Introduction: This course examines the history of the global food system and its impacts on food and environmental justice. In part 1, we will define the central concepts of the course (global food system, food security, food justice, etc.) and then track the emergence of the global food system. We will address the major environmental justice issues stemming from the industrialization and globalization of food production and consumption. In part 2, we will turn to the waters of the global food system. We will focus on the industrialization of marine life as a part of the global food system, especially aquaculture. While artisanal aquaculture had been a significant food production method for millennia, only within the last 40 years has aquaculture become industrialized and increasingly globalized. Aquaculture produces almost 50% of all the seafood consumed by people; and researchers expect that percentage to grow significantly in the near future. In part 3, we will examine the relationship between the global food system and food justice—including actions and strategies—through a case study of shrimp farming in Southeast Asia and its relationship with slave labor, habitat destruction, and food sovereignty.

ES 130C has two themes:
1) what counts as understanding the global food system has deep disciplinary roots—in history, politics, science, culture, and law—that in turn shape the kinds of stories that people tell about the past, present, and future of food;
2) and issues of power are deeply intertwined with how people speak for their particular visions of food and global food systems as well as what constitutes appropriate actions and strategies to realize those visions.

To make these themes as concrete as possible, we will employ a variety of learning methods. We will use the following analytical skills: gather evidence, look for patterns or discontinuities, develop explanations about context, causes, and consequences, write and talk about our ideas, engage others, refine our arguments—although not necessarily in that order.

One of this course’s main goals is for you to develop and practice these skills by participating in class exercises and completing the required readings and assignments. At the end of the course, you should walk out of the classroom ready to explain how the histories of the global food system will help you respond to contemporary problems of food justice.

Readings: You should complete all of the assigned readings before each class meeting. Please bring your copy of that day’s reading and/or notes to class, so that we can discuss the text together. I have limited the reading assignments to two books, selected articles, and other online materials available on GauchoSpace (GS) in an effort to reduce costs for students. The first two parts of the course are more reading intensive. In the third part, you will have more time to focus on your role in the shrimp case study. Please refer to the course schedule below for the assigned readings. The following books are on reserve at the Davidson Library.


Assignments and Grades

Grade Breakdown
Participation: 20 %
Mid-term Exam: 20 %
Four Fish Essay: 20 %
Shrimp Case Study:
  Annotated Bibliography Contribution 5 %
  Opening Statement 5 %
  Workshop Activities 10 %
  Reflection Essay 20 %
Subtotal 40 %

***For every 24 hours that any assignment is late, the grade will drop by one letter. That means, for example, an A paper turned in 25 hours late will become a C paper. You must turn in a hard copy.***
Participation: The success of this course depends on your good-faith participation. This means coming to every class prepared to contribute to discussion. Most classes will have a mixture of lectures, discussions, informal in-class writings, and other exercises, so there will be a number of different ways for you to participate. Participation can mean something as simple as asking a question in person or over email or posting a relevant article on the course Gauchospace page! Almost everyday I will ask for short, informal written responses about that day’s readings in order to encourage you to keep up with the readings and to evaluate how well you understand the course’s content and themes. If you need to miss a class for a personal, medical, or religious reason, you must notify me in advance. If you miss two or more classes, your participation grade will reflect your absences. Please check your email regularly. Please do not use your electronic devices during class for any reason except for note-taking. If your head is buried in a laptop when someone is talking and you are not looking up or taking any notes, I will assume that you are not paying attention. Your participation grade for that day will reflect this behavior.

Mid-term Exam: There will be a multiple-choice test based on course readings, lectures, and discussions on Monday, April 30. Please bring a full-page bubble sheet to class that day. We will practice some of the types of questions you will encounter before the exam itself. If you are a registered Disabled Students Program (DSP) student and you plan to request an accommodation, you should submit your request for the mid-term exam within the first 3 weeks of the quarter, so that we can plan for your accommodation. See http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/Index.aspx.

Four Fish Essay: In his book, Paul Greenberg explores the future of fish as the last wild food in the global food system. Through the history of humanity’s relationships with four kinds of fish, the author tries to “separate human wants from global needs and propose the terms of an equitable and long-lasting peace between man and fish (14).” Imagine that you are writing a letter to Greenberg in which you engage and evaluate his research and claims. Since he is a writer, you want to impress him with your ideas, your creativity, your thoughtfulness, and your prose. You can write in the style of a letter to the author, a creative non-fiction essay, or a more formal review. You can use first person pronouns like “I” or “We,” but your essay must be well-written, proofread, and must demonstrate your critical response to the book’s author. Your review essay will have three parts: a personal reflection, an evaluation, and a source reflection. Each part will be about two pages, six pages in total, with page numbers, double-spaced, 12-point font with polished prose.

First, you will describe how the book engaged you on a personal level. Tell the author about one experience you had with a similar research topic, issue, theme, group of people, or place analyzed in the book. Use your imagination to reflect on something concrete in the real world. Be specific and descriptive. Give Greenberg a sense of what it felt like for you to live through that experience. Remember to narrate the beginning, middle, and end of the experience. Think about individuals, cultural traditions, communities, or food justice.

Second, you will tell him how well he made his arguments. In other words, you will review the book. A well-written evaluation is not the same thing as a book report. A good evaluation not only summarizes what the author wrote, but how well the author accomplished his goals AND explains whether the book matters in some kind of larger sense. Name two things that the author does well and two things that he might have done differently. What did he do less well and how might he have done those things differently? Here is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your skills in constructive feedback, because it is not only about what you say, but how you say it.

Third, you will address specifically his use of sources. Choose ONE of the sources listed in the footnotes on pages 265-77, read that source carefully, and evaluate how well (or not) the author used that source to make his larger argument. Describe the source itself and reflect on how the author summarized the source. How does this source fit into the range of evidence that the author uses? How does he move between synthesizing sources and reflecting on implications? We will discuss finding and evaluating sources in greater detail. For citations, you must follow Chicago Manual of Style (see https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20110928111055_949.pdf). Don’t forget to include an introduction and conclusion that bring all three parts together. The Four Fish essay will be due in class on May 16.

Shrimp Case Study: You have been invited by four of your smartest friends to participate in a workshop to help your friends start a new non-governmental organization (NGO) to address the EJ issues surrounding shrimp aquaculture and its relationship with slave labor, habitat destruction, and food security within the global food system. Inspired by NGOs like LA’s Community Services Unlimited, your friends want to understand the details of the shrimp case study as well as identify a number of possible solutions to this environmental challenge. Your friends have asked you and some other people to assume the role/identity of one of seven important stakeholder groups, so that your friends will understand the complexities of the issue and some of the potential consequences of the NGO’s actions and strategies.

The seven stakeholder groups include: 1) Sustainability Team from multinational food retail firms (for example, Wal-Mart, Tesco, Costco, Whole Foods) 2) Environmental Activists (for example, Mangrove Action Project, Environmental Justice Foundation) 3) Labor and human rights activists (for example, Human Rights Watch) 4) Representatives of cultivated
shrimp industry (for example, Charoen Pokphand (CP) Foods buyer, Global Aquaculture Alliance President, Thai fishing boat captain) 5) Workers in aquaculture (for example, Burmese migrant held captive on Thai fishing boat, 10-year-old shrimp peeler in locked factory outside of Bangkok) 6) seafood consumers (for example, retiree from Montecito, CA, coastal rural Bangladeshi family members) 7) Policy-makers (for example, senior fishery officer at the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation, Thai ambassador to the U.S.). In addition, you must assume a specific identity within your group: where do you live? what does a typical day look like? There is a considerable range of possible identities within each group; notice the differences within the suggested possibilities inside the parenthesis above. I will ask you to rank your first three choices among the stakeholder groups and do my best to assign you to one of your preferred stakeholder groups. You have an 8th option for the role-play workshop; you can request to be on the friends/NGO group.

Annotated Bibliography Contribution:

Twitter: Social networking is an increasingly important professional communications skill. I would like each of you to sign up for a Twitter account for this course. We will be using the hashtag #ucsbfood2018 to label tweets relevant to our course. You can use your personal Twitter account if you wish, but remember that our conversations and tweets will be public and professional, so please act accordingly. In others words, don’t tweet anything that someone might find hateful or illegal. When in doubt, email me. For help, please see Twitter’s new user FAQ at https://help.twitter.com/en/new-user-faq. By Friday, April 13, I want you to sign up and follow at least two kinds of Twitter users: 1) Follow me at @JenMartin2017 2) follow any non-profit or for-profit organization that works on aquaculture, food, shrimp harvesting, environmental, or human rights issues (examples might include Wal-Mart, UN FAO, Human Rights Watch). You must retweet at least once from each Twitter user by Friday, April 20, and you must use the hashtag #ucsbfood2018. You should feel free to tweet articles, videos that speak to any of the issues or concepts discussed in class.

Source for Annotated Bibliography: Each person will post a source that speaks to the shrimp case study to an Annotated Bibliography on GS and tweet that source using the hashtag #ucsbfood2018 by Monday, May 21. Each person must post a different source: it can be an organization’s report, a news article, a TED talk video, a press release, an op-ed column, a FAO analysis. You must follow the Chicago Manual of Style and put your source in alphabetical order on GS. The url for your source must work. Your contribution to the annotated bibliography will also include a 5-7 sentence summary of the source (who, what, when, where, why); 2 sentences that identifies one or two important issues or questions in the source; 2 sentences that identifies which of the seven stakeholder groups would benefit from reading this source and why; and finally your full name in parenthesis. The Annotated Bibliography Contribution is due on GS by end of class on May 21.

Opening Statement: Each group will have 8-10 minutes to introduce themselves as a group and as individuals in their Opening Statement on Wednesday, May 23. Please do not read your opening statement essay (see description below) word-for-word. Each group needs to answer the following questions. 1) How does this issue touch your life? Your family’s life? Your community? 2) What does the NGO need to know about this issue from your perspective? What are the important themes or ideas or histories that need to be unpacked? 3) What problems or opportunities does the issue create? 4) What are two specific actions or strategies that the NGO should consider? 5) What questions or comments would you or your group like to direct to any of the other groups?

Each person will turn in a three-paragraph essay that answers these questions at the end of class on May 23. Each essay will be double-spaced, with 12-point font, polished prose, and at least three footnotes that cite different sources from the Annotated Bibliography. You must follow the Chicago Manual of Style.

Workshop Activities: You must volunteer during the discussions for each day of the workshop. Usually, that means talking actively. With guidance from the friends/NGO group, we will draw up an agenda and tackle the most salient issues and questions. At the start of each day, the friends/NGO group will provide a brief summary and at the end of each day, the friends/NGO group will post a question or two for the next meeting.

Closing Day Statements: Each group and/or individual will be required to sum up the most important points, answers, insights from the previous workshops. Each group will highlight one action or strategy for the NGO to consider. At the close, we will create a plan of next steps for the NGO.

Reflection Essay: You will write a 9-page (about 2700 words) reflection essay that explains the four to five most important histories, ideas, insights, or skills that you have learned about the shrimp case study and the global food systems generally from the course’s readings, lectures, discussions, shrimp workshops, your group members, and other exercises. Now that the course is nearly over, how would you answer the questions: What should I eat? Why does that question matter in the first
place? How can I take these insights, these skills out into the larger world? In what ways do the histories of the global food system help me respond to the contemporary challenges of food justice?

You can write in the style of a letter, a creative non-fiction essay, or a more formal essay. You can use first person pronouns like “I” or “We,” but your essay must be organized (what are the links among the four to five most important histories, ideas, insights, or skills? how does one lead to the second and to the third and so on?), well-written, proofread, and must demonstrate your critical, thoughtful response to the course.

Don’t forget an introduction and conclusion that brings all three parts together. You must footnote at least four sources from the course readings, two sources from the annotated bibliography, and two lectures or discussion comments to support your analysis. I will post a rubric to GS later. Follow the Chicago Manual of Style for your footnotes. No bibliography is necessary. Please print out your typed, 12-point font, double-spaced essay with page numbers by Monday, June 12 by 6 pm. No emailed essays, please. You may submit the essay earlier if you wish. You can turn in the essay to me in my office (Bren 4011).

Other policies:

Crashing: If you are not yet registered, then during week one you should sign the waiting list. You will need to attend all of the classes to be added to the roster. After Monday’s class in week two, I will distribute add codes.

Honors Contract: I welcome and encourage students to consider an honors contract proposal for ES 130C.

Equal Access for All Students: If you have any learning or medical condition that requires accommodation to complete the course work, please ensure that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) is aware of your disability and that you are familiar with your DSP responsibilities. See http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/Index.aspx. I will work with you and DSP to find the appropriate accommodation.

Plagiarism: UCSB takes plagiarism and other academic misconduct very seriously. If you turn in any work that fails to acknowledge the contributions of others, it may result in failure of the assignment or the course itself. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. We will discuss plagiarism in detail.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes will not be given for this class, except in the most extreme circumstances, such as a debilitating illness or death in the immediate family.

Copyright: All of the materials you receive through this course are subject to federal copyright laws and university policies. Distribution of these materials, such as posting them online or selling them to third party businesses, are strictly prohibited.

Schedule

Part 1: Concepts and Emergence of Global Food System

M, April 2 Introductions

W, April 4 Pre-Modern Origins of Global Food Systems
Reading: Sidney Mintz, “Food at Moderate Speeds,” in Fast Food/Slow Food, (2006), 3-11, on GS.

M, April 9 Industrialization: Turning Every Farm Into a Factory
Reading: 1. Carey McWilliams, Excerpt from 1939 Factories in the Field on GS. 2. Introduction of MTJF.

W, April 11 Globalization and Empire
Reading: 1. Pages 18-23 of chapter 1 and chapter 2 of MTJF. 2. “Open Letter from Maputo: V International Conference of La Via Campesina,” (26 October 2008) on GS.

M, April 16 Food Politics

W, April 18 Green Revolution
Reading: Chapter 4 of MTJF.
M, April 23 Business of Hunger

W, April 25 Politics of Obesity
Reading: Conclusion of MTJF.

M, April 30 Mid-term exam

Part 2: Blue Revolutions: Industrialization of Wild Fisheries and Aquaculture

W, May 2 Salmon
Reading: Introduction and chapter 1 of Four Fish

Don’t forget to start the readings for the shrimp workshop!

M, May 7 Sea Bass
Reading: Chapter 2 of Four Fish

W, May 9 Cod
Reading: Chapter 3 of Four Fish

M, May 14 Tuna
Reading: Chapter 4 and epilogue of Four Fish

W, May 16 Food Security, Seafood Safety, and Consumer Awareness

Four Fish Essay due in class

Part 3: Case study of shrimp farming

M, May 21 Food Justice: Actions and Strategies

Annotated Bibliography Contribution due on GS

W, May 23 Opening Statements

Opening Statement Essay due in class

M, May 28 Memorial Day No Class

W, May 30 Workshop Day 2
M, June 4 Workshop Day 3

W, June 6 What to Eat? And Why?

**M, June 12 Reflection Essay due by 6 pm in Bren 4011.**