

St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 364: Food and Society – Fall Semester 2016

Dr. John Phyne
Annex 110A

Class Times: Tuesday: 2:15 to 3:15 PM; Thursday: 2:15 to 3:15 PM

Office Hours: Tuesday, 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM; Thursday: 10:30 AM to 12:00 Noon;
Friday: 10:30 AM to 12:00 Noon or by appointment.

Phone: 867-2313

E-mail: jphyne@stfx.ca

Course Rules: In order to have a productive semester, the following rules will be used in this course. If you do not want to abide by these rules, I suggest that you drop this course as soon as possible:

1. Turn off all cell phones at the commencement of class. If you use a cell phone in class, I will ask you to turn it off. If you refuse, I will cancel the class and report the matter to the Dean of Arts. Cell phone usage in class is a disrespectful and disruptive act that I will no longer tolerate. My lectures are not on your cell phone.

2. No laptops are permitted for taking notes: Under no conditions will laptops be permitted for the taking of notes. These devices have also turned out to be disruptive to the classroom environment.

3. There are no extra assignments or tests: If you perform below your expectations, it is your responsibility to see me so you can improve on your performance in the next test. I will not, under any conditions, provide extra assignments or tests.

4. Your grade is your unit of concern: It is your responsibility to keep track of your grade. I will not e-mail test results or calculate your grades for you. So, come to class and collect your tests.

5. Academic Integrity: The Academic Integrity Policy may be found at: http://www.sites.stfx.ca/registrars_office/academic_integrity. Students do not need to be caught USING a device like a smart phone during a test or exam to be in violation of the policy. **Simply having the unauthorized device on their person during the test or exam is a violation of the policy.** In other words, put your cell phone away before the commencement of a test.

6. E-mail Policy: Please restrict your e-mails to necessary communications. These include extended absences from class (more than one week) and family emergencies. I refuse to use e-mail to cover lectures from missed classes. My office hours or the phone are be used to cover materials pertaining to the course

Course Description

This course explores the linkages among food production, distribution and consumption within the changing global political economy. Consideration is given to these issues *within* the Global North and Global South. We also consider the historical and contemporary linkages *between* the Global North and South. These linkages are also assessed through an examination of food policy issues (health and safety, security and sustainability).

The course is divided into five sections. The **first section** covers the social organisation of local and global food production, distribution and consumption. Emphasis is given to the social and ecological consequences of global food production and consumption patterns. We deal with the consequences of the ‘liberalisation’ of trade in food products for food producers and consumers. Attention is also given to the role of culture and gender in food consumption practices. The conceptual apparatus introduced here is the basis for the consideration of material in the rest of the course (two weeks).

Section Two emphasizes the social organisation of food production and consumption in the Global North. Much of the period since the end of WWII was characterised by state intervention and the maximization of production. Policies endeavoured to link production to consumption. This is referred to as the Fordist food regime. Case studies of the Fordist regime and the gradual decline of this regime include: the Canadian Wheat Board and supply management in Canadian dairy production. We also cover the roots of ‘permanent’ migrant labour in Canada’s seasonal fruit and vegetable sectors, the emergence of immigrant labour in the restructured beef-processing sector, and crisis and restructuring in Canada’s fisheries (three weeks).

Section Three emphasizes the social reorganisation of agricultural production in countries in the South and the linkages of this with Northern consumption practices. This ‘Post-Fordist’ period arguably began in the late 1970s, but accelerated in the 1990s. It consists of a growing emphasis on ‘free markets’ in the sourcing of agricultural products. This process was engineered by Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) in the revision of lending practices from Northern to Southern countries, and is stressed in the recent policy provisions of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This growing liberalisation of trade in food products coupled with the rise in agro-export industries in the South has resulted in changing patterns in the relationships between producers and consumers. Food is now sourced from a wider variety of places in the Global South. Here, we examine trade liberalisation and its implications for the rise of ‘buyer-driven’ food chains for export agriculture in Chile and South Africa (three weeks).

Section Four deals with selected issues in food policy. The topics covered include: health and safety, food security and sustainability. Under health and safety, we will assess: the debates over genetically modified foods (GMOs) and farmed salmon, the mass marketing of pseudo-foods, how healthy eating corresponds to social divisions based upon gender, ethnicity, class and life stage, and the issue of food labelling as it applies to health and safety criteria. For food security, we examine the issue of food banks in the

Global North and the role of the World Food Programme in the Global South. Food security will be assessed in terms of the ability of local, national and international governance arrangements to deal with hunger in the midst of plenty. We conclude by examining the social, economic and environmental dimensions of food sustainability (three weeks).

Textbook

Mustafa Koç, Jennifer Sumner and Anthony Winson, eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Evaluation

- 1) Test 1: Tuesday, October 4: Two essay questions. This test is worth **25 per cent** of your final grade.
- 2) Test 2: Tuesday, November 8: Two essay questions. This test is worth **25 per cent** of your final grade.
- 3) Research Paper: Tuesday, November 15: Due in class (not under my door after class). The guidelines are in Moodle. This is worth **15 per cent** of your final grade.
- 4) Final Examination. Two essay questions. This examination is worth **35 per cent** of your final grade

Required Readings

All required readings are either in your textbook or located on the Moodle page for the course (see the asterisk for these readings). While much of this material will be covered in class, you are expected to complete all of these readings for your examinations. Read the material in the order in which you find it. The failure to keep up with your readings will most likely result in a poor grade in this course.

Section One: Political Economy, Culture and Gender: Perspectives in Food Studies (Two Weeks)

Harriet Friedmann, "Changing Food Systems from the Top to Bottom: Political Economy and Social Movements Perspectives." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 16-32.

Robert Albritton, "Two Great Food Revolutions: The Domestication of Nature and the Transgression of Nature's Limits." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 89-103.

Jose Johnston and Sarah Cappeliez, "You Are What You Eat: Enjoying (and Transforming) Food Culture." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 49 to 64.

Jennifer Brady, Jacqui Gingras, and Elaine Power, "Still Hungry: A Feminist Perspective on Food, Foodwork, the Body and Food Studies." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 122.

Section Two: Fordist and Post-Fordist Food Chains: The Global North (Three Weeks)

Nettie Wiebe, "Crisis in the Food System: The Farm Crisis." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 155-170.

Kerry Prebisch, "Local Produce, Foreign Labor: Labor Mobility Programs and Global Trade Competitiveness in Canada." *Rural Sociology* 72(3), 2007, pp. 418-449.*

Michael Broadway, "Meatpacking and the Transformation of Rural Communities: A Comparison of Brooks, Alberta, and Garden City, Kansas." *Rural Sociology* 72 (4), 2007, pp. 560-582.*

Aparna Sundar, "The Crisis in the Fishery: Canada in the Global Context." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 171-185.

Section Three: Post-Fordist Food Chains: The Global South (Three Weeks)

Bradford L. Barham, Mercedes Callenes, Seth Gitter, Jessa Lewis and Jeremy, Weber, "Fair Trade/Organic Coffee, Rural Livelihoods, and the "Agrarian Question": Southern Mexican Coffee Families in Transition." *World Development*, 39(1), 2011, pp. 134-145.*

Andrietta Kritzing, Stephanie Barrientos and Hester Rossouw, "Global Production and Flexible Employment in South African Horticulture: Experiences of Contract Workers in Fruit Exports." *Sociologia Ruralis*, 44(1), 2004, pp. 17-39. *

Carmen Bain, "Governing the Global Value Chain: GLOBALGAP and the Chilean Fresh Fruit Industry." *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture & Food*, 17 (1), 2010, pp. 1-23.*

Eduarado Ramialrez and Ruerd Ruben, "Gender Systems and Women's Labor Force Participation in the Salmon Industry in Chiloe, Chile." *World Development*, 73, 2015, pp. 96-104.*

Section Four: Selected Issues in Food Policy: Health and Safety, Food Security and Sovereignty, and Sustainability (Three Weeks)

Health and Safety

Elisabeth A. Abergel, "The Paradox of Governing Through the Courts: The Canadian GMO Containment Debate." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 260-275.

Anthony Winson, "Spatial Colonization of Food Environments by Pseudo-Food Companies." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 186-207.

Brenda L. Beagan and Gwen E. Chapman, "Constructing 'Healthy Eating'/Constructing Self." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 136-151.

Food Security

Jennifer Clapp, "Who Governs Food Prices?" In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 276-289.

Melanie Bedore, "Geographies of capital formation and rescaling: A historical geographical approach to the food desert problem." *The Canadian Geographer*, 57(2), 2013, pp. 133-53.*

Carole Suschnigg, "Food Security? Some Contradictions Associated With Corporate Donations to Canada's Food Banks." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 223-242.

Food Banks Canada, *Hunger Count 2013*. Toronto: Food Banks Canada, 2013.

Sustainability

Tony Weis, "A Political Ecology Approach to Industrial Food Production." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 104-121.

Jennifer Sumner, "Conceptualizing Sustainable Food Systems." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 326-336.

Alison Blay-Palmer, Jonathan Turner, and Shannon Kornelson, "Quantifying Food Systems: Assessing Sustainability in the Canadian Context." In Mustafa Koç, et al., eds. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*, pp. 337-358.

Oxfam Issue Briefing. *Extreme Weather, Extreme Prices: The Costs of Feeding a Warming World*. September 2012. Oxfam International.

