

**SOCIOLOGY 330**  
**SOCIOLOGY OF FOOD INEQUALITIES**  
**Fall Term 2022**

Fully Remote Course

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Virtual Office Hours (via Zoom):

9:00-10:30am Tuesdays, or by appointment

Sign up at: [www.wejoinin.com/sheets/ogixl](http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/ogixl)

This course examines the social relations behind the food we eat, including its production, distribution, preparation, and consumption. We will look at the environmental, health, and social effects of our increasingly global and industrial agriculture and food system, and how they relate to social inequality. The course also explores the broad range of alternatives and social movements that have emerged, both globally and domestically, in response to these changes. By the end of the course, I hope that you will have gained a stronger understanding of the food system, your role in it, and various approaches to changing it. This class is also intended to strengthen your ability to read critically, to engage actively in discussion and debate, to explore new subject matter creatively, and to communicate ideas clearly and effectively.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, you should be familiar with:

- The dynamics of our current globalized, industrial food system, and the major transformations that food production, trade, and consumption have undergone in the past century.
- Conceptual frameworks for analyzing the food system and its social effects, in the context of economic globalization and neoliberalism.
- A range of critiques of the dominant industrial or conventional food and agriculture system, including issues of social justice/inequality, and environmental impact and sustainability.
- The roots of hunger, famine, and food insecurity both domestically and internationally, as well as multiple positions in debates over their causes and solutions.
- Various positions in several current public debates and trends regarding food, including the increasing interest in organic and locally-grown food, and controversies over food safety, food deserts, obesity, pesticides, and biotechnology, among other issues.
- A range of alternatives and responses to the dominant conventional food system, both in the U.S. and in the global South (or Third World), including food justice, food sovereignty, organics and fair trade.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1) Class Participation:** This is an upper-level online course, with a substantial online discussion component in Canvas. Your active participation in discussions is critical to making the class worthwhile, both for yourself and your classmates, and it counts for 10 percent of the final course grade. Note: In this online class, **participation requires that you reply to other students' postings in Canvas**, both their weekly reading responses (see #3-A, below) and their documentary film responses (see #3-D, below).

**2) Readings:** Everyone should finish the week (ending Sunday evening) having completed *all* of the required readings listed on the syllabus for that week, whether or not you are posting a reading response for that week. Incomplete preparation deprives everyone of the benefit of your insights and analysis.

### 3) ASSIGNMENTS:

#### A) READING RESPONSE POSTINGS:

On six (6) weeks during the term, you should write a short response/reaction that **incorporates all of the starred (\*) readings for that week.** (Important: **Posting a response in Weeks 1, 2, and 3 is required.**)

**These postings should be very short papers, between 500-800 words** (see specifications below). Response postings should be well organized and clearly written, with correct grammar and spelling.  
**Note:** The 500-word minimum is a firm minimum.

**IMPORTANT:** For some weeks, I will post specific questions, prompts, or instructions in the Canvas assignment window; please follow those prompts/instructions in your response. If there are no specific instructions, in your reading responses you may criticize or praise the readings, find points of similarity or divergence between them, question the authors' key ideas or concepts, point out weaknesses, relate the readings to your own personal experiences, examine their underlying values/assumptions, compare them to other readings, etc. Overall, for all reading responses, the key point is this: You should critically and thoughtfully engage with and respond/react to the ideas in all of the starred readings; the posting should not be merely a summary or restatement of the author's points.

Two important things to include in your reading responses:

- Quotes from the readings, and/or references to specific passages (with the author's last name) are necessary evidence of your engagement. When you include direct quotes, you must provide the page numbers. See the sample postings for examples.
- At the end of your posting, please include one or more questions about the readings (in **bold type**) that will help frame our online discussion. Also add the word count of your posting at the end.

➔ **Post your response to our course Canvas website** (under the "Discussions" tab, click on the discussion for the appropriate week, and then "Reply" to start a new posting).

*NOTE: Please DO NOT attach a file to the posting; instead, compose your response in a word processing program, then select the text, copy it, and paste it into the window for the discussion post.*

**Warning:** Don't write your posting online in Canvas; you are likely to lose your work! You are responsible for saving a backup copy of all your written work.

**POSTING DEADLINE: 11:59pm Sundays** (at the end of the week the readings are assigned in)

**\*\*Late posting policy:** If your posting is up to 12 hours late (until 11:59am Monday), you will receive 65% of what your grade would have been. No credit will be given after 11:59am Monday.

➔ **Reply briefly to at least one other student's posting, no later than 11:59pm on Monday.** This is a required element of the reading response assignment. (Click on the student's discussion posting, then click "reply," and enter your reply in the text window.)

I will evaluate your reading response postings using the grading rubric on Canvas, and usually add written feedback as well. Evaluation for reading response postings breaks down in this way:

- **Meaningful Engagement (up to 3 points):** The posting engages in a substantial way with the main ideas and/or arguments in all of the starred readings. It identifies common themes or draws connections between authors/readings, where relevant. (If a prompt is provided, the posting responds to the prompt.)
- **Grammar/Syntax, Clarity, Use of Readings, Format (up to 3 points):** The posting is clearly written, with correct grammar and spelling. It includes direct quotes from the readings to illustrate key points, with page number references. It adds at least one (boldfaced) question at the end, and a total word count for the posting.

**B) TWO FOOD EXERCISES (15 points each) OR COMMODITY CHAIN ANALYSIS (30 points)**

You may choose to do either two of the food exercise options, OR the longer commodity analysis project, **both of which are described in detail in a separate document on Canvas**. All of the options involve writing up your findings/reflections in an essay format (5-7 double-spaced pages for exercises; 10-14 pages for the commodity analysis).\* These papers should be submitted to the appropriate Assignment link in Canvas. All guidelines and specifications for these assignments are posted in the relevant module on Canvas. (\**Alternatively, you may choose a video essay option for one of the two exercises. In order to choose this option, you must check with me by email very early on to discuss expectations.*)

**Deadlines** for these assignments are as follows:

- **Exercise #1:** **Due by Saturday, October 29 at 11:59pm**
- **Exercise #2 (OR Commodity Analysis):** **Due by Monday, December 5 at 11:59pm**

*Policy on late essays:* Late food exercise essays turned in within 3 days (72 hours) after the deadline will receive 65% of what the grade would have been. No credit will be given for papers more than 3 days late.

**C) DOCUMENTARY FILM RESPONSES:** On 7 weeks during the term, there are required documentary films assigned (see calendar schedule below). Please watch all of these films. **For six (6) of those seven weeks, you should write a short response to the film (at least 250 words)**, on the separate discussion forums on Canvas. Also, please be sure to reply to at least one other student’s film response, which counts toward the participation portion of your grade. You will receive up to 3 points for each posting, depending on your level of engagement with the film content and the course themes. **The deadline for posting film responses is 10:00am on the Friday of the week the film is assigned.** Replies to another student must be posted by 10am Saturdays (24 hours after the deadline). Note: The late posting policy is the same as for reading responses (65% credit up to 12 hours late; no credit after that).

**E) EXTRA CREDIT:** You will have opportunities during the term to earn extra credit, up to a maximum of 4 points. See the two “Extra Credit Guidelines” documents posted on Canvas.

**EVALUATION/GRADING:**

The final course grade will weigh the assignments and requirements in the following way:

➤ Class Participation	10 points
➤ Reading Response Postings (6 total):	36 points (6 points per posting)
➤ Documentary Film Responses (6 total):	18 points (3 points per posting)
➤ 2 Food Exercises (18 pts. each) <u>OR</u> Commodity Analysis	36 points total
➤ Extra credit (add'l reading or film responses, up to 2 pts each)	4 points possible
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TOTAL:	104 possible points

Final grades will be calculated based on the following table:

A	93.0-104.0	B-	80.0-82.9	D+	67.0-69.9
A-	90.0-92.9	C+	77.0-79.9	D	63.0-66.9
B+	87.0-89.9	C	73.0-76.9	D-	60.0-62.9
B	83.0-86.9	C-	70.0-72.9	F	59.9 or less

**CLASS READINGS**

**1) There is one required textbook for this class:**

**Jason Konefal and Maki Hatanaka (editors). 2018. *Twenty Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. Oxford University Press.**

➤ Options for accessing this book:

--Easiest: A 180-day E-Book rental is available for \$21 at:

<https://www.redshelf.com/book/979973/twenty-lessons-in-the-sociology-of-food-and-agriculture-979973-9780190662141-jason-konefal-maki-hatanaka>

--There are hard copies for sale online

--One hard copy of the book is on 2-hour reserve at the PSU Library, to read or scan chapters

**NOTE: You must either rent or buy this textbook, or access it at the PSU Library on reserve. You will not be able to pass the course without reading the assigned chapters in the textbook.**

**2) Readings on Canvas:** All of the remaining required readings for the course are posted on the class Canvas website, under the “Course Content” link, and then in the folders for the relevant dates.



**COURSE “MENU” AND READINGS**

Note: I reserve the right to shift/add/drop readings during the quarter. I will notify you of changes in advance.

**\*Starred readings *must* be included in your reading response postings;** other readings may be included.

DATE	TOPICS	READINGS
	<b>FIRST “COURSE”:</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE</b>
<b>WEEK 1</b> <b>Sept. 26-</b> <b>Oct. 2</b>	Intro to the Sociology of Food & Agriculture  The Global Industrial Food System; Concentration and Consolidation  <b><u>*Post response to Week 1 readings on Canvas by Sunday, Oct. 2, 11:59pm, and reply to one student by 11:59 Monday Oct. 3.</u></b>	*Jason Konefal and Maki Hatanaka. 2018. Introduction to <i>Twenty Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture</i> . ( <a href="#">E-book link</a> )  *J. Dara Bloom. 2018. “Globalization of Food: The World as a Supermarket.” Chap. 8 in <i>Twenty Lessons (E-book)</i> .  *Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar. 2010. “Agriculture and Food in Crisis: An Overview.” 9-30 in <i>Agriculture and Food in Crisis</i> .  George Steinmetz. 2016. Super Size: The Dizzying Grandeur of 21 <sup>st</sup> -Century Agriculture.” (Photos and video.) <i>New York Times</i> , October 5.  *Matt Krupnick. 2022. “Costly Cow: Can Biden’s Bet on Local Meat Producers Loosen Big Beef’s Grip?” <i>The Guardian</i> , Feb. 17.  <b>(Optional):</b> Phil Howard. 2018. “Increasing Corporate Control: From Supermarkets to Seeds.” Chap. 7 in <i>Twenty Lessons (E-book)</i> .

	<b><u>Required Film for Week 2:</u></b> (post response by Friday Oct. 7, 10:00am)	<b><i>“Food, Inc.”</i></b> (Available at <a href="https://vimeo.com/31813990">https://vimeo.com/31813990</a> ) ( <u>Content warning</u> : Contains some scenes of animal slaughter.)
<b>WEEK 2</b> <b>October</b> <b>3-9</b>	Food Access, Diets, Health/Illness, and Safety  <b><u>*Post response to Week 2</u></b> <b><u>readings on Canvas by</u></b> <b><u>Sunday, Oct. 9, 11:59pm, and</u></b> <b><u>reply to one student by 11:59</u></b> <b><u>Monday Oct. 10.</u></b> (Note: These deadlines are not shown on the syllabus for future weeks)	*Anthony Winston and Jin Young Choi. 2018. “Food, Diets, and Industrialization.” Chapter 3 in <b><i>Twenty Lessons (required E-book).</i></b>  *Winne, Mark. 2008. “Growing Obese and Diabetic; Going Local and Organic.” 110-136 in <i>Closing the Food Gap</i> .  *Andrew Jacobs and Matt Richtel. 2017. “How Big Business Got Brazil Hooked on Junk Food.” <i>New York Times</i> , Sept. 16, 2017.  *Michael Pollan. 2016. “Big Food Strikes Back: Why Did the Obamas Fail to Take on Corporate Agriculture?” <i>NY Times</i> , Oct. 5.  Julie Guthman. 2007. “Can’t Stomach It: How Michael Pollan et al. Make Me Want to Eat Cheetos.” <i>Gastronomica</i> 7(2): 75-79.  Michael Moss. 2009. “The Burger That Shattered Her Life.” <i>The New York Times</i> , October 3.  <b>Plus:</b> Center for Food Safety website: <a href="http://www.endindustrialmeat.org">www.endindustrialmeat.org</a>
	<b><u>Film for Week 3:</u></b> (Post response by Fri. Oct. 14, 10:00am)	<b><i>“A Place at the Table”</i></b> (watch online via <b>PSU Library here:</b> <a href="https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/watch/a-place-at-the-table?context=channel:film-platform">https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/watch/a-place-at-the-table?context=channel:film-platform</a> )
<b>WEEK 3</b> <b>October</b> <b>10-16</b>	The Roots of Hunger;  Food Aid to the South; “Big Hunger” in the North	*Justin Sean Myers. 2018. “Food and Hunger.” Chap. 13 in <b><i>Twenty Lessons (required E-book).</i></b>  *Andrew Fisher. 2017. <i>Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance Between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups</i> . 1-10, Introduction.  *Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins. 2015a. <i>World Hunger: Ten Myths</i> . Grove Press. 13-33, “Too Little Food, Too Many People.”  *Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins. 2015b. “World Hunger: Ten Myths.” <i>Food First Backgrounder</i> 21(2) (Summer).  *Megan Tady. 2007. “Who Does U.S. Food Aid Benefit?” <i>In These Times</i> , September 12.  Siobhan McDonough. 2022. “Giving People Cash is Usually Better than Shipping Them Food.” <i>Vox</i> , June 28.

<p><b>WEEK 4</b> <b>October 17-23</b></p>	<p>The Environmental and Climate Impacts of the Industrial Food System</p>	<p>*Sean Gillon. 2018. "Food and the Environment." Chap. 12 in <i>Twenty Lessons (required E-book)</i>.</p> <p>*Eric Holt-Gimenez. 2019. <i>Can We Feed the World Without Destroying It?</i> 1-10, "Politics, Power, &amp; Potential of Food."</p> <p>*GRAIN. 2011. "Food and Climate Change: The Forgotten Link."</p> <p>*Oliver Millman. 2021. "Meat accounts for nearly 60% of all greenhouse gases from food production." <i>The Guardian</i>, Sept. 13.</p> <p>*Fiona Harvey. 2017. "Switching to Organic Farming Could Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions." <i>The Guardian</i>, Nov. 14.</p> <p>Eve Andrews. 2021. "Should I Give Up Dairy Because of Climate Change?" <i>Grist</i>, April 29.</p> <p><b>(Optional):</b> IPES. 2022. "The Politics of Protein" (2-minute video and report): <a href="http://www.ipes-food.org/pages/politicsofprotein">http://www.ipes-food.org/pages/politicsofprotein</a></p>
<p><b>SECOND "COURSE":</b></p>		<p><b>LABOR, INEQUALITY, AND JUSTICE</b></p>
<p><i>Film for Week 5:</i> (post response by Fri. Oct. 28, 10:00am)</p>		<p><i>"The Harvest/La Cosecha"</i> (watch online via PSU Library: <a href="https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/watch/the-harvest-la-cosecha-2">https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/watch/the-harvest-la-cosecha-2</a>)</p>
<p><b>WEEK 5</b> <b>October 24-30</b></p>	<p>Food and Labor (I): Farmworkers and Migration</p> <p><b>Food Exercise #1 DUE</b> <b>Saturday Oct. 29, 11:59 pm</b> (OR if doing commodity chain analysis, email a progress update to Prof. Jaffee)</p>	<p>*Seth Holmes. 2013. <i>Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies</i>. Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7. University of California Press. (<b>E-Book via PSU Library</b>)</p> <p>*Margaret Gray. 2018. "Food and Labor." Chap. 11 in <i>Twenty Lessons (required E-book)</i>.</p> <p>*Christine Ahn, M. Moore and N. Parker. 2004. "Migrant Farmworkers: America's New Plantation Workers." <i>Food First</i>.</p>
<p><i>Film for Week 6:</i> (Post response by Fri. Nov. 4, 10:00am)</p>		<p><i>"Food Chains"</i> (watch online via PSU Library here): <a href="https://www-filmplatform-net.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/product/food-chains/">https://www-filmplatform-net.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/product/food-chains/</a>)</p>
<p><b>WEEK 6</b> <b>Oct. 31- Nov. 6</b></p>	<p>Food and Labor (II):  Food, Globalization, Migration, and Labor Organizing</p>	<p>*Deborah Barndt. 2004. "Fruits of Injustice: Women in the Post-NAFTA Food System." 37-51 in G. Otero, ed., <i>Mexico in Transition</i>.</p> <p>*L.A. Minkoff-Zern. 2017. "Farmworker-Led Food Movements Then and Now." 157-178 in Alkon (ed.), <i>The New Food Activism</i>.</p> <p>*Richard Mertens. 2017. "Tomato Pickers Win Higher Pay. Can Others Use Their Strategy?" <i>Christian Science Monitor</i>, March 9.</p> <p>Lynne Terry. 2022. "Oregon Legislature Passes Bill Mandating Overtime Pay for Farmworkers." <i>Capital Chronicle</i>, March 3.</p>

<p><b>WEEK 7</b> <b>Nov. 7-13</b></p>	<p>The Global Food Crisis, the Covid Pandemic, and the Industrial Food System</p>	<p>*Jennifer Clapp. 2022. “Food Price Spikes are About Much More than Ukraine.” <i>Civil Eats</i>, May 16.</p> <p>*GRAIN. 2022. “Lurching from Food Crisis to Food Crisis.” July 8. <a href="https://grain.org/e/6862">https://grain.org/e/6862</a></p> <p>*Watch this 14-minute video news segment on Democracy Now, titled “Food Shortage or Economic Crisis?”: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKSGkXPwiiU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKSGkXPwiiU</a></p> <p>Fiona Harvey. 2022. “Record Profits for Grain Firms Amid Food Crisis Prompt Calls for Windfall Tax.” <i>The Guardian</i>, August 23.</p> <p>*Oliver Laughland and Amanda Holpuch. 2020. “‘We’re Modern Slaves: How Meat Plant Workers Became the New Front Line in Covid War.’” <i>The Guardian</i>, May 2.</p> <p>John Vidal. 2021. “Factory Farms of Disease: Industrial Chicken Production is Breeding the Next Pandemic.” <i>The Guardian</i>, Oct. 18</p>
	<p><b>THIRD “COURSE”:</b></p>	<p><b>ALTERNATIVES: FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL</b></p>
	<p><i>Film for Week 8:</i> <i>(Post response by Friday Nov. 18, 10:00am)</i></p>	<p><b>“Black Gold” (watch online via PSU library here:</b> <a href="https://search.library.pdx.edu/permalink/01ALLIANCE_PSU/1sk2t0o/alma99903054644101853">https://search.library.pdx.edu/permalink/01ALLIANCE_PSU/1sk2t0o/alma99903054644101853</a></p>
<p><b>WEEK 8</b> <b>Nov 14-20</b></p>	<p>Fair Trade</p> <p>Organics: Social Movement or Organic, Inc.?</p>	<p>*Daniel Jaffee. 2018. “Fair Trade.” Chap. 16 in <i>Twenty Lessons (required E-book)</i>.</p> <p>*Kevin Obach. 2014. <i>Organic Struggle</i>. MIT Press. Chapter 1, Introduction. (Note: Chapter 6 is optional.)</p> <p>*Whenona Hauter. 2012. <i>Foodopoly</i>. The New Press. 98-115, “Organic Food: The Paradox.”</p> <p>*View the graphics showing organic industry consolidation (and remaining independents) on Phil Howard’s website: <a href="https://philhoward.net/category/organic/">https://philhoward.net/category/organic/</a></p> <p>Civil Eats. 2020. “After 10 Years of Rapid Growth, What Does Organic Mean Today?”</p> <p><b>Also:</b> Look at Cornucopia Institute’s Organic Dairy Scorecard: <a href="https://www.cornucopia.org/organic-dairy-report-and-scorecard/">https://www.cornucopia.org/organic-dairy-report-and-scorecard/</a></p>





## **ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES:**

**Syllabus:** This is your principal guide to the class. Before emailing the instructor with a question, please *reread the syllabus first* to make sure that it doesn't answer your question.

**Contacting the Instructor:** Please do not contact me from inside Canvas. Instead, please send a regular email to me at [jaffee@pdx.edu](mailto:jaffee@pdx.edu), and include "Soc 330" in the subject line.

**Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism:** I expect that your writing and your work on all assignments in this course will reflect original thought. Using the work or ideas of others without proper citation and attribution—whether from the internet, publications, or any other source—is plagiarism, and is a violation of the Student Conduct Code. **To avoid plagiarizing, please adhere to at least these basic principles:**

- 1) If you use another person's ideas in your work, you must cite the source in the text (author last name(s) and year\*);
- 2) If you use another person's exact words in your work, you must put those words in quotation marks, as well as cite the source in the text, with a page reference (author last name, year\*, and page number).
- 3) All sources cited in the text must also appear in the reference list/bibliography\*

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the university, and I take violations of this policy very seriously.

Therefore, **any student whom I find to be in violation of these standards will receive either a grade of zero for the assignment in question, or a failing grade for the entire course.** I will also report all violations of this policy to the Dean of Student Life. If you have questions or concerns about these policies, or about proper attribution/citation practice, I strongly encourage you to discuss them with me. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for more information: <http://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct>

\*In your reading and film response postings, you do not need to list the publication year or add a reference list.

**PSU Sexual Harassment Policy:** As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. I also have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals at: <https://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help>. For more information about Title IX, please complete the required student module "Creating a Safe Campus" in your Canvas.

**Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities:** I am committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students, and to creating an equitable, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union: 503-725-4150, [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu), <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>. If you already have DRC accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and to discuss your accommodations.

**Technology and Access:** All of the course materials, including readings, assignment descriptions, discussion forums, and assignment submission folders, are located on the course Canvas site, except for the required e-book, *Twenty Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. You will need a computer, tablet, or similar device with an internet connection to access Canvas. Please contact me if you have difficulty accessing any of the course materials or assignments.