

Political Science 138D
Spring 2010
Time: MWF 3-3:50pm
Location: Center Hall 109

Instructor: Emily Matthews
Office: SSB 445
Office Hours: Weds. 12pm-2pm
E-mail: eomatthews@ucsd.edu

POLI 138D: Special Topics in Comparative Politics The Politics of Food

Course Overview:

Everybody eats. But how do politics affect our food? This course examines close historical relationships between politics and food; the politics of conventional agriculture and food policy; and alternative agriculture movements and food systems. Through these topics, you will learn to identify and evaluate the political choices underlying our current food system and proposed alternatives to it; and you will learn to identify and evaluate the political choices and tools available for remaking and restructuring that food system according to your own values and preferences, whatever they may be.

Student Responsibilities:

In order to achieve the course goals, you will need to read, watch, and digest the course texts, think through and complete the assignments, and participate fully in course activities and discussions. These are all necessary for the completion of the various assignments (paper, exams) which will give you the opportunity to apply the knowledge, understanding, and skills you will gain in the course. Any changes to the syllabus (incl. exam/due dates or required readings) will be posted to the WebCT page for this course, which you should check regularly.

Required Texts:

Many of the course readings and films are available on e-reserves at Geisel Library. You can access these readings at {<http://reserves.ucsd.edu>}; to access these items off-campus you will need to enable a web proxy or vpn on your computer (to learn how to set this up, go to: {<http://libraries.ucsd.edu/services/computing/remote-access/index.html>}). In addition, two of the course readings are available for purchase in the bookstore and for borrowing on reserve at Geisel Library. These are:

Nestle, Marion. 2003. *Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism*. University of California, Press, Berkeley CA.

Pollan, Michael. 2006. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. Penguin Books, New York.

Student Evaluation:

To earn a grade in this course, you must complete: 1) an in-class midterm examination; 2) a paper; and 3) an in-class final examination. No student who fails to complete one or more required assignments will pass the course. These three items will be weighted as either 1) Midterm-25%, Paper-25%, and Final-50%; OR 2) Midterm-30%, Paper-35%, Final 35%; your final course grade will be based on the *higher* calculation of the two options. The in-class exams will consist of both short-answer and essay questions. Tests will be based on lectures, presentations, readings, and films. The paper can either be on a topic of your own choosing, with approval by the teaching staff, or on a topic assigned by the instructor. Late papers will be penalized. Incompletes or special exams will be given only in *pressing* and *properly documented* cases and in accordance with UCSD policy; petitions for these must be *timely*.

The midterm exam is tentatively scheduled for Monday, May 3rd, 2010. The due date for the paper is tentatively scheduled for Monday, May 24, 2010. The final exam is currently scheduled for Wednesday, June 9, 2010 at 3pm, location TBA; please double check the official university final exam schedule in case of changes.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations are encouraged to notify, as soon as possible, both the instructor and the Office for Students with Disabilities {<http://osd.ucsd.edu>} in order to

work out the particulars. Note: both the instructor and the Office for Students with Disabilities must be notified *well in advance* of any course deadlines or due dates.

Academic Honesty:

Your instructor takes academic dishonesty very seriously. Any student violating UCSD's Academic Dishonesty or UCSD's Student Conduct policies will earn an 'F' in the course and will be reported to their college Dean for investigation. Committing acts that violate Student Conduct policies, and which result in course disruptions, are cause for suspension from UCSD. See {<http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>} for more information.

***Tentative* Course Calendar:**

I. Introduction:

Week 1:

Politics. And Food.

Almond, et al., 2008. "What is Politics?" (pp 1-2). [total 2p]

O'Neil 2007. "What is Comparative Politics?" (p 3). [total 1p]

Kernell, et al., 2009. "The Logic of American Politics." (pp 3-7). [total 5p]

Wilson 1989. Ch 17, "Problems." (pp 315-332). [total 18p]

Nestle 2003. *Safe Food*, "Introduction." (pp 1-25). [total 25p]

Listen or Read: Joyce 2010. "Belief in Climate Change Hinges on Worldview." [total 4min]

Film: *Food, Inc.* [total 91min]

Film: *The Botany of Desire*, "Potato/Control." [in class]

II. Food in Political History: Case Studies

Week 2:

Manning 2004. "The Oil We Eat." [total 9p]

Sugar

Mintz 1985. Selections from Ch 2 (pp 23-46; pp 52-57; pp 61-73); Selection from Ch. 4 (pp 151-171). [total 64p]

Price 1971. "The Politics of Sugar." (pp 212- 216). [total 5p]

Surowiecki 2006. "Deal Sweeteners." [total 2p]

Morgan 2007. "Sugar Industry Expands Influence." [total 3p]

Beghin and Jensen 2008. "Farm policies and added sugars in US diets" (p 480, p 484, p 486). [total 3p]

Week 3:

Bananas

Koeppl 2008. Introduction, Chs 9-11, Chs 15-16, Ch 23, Ch 27, Selection from Ch 35 (pp. 221-223),

Selection from "A Banana Timeline" (pp 247-260). [total 73 p]

Satapathy 2008. "US-EU Trade War Over Bananas." [total 2p]

Zagorin and Greenfeld 1999. "Banana Wars." [total 3p]

Porter 2009. "Banana Wars." [total 1p]

Week 4:

Famine and Hunger

Sen 1999. Ch 7, "Famines." (pp 160-188). [total 29p]

Bush 1996, "The Politics of Food and Starvation." [total 24p]

Food First 2006. "Twelve Myths About Hunger." [total 4p]

Waldman 2002. "Poor in India Starve as Surplus Wheat Rots." [total 3p]

Riches 1999. "Advancing the Human Right to Food in Canada." [total 9p]

Film: *The Business of Hunger*. [total 28min]

III. Conventional Agriculture and Food Policy

Week 5:

A Primer on Conventional Agriculture

Pollan 2006. Introduction, Chs 1-7. [total 116p]

Hurst 2009. "The Omnivore's Delusion." [total 7p]

Castle 2008a. "Europe Relaxes Rules on Sale of Ugly Fruits and Vegetables." [total 2p]

Castle 2008b. "EU relents and lets a banana be a banana." [total 2p]

Film: *King Corn*. [total 90min]

Week 6:

***Tentative* Midterm Date: Monday, May 3, 2010, in Class**

The Politics of Food Safety

Nestle 2003. *Safe Food*. Chs 1-4 (pp 27-138). [total 111p]

Smith 1991. "From Policy Community to Issue Network." [total 21p]

Week 7:

The Politics of Biotechnology and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

Nestle 2003. *Safe Food*. Part Two "Intro" (pp 139-143), Chs 6-8, "Conclusion." [total 114p]

Film: *Deconstructing Supper*. [total 48min]

IV. Alternative Agriculture, Food Policy, and Social Movements

Week 8:

A Primer on Alternative Agriculture

Pollan 2006. Chs 8-14. [total 151p]

Beus and Dunlap 1990. "Conventional vs. Alternative Agriculture." [total 23p]

Week 9:

***Tentative* Paper Due Date: Monday, May 24, 2010, in Class**

Food Security and Alternative Food Policy: Cuba and Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Nieto and Delgado 2002. "Cuban Agriculture and Food Security." [total 17p]

Lappé 2009. "The City That Ended Hunger." [total 3p]

Rocha 2001. "Urban Food Security Policy: The Case of Belo Horizonte, Brazil." [total 13p]

Film: *The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil*. [total 53min]

Farmers, Farm Labor, and Peasant Movements

Heartfield 2000. "The Politics of Food: Two Cheers for Agribusiness." [total 8p]

Getz, Brown, and Shreck 2008. "Class Politics and Agricultural Exceptionalism." [total 24p]

Holt-Giménez 2010. Introduction to "Grassroots Voices." [total 6p]

Wittman 2009. "Interview: Paul Nicholson, La Vía Campesina." [total 7p]

Week 10:

Consumer Movements (Fair Trade, Local Food, etc.) vs. Food-System Change

Shreck 2002. "Just Bananas?" [total 11p]

Brown and Getz 2008. "Towards Domestic Fair Trade?" [total 12p]

Guthman 2007. "Commentary on teaching food: Why I am fed up with Michael Pollan, et al." [total 4p]

Wilkins 2005. "Eating Right Here: Moving from Consumer to Food Citizen." [total 5p]
Berry 2003. "In Distrust of Movements." [total 7p]
Film: *Food, Inc.* [total 91min]

***Tentative* Final Exam Date: Wednesday, June 9, 2010, 3-6pm, location TBA**

List of Sources:

- Almond, Gabriel A., G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strøm. 2008. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. 9th ed. PearsonLongman, New York.
- Beghin, John C., and Helen H. Jensen. 2008. "Farm policies and added sugars in US diets." *Food Policy* 33: 480-488.
- Berry, Wendell. 2003. "In Distrust of Movements." In *Citizenship Papers*. Shoemaker & Hoard, Berkeley, CA. Reprinted from Orion Magazine, Summer 1999: 43-51. {<http://www.morning-earth.org/DE6103/Read%20DE/Berry-distrust%20movements.pdf>}
- Beus, Curtis E., and Riley E. Dunlap. 1990. "Conventional versus Alternative Agriculture: The Paradigmatic Roots of the Debate." *Rural Sociology* 55(4): 590-616.
- The Botany of Desire*. 2009. DVD. Director Michael Schwarz. Kikim Media, Menlo Park, CA.
- Brown, Sandy, and Christy Getz. 2008. "Towards Domestic Fair Trade? Farm Labor, Food Localism, and the 'Family Scale' Farm." *GeoJournal* 73: 11-22.
- Bush, Ray. 1996. "The Politics of Food and Starvation." *Review of African Political Economy* 23 (6, Jun): 169-195.
- The Business of Hunger*. 1984. VHS. Producer and Writer Robert Richter. Maryknoll, NY : Maryknoll World Video, Maryknoll, New York, and Institute for Food and Development Policy, San Francisco, CA.
- Castle, Stephen. 2008a. "Europe Relaxes Rules on Sale of Ugly Fruits and Vegetables." *The New York Times*, November 12. {<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/13/world/europe/13food.html>}
- Castle, Stephen. 2008b. "EU Relents and Lets a Banana be a Banana." *The New York Times*, November 12 {<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/12/world/europe/12iht-food.4.17771299.html>}
- Deconstructing Supper*. 2002. VHS. Director Marianne Kaplan. Bullfrog Films, Oley, PA.
- Food, Inc.* 2009. DVD. Director Robert Kenner. Magnolia Home Entertainment, Los Angeles, CA.
- Food First. 2006. "Twelve Myths About Hunger." *Institute for Food and Development Policy Backgrounder* 12(2, Summer). {<http://www.foodfirst.org/node/1480>}
- Getz, Christy, Sandy Brown, and Aimee Shreck. 2009. "Class Politics and Agricultural Exceptionalism in California's Organic Agriculture Movement." *Politics & Society* 36(4, Dec.): 478-507.
- Guthman, Julie. 2007. "Commentary on teaching food: Why I am fed up with Michael Pollan et al." *Agriculture and Human Values* 24: 261-264.
- Heartfield, James. 2000. "The Politics of Food: Two Cheers for Agribusiness." *Review of Radical Political Economics* 32(2): 319-326.
- Holt-Giménez, Eric. 2010. Introduction to "Grassroots Voices: Linking farmers' movements for advocacy and practice." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 37(1, Jan.): 203-209.
- Hurst, Blake. 2009. "The Omnivore's Delusion: Against the Agri-Intellectuals". *The American*, The Journal of the American Enterprise Institute. Thursday, July 30. {<http://www.american.com/archive/2009/july/the-omnivore2019s-delusion-against-the-agri-intellectuals>}
- Joyce, Christopher. 2010. "Belief in Climate Change Hinges on Worldview." *All Things Considered*. NPR. February 23. {<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124008307>}
- Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, and Thad Kousser. 2009. *The Logic of American Politics*. 4th ed. CQ Press, Washington, D.C.
- King Corn: You are what you eat*. 2008. DVD. Producer and Director Aaron Woolf. Docurama Films, New York.
- Koeppel, Dan. 2008. *Banana: The Fate of the Fruit that Changed the World*. Hudson Street Press, New York.
- Lappé, Frances Moore. 2009. "The City That Ended Hunger." *Yes! Magazine*. February 13. {<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/food-for-everyone/the-city-that-ended-hunger>}

- Manning, Richard. 2004. "The Oil We Eat: Following the Food Chain Back to Iraq." *Harper's Magazine*. February: 37-45. {<http://www.harpers.org/archive/2004/02/0079915>}
- Mintz, Sidney W. 1985. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. Penguin Books, New York.
- Morgan, Dan. 2007. "Sugar Industry Expands Influence: Donations Spread Beyond Farm Areas" *The Washington Post*. Saturday, November 3. A01. {<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/02/AR2007110201899.html>}
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- Porter, Eduardo. 2009. "Banana Wars." Editorial Notebook. *The New York Times*. December 29. {<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/29/opinion/29tue4.html>}
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