CESD 3906 Special Topics - Food Security, Sovereignty & Globalization
Spring Institute: June 10 to 15, 2012

Instructors:

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Classroom: EW206

Course website: www.my.algomau.ca

To view your course outline, required readings and pre-course assignment please visit www.my.algomau.ca and sign in with your username and password. Once you sign in, click on “Course Management System” and choose “Community Economic and Social Development”. Once you are in the CESD section, please scroll down and click on CESD 3906 Special Topics – Food Security, Sovereignty and Globalization.

Course Description:

In a world where over 800 million people suffer from hunger and where the phrase “super-size me” is becoming commonplace, communities are asking questions about where their food comes from. Chef celebrities and authors who detest GMOs and praise the 100 Mile Diet are just a few of the voices in this movement to understand sustainable food systems, food security and sovereignty. This course will look at the growth in food secure alternatives (fair trade, organic agriculture and local food) as responses from conventional food systems that have become increasingly unsustainable in the 21st Century. This course will also explore how communities can build networks of support for resilient food systems (from farm to fork) that work at the local, regional and international level.

Overview:

This course will provide an opportunity for students to develop an understanding of global food security and food sovereignty. Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to identify and analyze the historical forces of globalization and its impact on food production, processing, distribution and consumption. Specific themes will be addressed that relate to
global food security including global food corporations, food aid, trade liberalization and biotechnology (genetically modified organisms). Students will be presented with sustainable alternatives to the global food system that function at the local, regional and global level. Such alternatives will be explored, including organic agriculture, direct marketing of local food and fair trade agriculture and their feasibility will be considered in today’s globalized world.

The course takes a holistic approach (economic, political, social, cultural and environmental) to the content. Participants will be challenged to explore their own experience and knowledge, and where and how appropriate social networks of support may be developed. The course will be delivered using a variety of short lectures (20 – 30 min), small group discussions organized as learning circles as well as individual and group exercises. Case studies, theories in relation to food systems and experiential learning opportunities will be utilized throughout the course.

**Learning Objectives:**

- To increase awareness about the global food system, food security and food sovereignty
- To increase awareness about how the forces of globalization relate to food production, processing, distribution and consumption
- To increase awareness about sustainable food system alternatives at the local, regional and global level.
- To identify strategies to reinforce or develop networks of support at the local, regional and international level

**Evaluation Components and Distribution of Marks:**

- Pre-course assignment 20%* Due June 8, 2012 at 1PM EST
- Class participation 25%** June 10 – 15 inclusive
- Daily reflection 15% Due June 11, 12, 13 + final Evaluation June 15
- Major group assignment 20% Presented June 14-15
- Final assignment 20% Due July 6, 2012 at 1PM EST

*Pre-Course Assignment (20% of final grade):

Students are to write a 3-4 page summary prior to attending class in response to the question “What does food security and/or food sovereignty mean to you?”

To answer this question, take into consideration your own experience and the following articles:

- Menezes, Francisco: Food Sovereignty: A vital requirement for food security in the context of globalization
- Altieri, Miguel: Agroecology, Small Farms, and Food Sovereignty
- McMichael, Philip: A food regime analysis of the ‘world food crisis’

When reading and commenting on each article, take into consideration the following questions:

- What ideas or information did you find useful to your thinking about the food system?
  - Did the ideas make you think about the food system in a new way?
- What ideas or information did you disagree with or take issue with?

Please submit the pre-course assignment by e-mail to your course instructors. Printed copies can be dropped off at the Faculty Secretary’s office (NW307) for date/time stamping.

There will be a 2% mark deduction for every day the pre-course assignment is late (after June 8 at 1PM EST).

**Class Participation (25% of final grade):**

Marks will be allocated in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.5 - 25</td>
<td>Students in this category provide leadership in the classroom and work towards enhancing the interpersonal dynamics and collaboration within the classroom discussions. For regularly making insightful comments which help others to understand the course material; and for being a positive group member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 22.5</td>
<td>Students in this category consistently make contributions to the classroom experience by positively participating in class discussion. Contributions must demonstrate the student’s engagement and connection with course material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5-20</td>
<td>Students in this category show an active interest in class activities and occasionally participate in classroom discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>For attending class on a regular basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 12.5</td>
<td>For failing or rarely contributing in the previously identified ways to the classroom experience. This includes dominating the classroom discussion, rather than helping others to participate in the classroom experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Required Readings:


Students will be expected to read the above articles before the first day of classes (June 10th). These are posted on the Course Management System (CMS).

Optional Articles and Catalogues:


- Sen, A: Why Half the Planet is Hungry http://home.sandiego.edu/~baber/globalethics/senhungryplanet.html


- Shiva, V: The real reasons for hunger: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/jun/23/1

**Daily Reflections on Food Systems (15% of final grade):**

Students will experience the course topics through class presentations, lectures and other activities throughout the week. Students will be invited to shop at a local farmers’ market, visit a community garden and reflect on these experiences. As a group, students may decide to have a potluck together and use local food. Each day, students have an opportunity to hand in a one to two page reflection based on what you experience and what you’re learning. There will be a total of five reflections for each day of class. Reflections will be due at the end of each day or the last day of classes (Friday June 15th). Late reflections will not be accepted.

**Major Group Assignment and Individual Final Assignment**

Students will prepare a final presentation and an individual written report on one topic that relates to food systems, food security or food sovereignty. A list of potential topics is listed below; additional topics may be considered with the consent of the instructors. The topic must take into consideration local and global relations and the relevant course content.

**Group Presentation (20% of final grade):**

The presentations will take place on the last two days of class (Thursday and Friday). Each presentation will be approximately 15-20 minutes with 5-10 minutes for questions and discussion.

Presentations will be evaluated on the following factors:

- Course material is reflected in the presentation
- Additional research on the topic is incorporated into the presentation
- Each member of the presenting group is an active participant during the presentation
- A PowerPoint presentation is prepared for the class
- Discussion questions for the class to discuss are prepared
- Handouts are prepared for the class

Optional activities may include:

- Incorporating a group activity that involves the entire class
- Incorporating a form of creative expression such as drama, film, dance, music, poetry or art

**Final Assignment (20% of final grade):**

**Written report**

Individual students will write a report that will summarize the main ideas of an approved topic of discussion and clearly link the ideas to the readings and class discussions in this course (readings should be properly cited where appropriate). The topic must take into consideration local and global relations and the relevant course content. At least three referenced readings
from academic journals or books should be included and cited (this may include the required readings) using APA or MLA style citation. The report will be approximately 7-9 pages long (approximately 2,500 words). The report will include an introduction, a topical discussion and a conclusion.

Final assignments can be e-mailed to the course instructor, or dropped off to the Faculty Secretary’s Office (NW307), no later than **July 6, 2012 at 1PM EST**. Failure to meet this deadline could result in a grade of **zero** for the final assignment.

**Topics of discussion**

Student groups can choose from the following topics of discussion for the final assignment:

- Community development, food and nutrition
- Urban gardening and food security
- Indigenous food sovereignty
- The role of women in agriculture and food production
- Genetically modified organisms and the loss of biodiversity
- Climate change and food security
- Fossil fuel dependence and food security
- La Via Campesina, global food sovereignty and peasant movements
- Scaling up local food: creating new models of food distribution (e.g. CSAs, Food Hubs, co-operatives and social enterprises)
- The impact of Structural Adjustment Programs and the World Bank on food and communities
- Fair Trade Agriculture
- The impact of the BSE crisis on cattle farming in Canada
- Or another topic of your choice, approved in-class by your instructors

**Attendance Policy:**

The general regulations of the university require punctual and regular attendance at the various academic exercises. If there are extenuating circumstances related to an absence, the instructor should be notified. Absences will jeopardize receipt of credit for the course.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

The University takes a very serious view of such offences as plagiarism, cheating, and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced.

The following web site contains a complete policy statement on academic dishonesty and attendance. Students are encouraged to read this policy for further clarification of these issues: [http://www.algomau.ca/uploads/file/pdf/chapter_3_academic_conduct.pdf](http://www.algomau.ca/uploads/file/pdf/chapter_3_academic_conduct.pdf)