcting your work and getting you feedback in a timely fashion. For these reasons, **I do not accept late work**. If you are going to miss a class, a workshop, or a deadline for a valid and *documentable reason*, please do everything you can to let me know in *advance* so that we can arrange whatever alternate means may be necessary to fulfill the course requirements.

**Plagiarism**: Plagiarism is copying any work – written, visual art, music – and presenting it as your own original work. When you include the words, ideas, art, or music of another person in your class assignments, you must fully acknowledge your sources by naming the source artist/author and publication. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form, and students found plagiarizing will receive a “0” for the assignment and will be referred to the CSUSM administration.

**Academic Honesty:** Students will be expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty and integrity, as outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy. All assignments must be original work, clear and error-free. All ideas/material that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. Any quoted material should give credit to the source and be punctuated accordingly.

Students are responsible for honest completion and representation of their work. Your course catalog details the ethical standards and penalties for infractions. There will be zero tolerance for infractions. If you believe there has been an infraction by someone in the class, please bring it to the instructor’s attention. The instructor reserves the right to discipline any student for academic dishonesty, in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the university. Disciplinary action may include the lowering of grades and/or the assignment of a failing grade for an exam, assignment, or the class as a whole.

<https://www.csusm.edu/policies/active/documents/Academic_Honesty_Policy.html>

**ADA Statement:** Students with disabilities who require academic accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300 and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, TDD (760) 750-4909 or by email at: dss@csusm.edu Students authorized by DSS to receive accommodations should meet with me during my office hours, or in another private setting, in order to ensure your confidentiality.