

POLI 405
Capstone Seminar: Food Insecurity, Farm Policy and Community
Action

Fall 2017

Monday/Wednesday 2:00-3:15

Maybank 112

Instructor: Kendra Stewart, Ph.D.

Phone: (843) 953-6691

Email: stewartk@cofc.edu

Office: 176 Lockwood Blvd (West Edge)

Office Hours: M/W 3:30-5:00

or by appointment

Course Description

Why is it that everyday US schools battle with both childhood obesity and childhood hunger? How have government policies shaped the growing, distribution and processing of food in this country and how does that affect our health, wealth and local communities? This course will delve into these and other questions surrounding issues of nutrition policy, hunger, corporate farming, food waste and community activism. From the global to the national to the local level, food policy will be examined along with the important social problems stemming from our policies and potential solutions developed to deal with these problems.

The Capstone experience provides students with the opportunity to bring the skills and perspectives developed over their time as political science majors to bear in a seminar anchored by intensive reading, critical thinking and writing. It also represents a chance to polish those skills before graduation. This seminar was designed with these goals in mind so you will be expected to prepare diligently for class, conduct independent research all semester long, and to communicate the results of that research in writing and verbally by the semester's end.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the evolution and basic issues and challenges surrounding food creation and distribution;
- Critically evaluate food policy in the United States;
- Apply the basic principles of social science inquiry to a research question to demonstrate mastery of the independent research process;
- Demonstrate an understanding of how communities in the US and abroad deal with issues of food insecurity;
- Display skills in critical analysis and effective communication;
- Explain and evaluate a community-based organization's response efforts to food insecurity.

Required Course Materials

- 1) Nestle, Marion, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* 2013 University of California Press.
- 2) Paarlberg, Robert, *Food Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know*. 2010 Oxford Press.
- 3) Foer, Jonathan Safran, *Eating Animals* 2009 Back Bay Books.
- 4) Shiva, Vandana *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*. 2000 South End Press

Other readings can be found electronically on OAKS.

Attendance and Participation: ***Regular class attendance is absolutely necessary*** in any course, but is critical in this class. You must keep up with the reading, in-class assignments, and course projects. Please feel free to ask questions in class – I will do everything I can to help you succeed so do not hesitate to come see me if you are struggling or falling behind.

Assignments and Grading

Students are expected to read all assignments prior to class and participate in discussions. Your final grade will be based on the following components of the course:

Participation:

Each student will be expected to come to class prepared and participate. This course will be taught as a seminar, not a lecture, with the intent that students will be active in the course discussions. This course is an opportunity for us to learn together and from each other, rather than in the more traditional model. In order to develop and ensure this type of environment, participation will be encouraged and graded through two means.

First, throughout the semester there will be 12 reading quizzes worth a total of 100 points. The purpose of the quizzes is to encourage you both to read the material for class and to attend regularly. These tests will be administered with no prior notification on random days throughout the semester. They are designed to do exactly what the name suggests – test your comprehension of the assigned class readings that you are required and expected to have read for the class in question. *There will be no make-up reading quizzes and no excuses will be accepted.* In order to compensate for students who have legitimate reasons for missing class, the two lowest quiz grades will be dropped.

Second, each student will be expected to lead class discussion one time over the course of the semester. This will mean that you come to class with a series of questions/reflections stemming from the day's reading to steer the conversation for that class period. You should have 3-5 questions/reflections that showcase your reading and comprehension of the material under review and highlight that you have been thinking about the reading. There are no perfect questions, only questions that suggest you are engaged and challenging yourself to think through the political, economic, historical, geographic and other facets of food policy. In that sense, questions like “what was the central argument

in Nestle’s chapter 5?” will not be acceptable. While questions that help the class to understand the industrialization of farming such as “how does Nestle draw an analogy between industrial processing of corn and our digestive system, and how is this process advantageous?” would show that you are really thinking. There are no right or wrong answers and it is possible to err in your interpretation of the readings, and you will not be penalized for that. In order to help me understand where I may need to assist you in leading class discussion I need you to email me your questions by 8:00 am the morning you are presenting. Do not expect to hear back from me unless there is a major problem with your discussion questions/reflections. Your class session will be worth 20 points.

Participation grade total: 120 points

Active Learning Assignments:

Each student will participate in **two** active learning assignments over the semester. A separate hand out will be given providing various options and assignment expectations. The purpose of these assignments is to expose you to food insecurity, farm policy, and community programs in action. Students will select a non-profit organization, public agency or farm and participate in some specific event and then write a short (3-5 page) paper explaining and evaluating the experience. Each assignment will be worth 50 points. ***Active learning assignments total: 100 points***

FINAL PROJECT: Research Paper

Over the semester you will undertake an independent research project to investigate some aspect of food insecurity, farm policy or community response to it. You are free to use quantitative or qualitative research methodologies or a combination of the two as you investigate your topic. A separate handout will have the specific requirements for your project. It will be broken down into several components to be turned in over the semester. The final paper is due the last day of class. ***Research project total: 180 points***

All late assignments will be marked down one letter grade for each day they are late. Assignments that are more than 5 days past due will not be accepted.

The course grade will break down as follows:

Participation	120
Active Learning Projects	100
Research Project	180
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TOTAL	400

The following grading scale will be used:

A 372-400	A- 360-371	B+ 352-359
B 332-351	B- 320-331	C+ 312-319
C 292-311	C- 280-291	D+ 272-279
D 252-271	D- 240-251	F 239 and below

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, or presenting another's works or ideas as one's own, is a form of stealing. The instructor reserves the right to examine any source used by the student before giving a grade on an assignment, and to give and "incomplete" in the course if necessary, to allow time to obtain sources. Students should be prepared to show source material to the instructor for the purpose of verifying information. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and students will receive an F on any assignment or exam the instructor determines is in violation of the academic honesty policy. Academic dishonesty includes the following offenses:

- 1) Claiming as your own work a paper written by another student.
- 2) Turning in a paper that contains paraphrases of someone else's ideas but does not give proper credit to that person for those ideas.
- 3) Turning in a paper that is largely a restatement in your own words of a paper written by someone else, even if you give credit to that person for those ideas. The thesis and organizing principles of a paper must be your own.
- 4) Turning in a paper that uses the exact words of another author without using quotation marks, even if proper credit is given in a citation, or that changes the words only slightly and claims them to be paraphrases.
- 5) Turning in the same paper, even in a different version, for two different courses without the permission of both professors involved.
- 6) Using any external source (notes, books, other students, etc.) for assistance during an in-class exam, unless given permission to do so by the professor.

College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work

together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

Disability Statement

If there is a student in this class who has a documented disability and has been approved to receive accommodations through SNAP Services, please feel free to come and discuss this with me during my office hours. If you are in need of accommodations for this course due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability Services at SNAP@cofc.edu or (843) 953-1431.

Center for Student Learning

I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning's (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843)953-5635.

I also encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>.

Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to make necessary adjustments to this schedule. Required texts are listed by the last name of the first author. E-reserve readings are designated with an * and instructions will be given in class on how to access

Date

August 23

Assignment

Introduction & Syllabus Review
In class discussion

August 28

Introduction to Food Politics

	Paarlberg Chp. 1; Nestle – Forword through Introduction
<i>August 30</i>	<i>Undermining Dietary Advice</i> Nestle Part 1 (Chapters 1-3)
<i>September 4</i>	<i>Working the System</i> Nestle Chapters 4-5 USDA Inc.: How Agribusiness has Hijacked Regulatory Policy at the US Dept. of Agriculture: http://www.nffc.net/Issues/Corporate%20Control/USDA%20INC.pdf
<i>September 6</i>	<i>Working the System, Contd.</i> Nestle Chapter 6-7 Paarlberg Chapter 14
<i>September 11</i>	<i>Exploiting Kids, Corrupting Schools</i> Nestle Part 3 (Chapters 8-9)
<i>September 13</i>	<i>Food Insecurity and Public Programs</i> Paarlberg Chapter 2 & 4
<i>September 18</i>	<i>Urban Food Security: International & Local Perspectives</i> Paarlberg Chapters 5 & 7 Growing Food and Opportunities in South Carolina
<i>September 20</i>	<i>Deregulation and Supplements</i> Nestle Part 4 (Chapter 10-12)
<i>September 25</i>	<i>Techno-Foods</i> Nestle Part 5 (Chapters 13-15) Nestle Conclusion
<i>September 27</i>	<i>Eating Animals</i> Foer Chapters pages 1-89 <i>When reading this book, please refer to the “Notes” section beginning on page 271 when the author footnotes something in the book.</i>
<i>October 2</i>	<i>Eating Animals</i> Foer pages 90-173
<i>October 4</i>	<i>Eating Animals</i> Foer pages 174-267

<i>October 9</i>	<i>Annotated Bibliography Due</i> Film
<i>October 11</i>	<i>Stolen Harvest: International Food Security</i> Chapters Intro-2
<i>October 16</i>	<i>No Class – Fall Break</i>
<i>October 18</i>	<i>Active Learning Project #1 Due</i> <i>Stolen Harvest: Harvesting Foods</i> Chapters 3-5
<i>October 23</i>	<i>Film</i>
<i>October 25</i>	<i>Stolen Harvest: Reclaiming Democracy</i> Chapters 6-Afterword
<i>October 30</i>	Paarlberg Chp. 11
<i>November 1</i>	<i>Food Safety and School Lunches</i> Paarlberg Chp. 13 *Food Safety: Public-Private Approaches * Poppendick
<i>November 6</i>	<i>The Cost of Food and Obesity</i> Paarlberg Chapters 3 & 8 *Reducing Childhood Obesity http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/29/3/357.full.pdf+html
<i>November 8</i>	<i>Going Green and Organic Farming</i> Paarlberg Chps. 6 & 12 *Organic Agriculture Supports Biodiversity
<i>November 13</i>	<i>Research Paper Methodology Due</i> <i>Agriculture and Farming</i> *Urban Agriculture by Brown & Jameton Paarlberg Chapters 9 & 10
<i>November 15</i>	<i>Food Loss</i> *Corner on Food Loss *Food Loss on the Farm *Hallmark of a Sustainable Farming Industry *Analyzing Retail Food Loss

*Food Loss and the American Household
*What to do about Food Loss

November 20

***Active Learning Project #2 Due
Film***

November 22

No Class – Thanksgiving Break

November 27-29

Research Presentations

December 4

Final Class – Wrap Up

December 8

Final Research Projects due in class