

GEOG 3320: Food Systems: Issues in Security and Sustainability

Instructor: Dr. Philip Loring

Meets: Tues/Thurs 1:00-2:30 PM

Room: Zoom (see below)

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Office Hours: Open discussions of course materials and questions will be held via Zoom on Tuesdays during the normal class meeting time, 1-2:30. On Thursdays, I'll have Zoom office hours during that same time period.

Course Notes: See CourseLink

TAs: Jillian MacIntyre, jmacin05@uoguelph.ca
Abdul-Rahim Abdulai aabdulai@uoguelph.ca

Assessment:	1. Quizzes	40 points
	2. Discussion board	20 points
	3. Polls/surveys	10 points
	4. Systems diagram (midterm)	15 points
	5. Final presentation	15 points

Fall 2020 Preface

These are strange times, and I recognize that many of you remain under a tremendous amount of stress as a result of the ongoing pandemic as well as political issues and unrest around the world. As such, this course will likely be very little like what it was last year or would have been. I promise to all of you to do my best to provide an enjoyable educational experience that works for you and that is flexible and responsive enough to your own ongoing issues and challenges. It would be a mistake and neglectful to try to ignore the challenges around us. Instead I think we need to talk openly about these—put important issues like Black Lives Matter directly into our discourse, to give them the thought and consideration and dedication that they deserve.

Everything here has been set up to empower you to succeed. Assignments and guidance is all available. Lectures for every week are all already available. Quizzes will all be released for you to take as you go, at your own pace. The only thing you have to do to really succeed is try, share, communicate, and contribute online.

Course Description

This class provides students with historiographic and social-ecological perspectives on contemporary food systems challenges around the world. The class is taught in two phases: the first attends to food systems historically and in comparison. Hunting and gathering, slash and burn agriculture, pastoralism and transhumance, and other small-scale/peasant systems are explored with respect to environmental and social dimensions, concluding with a critical exploration of the agricultural revolution. In phase two, the contemporary

industrial/chemical global food system complex is interrogated alongside issues such as food insecurity, hunger, population growth, the Green Revolution, and the emerging emphasis on big data. The class concludes with a discussion of how to move forward in addressing the food systems challenges of the 21st Century.

We will draw on a variety of readings, activities, and other materials in this course, including writing from geography, anthropology, philosophy, and Indigenous studies. We will also engage with art, literature, and self reflection. The course will be structured around asynchronous delivery and will rely heavily on discussion boards.

It is important that this class engage with people's interests if the experience is to be a positive one for all. As such, we will make effort to steer the course in the direction of student's interests. The final structure of the course from meeting to meeting depends largely on the final enrollment and what is possible and preferable as a mode of interaction given the number of us in the group.

Anticipated Learning Outcomes

- Working familiarity with key concepts including food systems, food security, carrying capacity, tragedy of the commons, agroecology, etc.
- Knowledge of historical and contemporary food systems.
- Ability to identify and discuss the root causes of food insecurity, hunger, and population growth.
- Familiarity with debates regarding intellectual property, genetically modified organism, and small versus large scale solutions.

Course Materials

All readings will be shared CourseLink. Readings may change, and will be shared no later than one week prior to class for which that reading is due. **Note: Readings should be read PRIOR to the week for which they are listed!**

Office Hours

Office hours will be held via ZOOM during regular class hours.

Tuesdays: open discussion (everyone can join at the same time and listen in / ask questions).

Thursdays: One-on-one. I will admit people one at a time to ask specific questions, on a first-come-first-serve basis.

[Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 949 222 3885

Passcode: food

Course Schedule (subject to change):

Week 1	Introductions
	Watch: Tarantino:
	Mini-lecture: Overview of and plan for the course
	Discussion topic: Introductions & Das Rad
	Complete: Online Course Expectations Survey

Week 2	Food systems & sustainability concepts
	Read: Food System Primer (online); Systems thinking and messy situations
	Watch: L2TWS Episode 2: Introduction to Complexity
	Mini-lecture: What are systems? What are food systems? What are sustainable food systems?
	Quiz 1

Week 3	The power and politics of food
9/24	Read: McMichael, <i>The Power of food</i> ;
	Watch: Bourdain:
	Watch: Shiva
	Mini-lecture: Who controls what you eat?
	Quiz 2

Week 4	Early food systems, biocultural systems
	Watch: Nabhan, <i>Where our Food Comes From</i> ; Nabhan the diversity of apples
	Read: History of Agriculture Primer
	Read: Swidden
	Mini-lecture: History of food systems
	Quiz 3

Week 5	Contemporary Issues: Population & food
	Read: Rahnema, Swift
	Watch: Hans Rosling talks (x2)
	Mini-lecture: Food and population
	Mini-lecture: The Great Forgetting
	Quiz 4

Week 6	Contemporary Issues: Climate change and food
	Read: Drawdown; Food and climate infographic; Yale Food Security; Eat fish and fight climate change
	Watch: Hawken Drawdown; Sea Ice Secure
	Mini-lecture: Food and climate change; climate change and food
	Quiz 5

Week 7	Contemporary Issues: Local food?
	Read: Kloppenburg, Born and Purcell. Community food systems report
	Watch: Loring Pecha Kucha, Mohammad Modarres Ted Talk
	Midterm due 10/23: systems diagram

Week 8	Contemporary Issues: Fisheries and Hatcheries
	Watch: ArtiFISHal
	Watch: Cook Inlet Aquaculture
	Mini-lecture: Dr. Hannah Harrison Guest Lecture on Hatcheries
	Quiz 6

Week 9	GMOs
	Watch: Pamela Ronald GMOs AND Shiva on GMOs
	Read: On the Scientific Consensus
	Complete: Week 8 class survey
	Mini-Lecture & Debate: Why biotechnology?
	Quiz 7

Week 10	Regenerative Agriculture
	Watch: Massey, Savory (might want to revisit my Pecha Kucha from week 7)
	Mini-Lecture: Regenerative agriculture; The Burren
	Quiz 8

Week 11	Problems & Solutions: Water
	Watch: Wetland / Wasteland
	Read: Breen et al
	Survey: Complete issue survey for last class

Week 12	Transitions and transformations
	Watch: TBD
	Read: TBD
	Mini-Lecture: How things change

Week 13	Conclusions
	Discussion TBD
	Read: TBD
	Mini-Lecture: TBD
12/4	Final Due 12/4

Course Assignments

More information about these assignments is available on CourseLink

Quizzes (8) – 5 points each (40 total)

- Quizzes will be based on content in mini-lectures and readings. They are to help you stay on track and keep you accountable for the material. You can take them twice if you are unhappy with your score.

Discussion Boards (Online) 20 points – Weekly

- Sustained contribution to the online discussions, both by responding to others' threads and by starting some of your own, will ensure you get full points in this area. I will post a mid-term update of your running grade so that you know how you are doing.

Polls and Surveys (Online) 10 points – Weekly

- I will also make polls and surveys available as a way to contribute and participate. Do them all and you get full points. Easy as that.

Midterm (Systems Diagram) 15 points – Due 10/23

- Pick a problem, behavior, process, or other kind of system **within food systems** you are familiar with
- Draw a systems diagram based on that system. Choose one of the kinds I've introduced you to (causal loop, connection circles, process, ladders), or some combination
 - Use PPT, or draw with hand and take a picture, or use some other software that works for you!
- Write 150-300 words in a separate word document explaining the systems diagram and what you learned from doing the diagram. Are there key positive or negative feedbacks? How does scale come into play? What are the key dependencies?

Final (Presentation) 15 points – Due 12/4

- This is an “unessay” project based on a solution to climate change from the Drawdown portfolio of climate solutions. See CourseLink for additional details.

Online Behaviour

Inappropriate online behaviour, including bullying, hate speech, flaming, shaming, and trolling, will not be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate online behaviour include:

- Posting inflammatory messages about your instructor or fellow students
- Using obscene or offensive language online
- Flaming, shaming, or trolling
- Copying or presenting someone else's work as your own

- Adapting information from the Internet without using proper citations or references
- Buying or selling term papers or assignments
- Posting or selling course materials to course notes websites
- Having someone else complete your quiz or completing a quiz for/with another student
- Stating false claims about lost quiz answers or other assignment submissions
- Threatening or harassing a student or instructor online
- Discriminating against fellow students, instructors and/or TAs
- Using the course website to promote profit-driven products or services
- Attempting to compromise the security or functionality of the learning management system
- Sharing your username and password

General Policy on Late Assignments

All writing assignments are to be submitted via the Courselink dropbox no later than 11:59pm on their due date. Late assignments will be accepted, but with a 2% loss in grade for each late day, unless you obtain permission, usually by providing prior communication related to some legitimate and verifiable issue. Begin your assignments early so that you have plenty of time to organize your submissions to the Courselink dropbox. Students are expected to make every effort to meet deadlines. That said, when you find yourself unable to meet a deadline because of illness or compassionate reasons, please inform the course instructor and the teaching assistant by way of email or in person immediately, prior to the due date of a given assignment. We are only able to make accommodations if we are aware of your situation, so please keep the lines of communication open as early and often as possible.

Student Accessibility Services

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or emailcsd@uoguelph.ca or see the [website](#).

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day.

[More information.](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

[The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Mandatory COVID19 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website [[hyperlink to the website](#)] and circulated by email.

Illness

The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the fall 2020 or winter 2021 semesters.