Instructor: Stephanie Crist, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:00am-12:00pm and by appointment

Course Overview:
In this seminar, we will explore and examine the politics of food. We will pay special attention to the ways in which gender and other powerful social structures such as race and class shape everyday experiences of food in the United States. To accomplish this, we will use a sociological perspective to aid us in understanding how our relationships with food are historically, culturally, and politically situated.

You should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time reading and writing for each weekly seminar. This course has a community-based learning (CBL) component; therefore, you should also plan to spend at least 2-4 hours a week working with their community groups/organizations.

Student Objectives:
By the end of the semester, students in this course should be able to:
- Define hunger and food insecurity and their causes and prevalence in the U.S.
- Understand the relationships between food and identity, culture, and experience
- Understand how food in the U.S. is historically and culturally connected to gender roles and gendered labor
- Think critically about the connections between women’s lives and what ends up on our dinner plates
- Recognize the complexities of food politics—at the personal level and the food systems level
- Define food justice and identify projects that fall within the food justice umbrella
- Make connections between CBL experiences and food politics

Required Books:


**Required Lecture Series:**
Professor Susan Rodgers (Anthropology) and I are organizing a lecture series for Holy Cross students. This semester there will be two events taking place that are part of this series—each event connects to the topic of food, hunger, and poverty. Please put these dates into your planner and make every effort to attend. By attending these events, you will earn credit for the course (see section on Event Attendance below for more info). Here is some tentative info:

- Wednesday, March 13, 4:30pm: A panel of local anti-hunger activists and representatives
- Tuesday, April 9, 7:00pm: Erin Boyd, M.A. (date tentative)

**Community-Based Learning:**
I am extremely enthusiastic about the CBL component of this course—I hope that you will share in my excitement. Because food is such an important and ubiquitous part of human life and society, CBL is an excellent fit for our course. In the city of Worcester, there are dozens of organizations doing work around a variety of food issues. For our course, the Donelan Office has assisted us in making partnerships with four very different organizations. The Placement Options handout that you have received will provide you with detailed information on each of these options. Please read the information over carefully and submit your organization preferences to me through the Moodle survey or by email as soon as possible. After receiving everyone’s preferences, I will do my best to make placements according to desire, need, and fairness.

In brief, placement opportunities include:
- Artichoke Food Co-Op (2-4 students)
- Community Harvest Project (2-3 students)
- Holy Cross Dining Services (2-4 students)
- Regional Environmental Council (REC): (3 students)

Working at your CBL sites will provide you with insights that would not be available to you by reading a text on an issue. You will have the unique opportunity to be a part of different types of work related to food issues on the ground level. This experience will deepen your understanding of local issues and how they connect to broader society and the policy level. My expectation is that you will enter your CBL sites with a positive attitude and an open and inquiring mind. You will be working on issues that are important to these organizations; the contributions that you make, no matter how small, are important and to be taken seriously. CBL partnerships, at their best, benefit both the organization and student learning. Though you will be giving your time and energy to these organizations, we must express our own gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of these different food-related efforts and issues.
I am looking forward to learning from your CBL experiences. I expect that you will gain much from the experience, as well. Here are just a few goals that I hope your CBL experience will help you accomplish:

- A deeper understanding of a food-related issue and its impacts
- An understanding of how an organization works to address an issue
- An awareness of the complexities, difficulties, complications, and challenges of your organization’s work
- The ability to locate your organization’s issue within broader food justice or social justice struggles
- The ability to connect theory to action and service to politics
- Enhanced communication skills and work experience

You should plan to spend about 2-4 hours a week at CBL sites. Throughout the semester, journaling, discussion participation, and formal writing will help you critically reflect on CBL experiences and make connections to course material.

Many thanks to Michelle Sterk Barrett and Lauren Buckley at the Donelan Office of Community-Based Learning for assisting us throughout the semester and for facilitating our connections to the CBL placement sites.

Assignments and Grades:

- Participation and Attendance in Weekly Seminar: 5%
- Event Attendance: 5% (various dates)
- CBL Journals (five total): 20% (due 2/18, 3/11, 4/8, 4/22, 5/6)
- Gender and Food Narrative: 15% (due 2/25)
- Essay 2 on Readings (1500 words): 15% (due 4/29)
- Final CBL Project and Presentation: 25% (due at 3:00pm on 5/9)

**Participation and Attendance:** Participation and attendance in seminar make up 5% of your final grade. Come to class awake, prepared, and ready to think, participate, and listen. There will be plenty of opportunities to contribute to class discussions, so please save personal/side conversations for outside of class time. Please turn your cell phone off when you enter class as texting, ringing phones, and talking on the phone is disruptive to the learning environment of your classmates and instructor. Side conversations and cell phone use will negatively impact your participation and attendance grade. If you plan to use a laptop, iPad, or other electronic device for note taking, please chat with me about my expectations regarding computer use in class.

Attendance in this class is important, as we will facilitate seminar-style discussions on the readings and your CBL experiences. Your participation matters and is integral to the creation of our classroom learning environment. I will give you a variety of contexts in which to find your comfort…large group discussions, small group discussions, discussing with one other person, etc. If you are concerned about your participation for any reason, I suggest that you check-in with me at the beginning of the semester, not at the end.

Coming to class late and leaving class early will negatively affect your attendance and participation grade. This is especially important given that we only meet once a week. Absences will only be excused in the following situations: 1) I am notified by a Class Dean about an extenuating circumstance that you are experiencing, 2) you provide me with documentation of an illness or family emergency, or 3) you speak with me beforehand about an anticipated absence due to a required college event, a religious holiday, or a health-related reason. Each unexcused absence will result in a lowering of your attendance and participation grade by one full letter grade. Please keep
in mind that missing one day of our class is equivalent to missing three days on a MWF schedule. In the event that you do miss class, you are responsible for all of the material covered on that day, including announcements.

**Event Attendance:** Throughout the semester, you will attend two lectures and go on a trip outside of the class meeting time for course credit. Each lecture will be worth 1% of your final grade. The Class Field Trip will be worth 3% of your final grade. You need to attend these events to earn the total 5% allocated to Event Attendance. I will have an attendance sheet at each event for you to sign. The first three events listed below are required. If you have a legitimate conflict with an event, you must speak with me before the event to arrange a make-up activity (samples listed below).

**Required Events:**

1. **Wednesday, March 13, 4:30pm:** Jean McMurray (Worcester County Food Bank), Carla Szymanski (Rachel’s Table), and _____________________
   *A panel of local anti-hunger activists and representatives*

2. **Tuesday, April 9, 7:00pm:** Erin Boyd, M.A.
   *Erin Boyd is a HC alumnus (2011 Sanctae Crucis Award) currently working in the emergency food network in NYC*

3. **Date TBA (April?):** Class Field Trip to New Lands Farm
   *http://www.lssne.org/NewLandsFarm.aspx*

**Possible Make-up Activities:**

- If available, watch video or listen to audio of required lecture above (potentially available at Rehm Library website after event)

- **Sunday, March 24, ESS Food Studies Mini-Conference**
  *Attend part or all of an all-day conference on food studies at the Eastern Sociological Society Conference in Boston ($10 registration fee. You will need to arrange transportation.)*

- **Date TBA: Massachusetts-based Hunger Summit**
  *Organized by state leaders. You will need to arrange transportation.*

- **Take a trip to Overlook Farm in Rutland, MA (Heifer International)**
  *http://www.heifer.org/visit/overlook-farm
  *You will need to arrange transportation.*

- Additional make-up options will be made available as need arises, providing that prior notice is given regarding missing a required event.

**Transportation Note:** There will be a certification class offered on January 30, 2013 that you can take if you have a Driver’s License and you want to become certified to drive Holy Cross vans. If you do not have a car on-campus, this may be useful for your CBL placements or other trips that you want to take for school purposes. Contact the HC Transportation Office for more info. General transportation to CBL sites will be discussed on the first day of classes.
CBL Journals: You will be required to submit CBL Journals five times throughout the semester (due in-class on 2/18, 3/11, 4/8, 4/22, and 5/6). In these journals, you will critically reflect on your CBL experiences—reporting your activities/observations at sites and reflecting on these activities and the course material. I expect the length of these journals to vary from week to week depending on your placement, but each submission should be about 750 words long. You’ll submit your journal entries on Moodle. I encourage you to devote energy to writing high quality journals, as they may better prepare you for the Final CBL Project.

Gender and Food Narrative: For this assignment, you will interview one person who you think may have an interesting, inspiring, or educational food story that connects to gender. This interviewee could be a relative, a Holy Cross employee, a local chef, a personal acquaintance... You will need to design an interview guide that includes the questions you plan to ask and have it approved by me before your interview (by 2/18/13 at the latest). You should plan to spend 1-2 hours speaking with your chosen interviewee. After the interview, you will write a 5-page narrative of your interviewee’s “food story.” Be prepared to discuss your narrative in class on the day it is due (2/25/13).

Essays: Two different writing assignments will provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate what you’ve learned from course readings and discussions.

- In Essay 1, you will synthesize material from Units 1 and 2 in a formal, academic style. The length requirement for this essay is 2000-2500 words.
- In Essay 2, you will be given a special prompt that is apropos for our course on food. You will write the script for a “dinner party” including five of our course authors and yourself playing the role of the “host.” Using the arguments presented by the authors in Units 3 and 4, your job will be to put the different authors in “real” conversation with each other. This essay has a length requirement of 1500 words.

Essays that do not correctly cite sources and/or plagiarize in any way will not earn a passing grade. You will be provided with an essay prompt 3-4 weeks before each essay is due—these prompts will explain the guidelines and requirements for each essay in further detail.

Final CBL Project: (Due at 3:00pm on May 9th) The final product of your CBL experience will be a portfolio that includes your CBL journals, a brief account of what you accomplished for the organization, and a 10-page institutional analysis of your placement organization that utilizes external scholarly literature. In your analysis, you will describe how the organization is structured and discuss how this organization’s work is connected to broader food/social justice struggles. If relevant, you should also discuss how an awareness of race, class, and/or gender-based inequality impacts organizational missions, goals, and programs. For this analysis, you will identify scholarly literature that will assist you in situating the work your placement organization accomplishes within broader social movements. You will also need to identify local or national policies that impact your organization and its work, analyzing the impacts of such policies and identifying spaces where new or revised policies could benefit your organization.

Presentation: During the final exam period on May 9th, you will have an opportunity to briefly present and discuss your CBL experience with your peers through a formal presentation. Since multiple students will be at each site, this presentation will be, in part, a group presentation, however, I expect each student to contribute their personal experiences and analytical insights. Additional information about the Final CBL Project will be provided in class.
Late Policies:
Late essays and assignments will be penalized by one letter grade per 24-hour period after the deadline (typically set for the beginning of class). If you submit a paper later in the day on the day it is due and it would have earned a grade of an A, your grade will automatically lower to a B and so on. If you have an extenuating circumstance such as serious illness or a family emergency and want to request an extension you must contact me before the paper is due and get approval.

Rewrites of essays and assignments will not be accepted. I strongly encourage you to set up a time to meet with me before the paper is due to discuss the assignment and ask questions. I also encourage you to take advantage of Holy Cross resources such as the Writer's Workshop.

Grading Scale:
Grading will be based on a total of 100 percentage points. The following scale will be used:

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Expectations for Class Discussion:
Our course content has the potential to be sensitive in nature and because of this it can spark debate. Debates can be very productive and I would like you to get excited about the course material. At the same time, it is important that everyone in the room feel able to participate. This is not to say that we should all feel comfortable in every way, at every time, because the discomfort felt through challenging deeply-rooted societal assumptions, privileges, and stereotypes is a productive intellectual moment in all of our lives. Throughout the semester, I hope that you will keep a thoughtful and open mind as we study subjects that may be new to you or push you to consider viewpoints that differ from your own.

Academic Honesty:
To succeed in this course, you must abide by the Holy Cross statement on academic honesty. Please familiarize yourself with this policy at: [http://www.holycross.edu/catalog/acad_program.pdf](http://www.holycross.edu/catalog/acad_program.pdf) (pg 17...). It is very important to me that you maintain academic honesty in the fullest sense. Academic honesty covers everything from misrepresenting yourself on an attendance sheet to exaggerating CBL hours to incorrectly citing sources for ideas and concepts in an essay. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes a violation of academic honesty. Violations of academic honesty on an assignment will result in a submission of the violation to the Holy Cross academic honesty administrative procedure and a zero on the assignment.

Office of Disability Services:
Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services at 508-793-3693 ([http://offices.holycross.edu/disability-services](http://offices.holycross.edu/disability-services)) to coordinate any course-related needs.

Moodle:
This course will utilize Moodle 2.2 as a communication system, as a grade book, and as a document manager. I will post copies of handouts, the syllabus, and other important files to Moodle. Also, many of our required course readings will be posted to Moodle (we won’t be using ERes). Please let me know if you have trouble opening a link or file. You should check the Moodle site (and your Holy Cross email address) on a daily basis so that you are fully informed of any course announcements or changes.
Email:
Feel free to email me at any time, but do realize that I don’t check my email frequently between the hours of 5pm and 8am. If you email me during those hours or on the weekends, please expect that I will take longer to respond. It’s important that you plan ahead and don’t leave important questions until the night before something is due. Also, some conversations are more helpful in-person (grades, questions on the readings, and so on), so I may suggest that you schedule an appt. with me instead of using email to respond.

As your instructor, I reserve the right to make minor changes to the course requirements and/or the reading schedule, but I promise to do so with sufficient notice given in-person or by email/Moodle.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: January 28
Introduction to the Course and Community-Based Learning Projects

Unit I: Hunger and Poverty in the United States

Week 2: February 4
Hunger in the U.S.
• Intro, Ch. 1-5, & Ch. 7-9 in All You Can Eat: How Hungry is America? (Berg)

Week 3: February 11
The Emergency Food Network
• Intro, Ch. 1-2, Ch. 5-7, & Ch. 9 in Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement (Poppendieck)
Unit II: Analyzing Food from a Women’s and Gender Studies Lens

Week 4: February 18 (CBL Journal Due)
An Introduction to Gender and Food
- Pgs 1-26, “Feminist Food Studies: A Brief History” by Arlene Voski Avakian and Barbara Haber (Moodle)
- Pgs 6-24 “Food, Culture, and Gender” by Carole Counihan (Moodle)
- Pgs 23-40 “Women and Food Chains: The Gendered Politics of Food” by Patricia Allen and Carolyn Sachs (Moodle)
- Pgs 251-264, “Metrosexuality Can Stuff It: Beef Consumption as (Heteromasculine) Fortification” C. Wesley Buerkle (Moodle)
- Pgs 121-140, “Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women” by Caroline Walker Bynum (Moodle)

Week 5: February 25 (Gender and Food Narrative Due)
Gender, Food, and Work
- Intro, Ch. 1-4, Ch. 6, & Ch.8 in Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work (DeVault)

(March 4-Spring Break)

Week 6: March 11 (CBL Journal Due)
Representation and the Media
- Intro, Ch. 1-2, & Ch. 4-5 in Food is Love: Food Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America (Parkin)

Week 7: March 18
Representation, the Media, and Bodies
- Pgs 163-184, “Hiding Gender and Race in the Discourse of Commercial Food Consumption” by Alice Julier (Moodle)
- Pgs 187-201, “Feeding Hard Bodies: Food and Masculinities in Men’s Fitness Magazines” by Fabio Parasecoli (Moodle)
- Pgs 482-499, “The Political Economy of Obesity: The Fat Pay All” by Alice Julier (Moodle)
- Pgs 169-187, “Thin Is Not In: Two Fat Ladies and Gender Stereotypes on the Food Network” by Sherrie Inness (Moodle)
- Pgs 162-186, “Anorexia Nervosa: Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture” by Susan Bordo (Moodle)
Unit III: Food, Identity, and Culture

Week 8: March 25 (Essay 1 Due)
Identity and Culture
  - Chapters TBA in Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, & Power (Williams-Forson)

(April 1-Easter Recess)

Week 9: April 8 (CBL Journal Due)
Identity and Culture (continued)
In-class Film: Daughters of the Dust (Dash 1991)
  - Pgs 151-168, “Beating the Biscuits in Appalachia: Race, Class, and Gender Politics of Women Baking Bread” by Elizabeth S. D. Engelhardt (Moodle)
  - Pgs 277-294, “‘We Got Our Way of Cooking Things’: Women, Food, and Preservation of Cultural Identity among the Gullah” by Josephine Beoku-Betts (Moodle)
  - Pgs 265-278, “‘Please Pass the Chicken Tits’: Rethinking Men and Cooking at an Urban Firehouse” by Jonathan Deutsch (Moodle)
  - Pgs 491-509, “Mexicanas Taking Food Public: The Power of the Kitchen in San Luis Valley” by Carole Counihan (Moodle)

Unit IV: Food in the Global Economy

Week 10: April 15
Food Production in the Global Economy
  - Chapters 1-6 in Transnational Tortilla: Race, Gender, and Shop-Floor Politics in Mexico and the United States (Muñoz)

Week 11: April 22 (CBL Journal Due)
Global Economy (continued)
  - Pgs 452-466, “Whose ‘Choice’? ‘Flexible’ Women Workers in the Tomato Food Chain” by Deborah Barndt (Moodle)
  - Pgs 94-112, “Charlas Culinarias: Mexican Women Speak from Their Public Kitchens” by Meredith E. Abarca (Moodle)
  - Selected Websites on Women and Food Security on the Global Scale (Moodle Links)
Unit V: Conclusion—Resistance and Community Organizing

Week 12: April 29 (Essay 2 Due)
Patriarchy, Meat, and Vegetarianism
  • Ch. 1-4, Ch. 9, and Epilogue in *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* (Adams)

Week 13: May 6 (CBL Journal Due)
Alternative Food Movements, Community Organizing, and Resistance
  • Pgs 263-281, “If They Only Knew’ The Unbearable Whiteness of Alternative Food” by Julie Guthman (Moodle)
  • Pgs 68-86, “Mapping the Food Movement: Addressing Inequality and Neoliberalism” by Teresa Marie Mares and Alison Hope Alkon (Moodle)
  • Pgs 283-307, “Just Food?” by DuPuis et al. (Moodle)
  • Pgs 331-347, “Conclusion: Cultivating the Fertile Field of Food Justice” by Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman (Moodle)
  • Pgs 510-514, “A Feminist Examination of Community Kitchens in Peru and Bolivia” by Kathleen Schroeder (Moodle)
  • Selected web articles re: Michael Pollan’s work (Moodle)
  • Selected pages from *Sistah Vegan: Black Female Vegans Speak on Food, Identity, Health, and Society* (Moodle)

Final Presentation and CBL Project During Final Exam Period
Thursday, May 9th from 3:00-5:30pm