

THE POLITICS OF FOOD: PRODUCERS, CONSUMERS AND CITIZENSHIP
POSC 222, Spring 2012

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Office Hours: Wed. and Thur. 12:30-2:00
by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Although what we eat everyday is familiar and biologically intimate, it is also part of a complex political system. In this course we will learn about and reflect upon the political aspects of food in the U.S. Topics include food production history, agribusiness, alternative producers, food policy, and social justice. This is a survey course intended to give you a broad view of politics related to food. We will consider questions such as: What influences the way we eat and the choices available to us? How did ignorance about food become the norm in the U.S.? Where are sites of power as it relates to food? This is a course about politics and as such it will be focused on power relations, public values, the role of citizens, and institutional arrangements. It is not a course about lifestyle choices, public health, nutrition, etc. The material can be challenging psychologically as well as intellectually. The classroom will become a supportive community of learners as we move through some challenging material together.

TEXTS

- 1) *What to Eat* by Marion Nestle
- 2) *Kitchen Literacy* by Anne Vileisis
- 3) *Agrarian Dreams* by Julie Guthman
- 4) *Working in the Shadows* by Gabriel Thompson
- 5) Readings in eReserves or Moodle.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Extra Time Commitments

This course will have events that extend beyond regularly scheduled class time. These activities are required. There will be field trips on one or two Saturdays in May (dates to be announced shortly). There will also be tables set up in Sayles for you to share your research findings with other Carleton students.

2) Participation

This class will be a mix of short lectures, class discussion, and other activities. The lectures will generally address topics not in the readings. Consequently, your success in this class depends upon attending class regularly. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed so you can return to class prepared.

3) Reading

Your reading assignments are due on the date they are listed on the course schedule. I expect excellent comprehension, retention and reflection to be evident in course discussions, questions raised, and in your workbook writing. If you have questions or concerns about any course reading that are not addressed in class discussion, please come see me in my office hours or make an appointment to discuss it with me.

4) Assignments

Your grade will be based on workbook writing, a research report, one short paper, and a final paper. For the research report the class will split into groups to research various aspects of a single food. The research groups will be organized around the foods determined by the class.

GRADES

Workbook (turn in 5 times)	40 points each	200 points
Short paper		100 points
Research report		125 points
Final paper		150 points
	Total	575 points

Please feel free to talk with me about any of your assignments. I am happy to answer any questions that you have about either the course materials or your progress in the course.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Class policies are intended to foster a stimulating and fruitful intellectual community for everyone. Our time in class is valuable. Therefore, I will enforce the following rules/expectations:

1. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns in the class. You can email, make an appointment, come to office hours, or talk to me before or after class. If you have a problem in the course, the sooner you contact me, the more effectively it can be handled.
2. Conversations, electronics and other diversions will not be tolerated. I will strictly enforce this rule in order to protect the class environment so all students can have a calm, productive, stimulating learning environment. Laptop computers are a convenience but also a potential and tempting distraction. During class discussion and at other times I will ask that the screens be folded down.
3. Any student with a documented disability who needs to arrange accommodations should talk to me at the beginning of the semester.
4. Topics in politics often entail conflicting opinions. Even those who take the time to make deeply thoughtful conclusions often disagree. Class discussion will encourage free expression for everyone and hold to a standard of respect for all students.
5. Late paper policy: Late papers will be graded down two points for each day they are late, starting after class on the due date.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

An act of academic dishonesty is a serious offense in a college community. By seeking credit for work which is not his or her own, a student takes unfair advantage of fellow students, who accept their limitations, and of teachers, who trust that the work received is the student's. Dishonesty in academic work, particularly in the form of plagiarism, also defeats the process of self-discovery which is the heart of a liberal education. People establish their integrity and personality only as they learn to distinguish what is significantly their own from what belongs to another, only as they learn to value their own work, including its limitations, in relation to the work of others. As a scholar, finally, one should be generous in acknowledging the work of other scholars, for their work makes possible one's own.

At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred to the Academic Standing committee for appropriate action. This action can vary from a grade of Unsatisfactory in the given piece of work to a recommendation of permanent dismissal from the College in cases of repeated and serious offenses.