

Food Politics
Political Science 303D
University of Hawaii, Manoa

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Course Description:

This course examines the political nature of food policy in the United State, and more specifically Hawaii. It considers the political history of food production and regulation from traditional indigenous methods to modern factory farms. We will follow the industrial food chain, beginning with production/agriculture then on to processing and transport and finally to the politics of consumption. We will inquire into the ethics of how food is grown, processed, regulated, and consumed.

Food is not simply fuel for our bodies. It is a cultural and social artifact that represents our connection (or lack thereof) to the natural world. This course is designed to foster deep thought and critical thinking into how our food system evolved into its modern form. Some questions we will consider are: Why, in an age of plenty, do some people still go hungry? What are the consequences of importing over 90% of our food supply? Is there really such a thing as sustainable agriculture? What are the consequences of buying seasonal foods year round? Who decides what is offered for school lunches? What are the public health consequences of eating mostly processed food? And why do people choose processed foods over whole foods? How do we create an alternative future in an era where most people lack a connection with their food and the ability to properly prepare?

A mix of academic, journalistic, and legal readings will provide a baseline for online discussion. Documentaries and short videos will supplement the reading. Through these readings, writings, and exercises this course will encourage consciousness and conscious eating. This course has a Contemporary Ethical Issue (E) focus designation. Contemporary ethical issues are fully integrated into the main course material and will constitute at least 30% of the content. At least 8 hours of class time will be spend discussing ethical issues. Through the use of lectures, discussions and assignments, students will develop basic competency in recognizing and analyzing ethical issues; responsibly deliberating on ethical issues; and making ethically determined judgements.

Writing assignments will be used to further explore the issues revolving around food politics. There will be two research papers along with weekly reading papers. In addition, as an online class your participation will be graded through additional written comments in response to other students' reading papers. The research papers (Story of Your Food Research Paper and Legislative/Administrative Comment and Analysis) will total 15-19 pages and the reading papers will total 7 pages for a grand total of 22-26 pages. Students will learn to write in various styles including narrative, advocacy, and journaling. Some of these assignments will go through a formal feedback process and some will be allowed to be revised. This course is process focused opportunity to improve on your analytical and writing skills to get you more comfortable with the process.

Learning Objectives:

- Think critically about the impact food has on our daily lives and how we can impact the food system
- Strengthen critical thinking skills when analyzing government policies
- Articulate the ethical issues related to various food policies and food decisions
- Develop informed opinions and craft arguments related to the food system such as sustainability, veganism, and commodity subsidies
- Develop an understanding of food sovereignty and the role it plays in the futures of indigenous people

Materials:

There are three required books and a variety of articles that will be posted in Lualima or available through the UH library online. In addition, this course will take advantage of several excellent documentary films that have explored issues surrounding food politics.

Required books

Michael Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma*.

Peter Pringle, ed., *A Place at the Table*.

Marion Nestle, *Food Politics*. (available online through UH library)

Required Resources

Access to the UH Library system

Access to Lualima

Grades:

Your grade will consist of several assignments, including an online class participation portion. In an online environment it is imperative that all students participate in the manner prescribed in this syllabus.

Food Diary 5%

Maintain a food diary of everything you consume for two days. This diary will be turned in, but will not be posted. Please do not alter your normal eating habits for this project. The description of the foods should be detailed enough that you can recreate the meal later. For example, if you purchased a microwaveable meal, include in your description the brand, flavor, and any alternations you made (e.g., adding hot sauce). Similarly, if you made spaghetti from scratch list all of the ingredients you used. Your list should include as much information as you can. For example, the brand of the pasta, where the ground beef, tomatoes, onions, etc. came from. Whether the ingredients were organic, local, etc.

Story of Your Food Research Paper 20%

Based on your food diary you will select one meal and trace back the ingredients of that meal as far back as you can. If you select a freshly made meal you should trace back as many of the ingredients as you

can. If you select a processed meal you should trace it back to the ingredients that the factory used to make the meal. As part of the story of your food you should note, how the ingredients came to Hawaii, where you purchased the food/ingredients, what type of labor was used to produce/process it, whether the farmers that grew the ingredients take advantage of farm subsidies, what type of agricultural methods are used on that farm, how much the meal cost, etc. Your analysis should include a section analyzing your consumption pattern and its impacts on the local community including at least one page indicating why you chose to purchase and eat this meal rather than another and whether after conducting this research you would make the same decision.

This paper will be 5-7 pages, double-spaced using either Times New Roman 12 point font or Arial 11 point font. Margins should be no more than 1 inch. Title page and pictures do not count towards page requirements. Pages must have more than 50% of text in order to count as a page. More detailed information on what is expected will be provided in class.

Legislative/Administrative Comment and Analysis 35%

For this project you will select a legislative bill or administrative rule on the state, county, or federal level. The professor **must** approve your selected bill or rule. Research the issue thoroughly and write a research paper analyzing the issues, including a section on the ethical problems that this proposal poses or resolves. The paper must include a submission ready comment ready. We will be discussed in class what this type of writing will look like. Because the state legislature is not in session, you may select a recently unsuccessful bill that you would like to see re-introduced. Or you may choose instead chose to research a federal or county bill or BLNR item related to food. If you select a federal or county bill please try to select one that has an upcoming hearing so that you can submit a comment for the record. On the administrative side, a rule that has an open comment period should be selected. More details on this assignment will be provided separately.

The entire paper should be a minimum of 10 pages and a maximum of 12 pages, double-spaced using either Times New Roman 12 point font or Arial 11 point font. Margins should be no more than 1 inch. Title page and pictures do not count towards page requirements. Pages must have more than 50% of text in order to count as a page. You will be required to submit a rough draft to the professor.

Reading Papers 20%

Each week you will be required to submit a 100-word reflection paper on the reading. For certain modules I will post a question that all students must write on and for other modules you are free to choose a relevant topic based on the readings. Papers are due by 6 PM on the last day of the module. Papers should be posted under the appropriate discussion thread in the Forums section of Lualima.

Although this is an informal paper, I still expect a topic sentence for each paragraph along with good grammar. Each paper will be worth 5 points. Late papers will be docked 1 point per day that they are late. Note that papers posted after the time due on the date due will count as late and thus docked 1 point. Papers that are of poor grammar or not well organized will be docked 1 point. The remaining points will be assigned based on the quality of the comments. To receive full points you should show that you read, understood, and digested the materials

Participation 10%

In an online environment it is important to fully engage in the medium. As such you will be required to participate above and beyond merely posting your reading papers. Your participation grade will consist of 5 points per module. You will receive points for attendance, required responses to other students' comments, and the quality of your comments. Responses are due by 11:59 PM on the last day of the module in the Forums section of Lulima.

For each module you will be required to respond to at least two student comments. Be sure to hit the "reply" button to the comment that you wish to respond to. Late responses will be docked 1 point per day that they are late. Note that responses posted after 11:59 PM on the last day of the module will count as late and thus docked 1 point. Responses that are of poor grammar or not well organized will be docked 1 point.

Online discussions will be held in a manner that exudes mutual respect. While students are encouraged to voice disagreements in interpretations, however, any comment that is directed personally towards another student or is deemed derogatory in any manner will be deleted and the student will receive no participation points for that module. Repeat offenses will be dealt with according to University policy.

Attendance:

Attendance is required. In order to be successful in this class you must complete all of the reading, review the class presentation materials, and complete all assignments. Attendance will be determined by posting reaction papers, responses to papers, and other comments in a timely manner.

Late Papers:

Late papers will not be accepted unless there is an exigent situation that has been pre-approved by the professor.

Disability:

If you have a confirmed disability and require an accommodation, please inform the professor at the earliest possible time.

Miscellaneous:

The professor reserves the right to change this syllabus to best meet the needs of the students. Any modifications will be announced and the syllabus will be updated online to reflect the changes. No changes will be made without adequate notice (defined here as one week).

Rules of Conduct:

Respect: All comments will be respected. Absolutely no disrespectful comments, especially those directed at other students, will be tolerated.

Listen/Open minded: In order for true learning to occur we must allow our minds to open. Everyone has their preconceived ideas, but only by truly listening to others and reflecting upon the information presented can we grow.

Honesty: Citations to sources are required. Plagiarism will be dealt with to the fullest degree allowable by University policy. There is no shame in standing on the shoulders of academics that have come before.

Integrity: Extensions will only be allowed based on extenuating circumstances.

Academic Integrity:

Please review and be familiar with the University’s policies on academic integrity. The policy is found here: <http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm>. Any violations of this policy may result in the lowering of your grade, failure of the course, or suspension from the University.

Procedure:

Read the materials for the modules first. After you have finished reading the materials go through the PowerPoint for the module. You may upload your reading papers at any time during the dates of the relevant module, but no later than the last day of the module by 6 PM. Your participation responses must be posted no later than 11:59 PM on the last day of the module.

Please submit written assignments through Lualima Dropbox.

Course Readings

Date	Course Topic/Modules	Reading
July 5-9	Food Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern food system • Traditional American system • Indigenous food system • Movie: Food, Inc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Pollan, Omnivore’s Dilemma. Chapters 1-5 • U.S. Food System Factsheet, University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Systems • Davianna McGregor, et al. An ecological model of Native Hawaiian Well Being • Samuel Kamakau, Ruling Chefs of Hawaii. Chapter 18. • Recommended: Jeffery Sobal, Laura Kettle Khan, and Carole Bisogni, A Conceptual Model of the Food and Nutrition System, Soc. Sci. Med. Vol. 47, No. 7 (1998).
July 10-13	Food Security in Hawaii and Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of importation • Reduction of farmlands • Indigenous people/biodiversity • Video: What is Food Sovereignty?; Native Chefs; Waianae Homestead Farming; Sustainable Molokai • Video: The Desert’s Perfect Food • Go over Food Diary assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii Department of Business Economic Development & Tourism, Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy (October 2012) • Sam Grey and Raj Patel, Food sovereignty as decolonization, Agricultural Human Values, Vol 32 (2015). • Le’a Kanehe, The Hawaiian Movement to Resist Biocolonialism • John Tomanio, National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation infographic • Claudia Sobrevila, The Role of Indigenous People in Biodiversity Conservation, The World Bank (May 2008). Read Executive Summary and Introduction. Skim the rest. • Recommended: Raj Patel, Food Sovereignty, The

		Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 36, Issue 3 (2009).
July 14-16	Food Deserts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fat and Famine • Food insecurity • Writing Workshop: Crafting a Narrative with Purpose ➤ <i>Turn in Food Diary</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Pollan, Omnivores Dilemma. Chapters 6-7 • Peter Pringle, ed., A Place at the Table. Chapter 3 • Molly Asifoa-Iagai, "Food Desert" American Samoa, Community and Natural Resources Division, American Samoa Community College (July 2012) • Video: Ron Finley, Guerilla Gardener in South Central Los Angeles, TedTalk • Recommended: Donna Gabaccia, We are What we Eat. Chapter 4
July 17-20	Corporate Influence & Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Lobbying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion Nestle, Food Politics. Chapter 4-5 (available online through UH Library) • Peter Pringle, ed., A Place at the Table. Chapter 7 • Pa'í'ai: HRS 321-4.7 and HAR 11-50-3 • Recommended Movie: Food Chains (labor)
July 21-23	Corporate Influence & Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monsanto influence • GMO and self destructing seed • Go over legislative or rule assignment ➤ <i>Turn in Story of Food Research Paper</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion Nestle, Food Politics. Chapter 6-7 (available online through UH library) • Andrew Pollack Genetically Engineered Salmon Approved for Consumption, New York Times (November 19, 2015). • Jill Richardson, Why is the FDA about to rubber-stamp GE salmon?, The Grist (Sept 20, 2010). • Katherine Paul and Ronnie Cummins Monsanto's Patents on Life, Nation of Change (February 28, 2013). • Jon Entine, The 'BioPiracy' myth at the heart of the Monsanto case, Genetic Literacy Project (Feb 25, 2013). • Walter Ritte and Bill Freese, Haloa, Seedling (October 2006) • Recommended: Congressional Research Service, Genetically Engineered Salmon
July 24-27	Farm Subsidies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop and food choices • Writing Workshop: Writing for Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Pringle, A Place at the Table. Chapter 4 • Congressional Research Service, The 2014 Farm Bill In Focus • Congressional Research Service, Farm

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Turn in legislation or rule idea</i> 	<p>Commodity Provisions in the 2014 Farm Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Movie: King Corn (minutes: 13-17 and 70-78 commodities; 55-59 corn syrup) • Recommended: Michael Pollan, Omnivore's Dilemma. Chapter 6-7
July 28-30	<p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic locavores • Ocean resources • Video: Na Loea: Ed Wendt: The Great Heart of Waiokane at 7:36-19:54 • Video: Na Loea: Mac Poepoe: Malama Mo'omomi at 10:00-15:31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Pollan, Omnivore's Dilemma. Chapter 8-14 • Shackeroff & Kittinger. Customary Marine Resource Knowledge and Use in Contemporary Hawaii, Pacific Science, Vol. 67, no. 3 (2013). • Congressional Research Service, Local Foods: Selected Federal Programs.
July 31-Aug 3	<p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic Farming – Permaculture • Traditional farming methods • Video: Na Loea: Herbert Hoe: Food for the Soul at 12:51-17:58 ➤ <i>Turn in Legislative/Administrative Comment and Analysis Rough Draft</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fikret Berkes, Johan Coldg, Carl Folke, Rediscovery of Traditional Ecological Knowledge as Adaptive Management, Ecological Applications, Vol 10, No. 5 (2000). • James McWilliams, The Myth of Sustainable Meat. New York Times Opinions (April 12, 2012). • Joe Salatin, Joel Salatin responds to New York Times' 'Myth of Sustainable Meat' Grist (April 17, 2012).
Aug 4-6	<p>Ethical Eating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veganism/vegetarian • Sustainable practice • Slow Food Movement ➤ <i>Rough draft returned</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Pollan, Omnivores Dilemma. Chapter 15-20 • Michael Pollan, The Intelligent Plant, The New Yorker (December 23, 2013). • Michael Pollan, Megan Phelps, Everything He Wants to Do is Illegal, Mother Earth News (Oct. 1, 2008).
Aug 7-12	<p>School Lunches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA regulations • Corporate influence • Video: Ann Cooper: Renegade School Lunch Lady, TedTalk ➤ <i>Turn in: Legislative/Administrative Commend and Analysis Final Paper</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Pringle, A Place at the Table. Chapter 8-9 • Congressional Research Service, School Meals Programs and Other USDA Child Nutrition Programs: A Primer • Recommended: Video: A Place at the Table

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