

Community, Food and Agriculture: A Survey

CSUS 811

Fall 2019

Tuesdays, 1:00 to 2:20pm and online

Room 118, Farrall Ag Eng Hall

Required Texts:

Carolan, Michael. 2016. *The Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge

Percival, Bronwen & Percival, Francis. 2017. *Reinventing the Wheel: Milk, Microbes and the Fight for Real Cheese*. Oakland: University of California Press (or paperpack edition September 2019).

(additional readings as assigned in course management system)

Instructor: Phil Howard

316 Natural Resources

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:30 to 3:30pm, and by appointment

Course Description: This graduate multi-disciplinary course in the Department of Community Sustainability examines a range of philosophical, environmental, socio-economic and political issues related to food and farming in the US. This course is designed as the introductory course for Community Sustainability students specializing in the area of Community, Food and Agriculture, as well as others interested in a wide variety of local, national and global food and farming issues. It also serves as an introductory social science course for students in the Ecological Food and Farming Systems specialization.

Key course themes that are addressed from diverse disciplinary and conceptual frameworks include: sustainability; the industrialization and corporate control of US food and farming; food and globalization; localized and place-based agriculture; governance of the agrifood system; and, food democracy, security and sovereignty.

Students are expected to draw upon their experiences and backgrounds, to expand their reading in the area of community, food and agriculture, and to explore a specific issue or theme from an intellectually-grounded conceptual framework.

Course Objectives

- provide students with an overview of the literature addressing local, national and global issues in community, food and agriculture
- develop an understanding of various conceptual perspectives used to address issues in the area of community, food and agriculture, and
- develop a scholarly capacity for analyzing food and farming problems from a multi-

disciplinary perspective.

Course Approach: The course is organized as a small seminar with a commitment to developing collaborative learning among all who participate. In the spirit of creating an intellectual community around community, food and agricultural issues, participants are encouraged to share their concerns about the learning environment and to shape our efforts to explore these issues.

Course Assignments

- Weekly readings, participation in class discussions and written reflections - 100 points
- Critical review of a scholarly book (due Oct. 15) - 100 points
- Final annotated bibliography and presentation (draft due Oct. 29, final due Dec. 3) - 100 points
- Self-evaluation (due Dec. 11) - 100 points

Grading scale for the course (by percentage of the 400 points obtained):

- 94 to 100% – 4.0
- 87 to 93% – 3.5
- 80 to 86% – 3.0
- 75 to 79% – 2.5
- 70 to 74% – 2.0
- 65 to 69% – 1.5
- 60 to 64% – 1.0
- <60% – no credit

Weekly readings, class discussions and written reflections - you are expected to answer the following questions about the weekly readings in class (Tuesdays):

- 1. what did you agree/disagree with the most? OR what did you find most useful?*
- 2. what did the readings potentially leave out?*

Then by Friday you will answer the following questions in Schoology forums:

1a. what question(s) did the readings and class discussion raise? 1b. what were you able to uncover about this question? (This will require that you seek out and read at least one additional scholarly article or chapter in an effort to answer your question. It's OK if you're not able to answer the question, just include citation information for the reading and share what you learned in the process.)

By the Tuesday after this written assignment is due you will read other students' posts, and briefly respond to at least one post.

Critical review of a scholarly book - choose a book addressing the topics of community, food and agriculture of interest to you. Read carefully and write a critical review of approximately 1000 words. You may choose from among the references in the Carolan text, suggestions in the assignment folder, or meet with me to discuss some possibilities you're considering. Be sure to look at a number of examples of book reviews in scholarly journals, such as *Agriculture and Human Values*, to get a sense of

what is expected. Typical elements include bibliographic information, a brief summary of the book, a critique, and a suggested audience. Keep in mind the purpose of the review is to help readers decide if it is worth their time to read the book. Due Oct. 15.

Annotated bibliography - You will choose a very focused topic related to community, food and agriculture, and create an annotated bibliography with 20 to 25 entries (at approximately 150 words per entry). The majority of the entries should be peer-reviewed journal articles, but some book chapters (e.g. edited books) and reports are OK. A summary/synthesis paragraph preceding the entries is encouraged, but not required. An informal, three to five minute presentation summarizing your findings will be delivered during the final week of class. For more see: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/> and examples posted in Schoology. An early draft with just 3 annotations is due Oct. 29. Final is due Dec. 3.

Schedule

Sept. 3 - Introduction

Sept. 10 - readings: Carolan, Introduction, Part I

Sept. 17 - readings: Carolan, Part II

Sept. 24 - readings: Carolan, Part III and IV

Oct. 1 - readings: Percivals, prologue to chapter 6 (optional field trip to MSU dairy cattle teaching & research center)

Oct. 8 - readings: Percivals, chapters 7 to 12 (optional field trip to MSU dairy plant observation deck)

Oct. 15 - **no class meeting, critical review due**, readings: Howard

Oct. 22 - readings/guests: Rich Pirog and Kim Carr, Community Sustainability/Center for Regional Food Systems

Oct. 29 - **3 annotation entries due**, readings/guest: Jenny Hodbod, Community Sustainability

Nov. 5 - readings/guest: Wenda Bauchspies, Community Sustainability/GenCen

Nov. 12 - readings/guest: Chelsea Wentworth, Community Sustainability

Nov. 19 - readings/guest: Abby Bennett, Fisheries & Wildlife

Nov. 26 - **no class meeting**, Thanksgiving holiday

Dec. 3 - **annotated bibliography due**, final presentations

Dec. 11 - **self-evaluation due** at 2:45pm

[Article 2.III.B.2](#) of the Academic Freedom Report states: "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Department of Sustainability adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, [Protection of Scholarship and Grades](#); the all-University Policy on [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#); and [Ordinance 17.00](#), Examinations.

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to

use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU regulations on Protection of Scholarship and Grades will receive a failing grade in the course or on the assignment.

Faculty are required to report all instances in which a penalty grade is given for academic dishonesty. Students reported for academic dishonesty are required to take an online course about the integrity of scholarship and grades. A hold will be placed on the student's account until such time as the student completes the course. This course is overseen by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Michigan State University is committed to ensuring that the bereavement process of a student who loses a family member during a semester does not put the student at an academic disadvantage in their classes. If you require a grief absence, you should complete the "Grief Absence Request" web form (found at <https://www.reg.msu.edu/sitemap.aspx?Group=7>) no later than one week after knowledge of the circumstance. I will work with you to make appropriate accommodations so that you are not penalized due to a verified grief absence.