This graduate seminar examines the vibrant and growing range of social movements around food and agriculture, with an emphasis on the global South (or Third World). We will begin by examining several theoretical and conceptual frameworks for understanding historical changes and current dynamics in the international food and agriculture system. We will then turn to the current phenomena of global food price crises and “land grabs,” as well as social movement responses to them, and examine different positions in fraught debates around population growth, hunger, and the appropriate role of biotechnology and agribusiness relative to low-input, peasant agriculture in feeding a growing global population. The remainder of the course will examine several case studies of social movements around land, food, and agriculture. There will be some focus on the United States, but the predominant emphasis is on agrarian movements in the global South, as well as movements bridging South and North. We’ll end the term with a look at emerging paradigms and alternative models, and examine dynamic current debates around food sovereignty and food justice.

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

- Theoretical and conceptual frameworks for analyzing the food system and its social effects, in the context of economic globalization and neoliberalism.
- Frameworks for understanding the major historical transformations that food production and consumption have undergone globally, including food regime theory.
- A range of critiques of the dominant industrial or conventional food and agriculture system, including but not limited to issues of social inequality and justice, labor, and environmental sustainability.
- A range of positions in debates on the root causes of hunger, famine and food insecurity and the best ways to address these problems.
- The multiple causes of the recent global food price crises and the phenomenon of global land grabs, as well as the social and environmental effects of these dynamics.
- A range of responses and alternatives to the dominant food and agriculture system, from agrarian, peasant, consumer, environmental, and other social movements. This includes contestation by movements both in the global South and in the global North (particularly the U.S.), as well as transnational movements linking South and North.
- Multiple positions in debates around the meanings of food sovereignty and food justice.

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly Response Postings:

For seven (7) class sessions during the quarter, you should write a thoughtful response/reaction incorporating all of that week’s assigned readings. These should be very short papers, between 600-
900 words. They should be posted to our course D2L site no later than 8:00 am on the day of class, so everyone in the class can read each others’ postings and begin the discussion online before we meet. Late posting policy: Responses posted between 8am and 10am will receive 50% credit; no credit will be given for postings later than 10am.

• Posting a Response: (under “Course Content,” click on “Response Paper/Postings,” then on the folder for the appropriate date, and then “Compose” to start a new posting), so that everyone in the class can read each others’ comment before we meet. NOTE: Please DO NOT attach your Word file to the posting; instead, please compose your response in a word processing program, then select the text of your response, copy it, and paste it into the text window for the posting.

• Replying to Others’ Postings: In order to facilitate an online discussion, please read all the other postings, and write/post at least one reply to another student’s posting, before class time. To respond to a posting, click on the posting, click “Reply,” and type your response into the box.

In these responses, you may criticize or praise the readings, tease out points of divergence or convergence, question key ideas, propose alternative approaches or clarifications, point out weaknesses, relate them to your own experience, examine or question their theoretical or methodological approach or underlying values and assumptions, pose questions they raise for you, and/or compare them to other readings. The key point is to give evidence of having critically and thoughtfully engaged with all of required readings. Quotes from and references to specific passages in these readings (with page references) will be necessary evidence of your engagement. Regardless of the specific topics you choose to reflect on in writing, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings. I will read your responses, and respond to you by email with one of these comments:

++ Especially strong response—keep it coming!
+ Good response; you interacted meaningfully with the readings.
- Unsatisfactory; you didn’t seem to engage with the readings.

All response postings that receive either + or ++ will count equally toward this portion of the course grade.

2. SCHOLARLY BOOK REVIEW or FOOD MOVEMENT RESEARCH PAPER

You can choose one of two options for your substantial written project:

A. Scholarly Book Review:

This assignment will be a review of a recent book (published in 2013 or later) broadly related to food-related social movements, which will be submitted for publication to an academic journal by the end of the term. Your choice of book should reflect your own research interests and goals, as well as theoretical/analytical perspectives from the course. We will identify potential target journals early in the term.

In the first two weeks of the term, you should: read a number of book reviews in several journals to familiarize yourself with the review approach and format; identify both the book you wish to review and the journal to which you will submit the review; and make contact with the book review editor(s) of your target journal(s) to confirm that they are open to receiving your review. We will discuss this assignment further in the early weeks of the quarter. Please consult with me individually if you have questions about book or journal selection, or the assignment in general.
B. Food Movement Research Paper:

This is a substantial (roughly 5,000-6,000 words, double spaced) individual research paper. Depending on the stage and focus of your graduate work, the paper may be structured as either a draft journal article, part of your master’s thesis, a dissertation proposal or a dissertation chapter, a conference paper, a research report for a non-governmental organization, or some other format (upon consultation). The paper should focus either on one specific agrarian or food-related social movement, or potentially an issue cutting across multiple food movements, that is relevant to your own research interests/goals. The paper should incorporate both readings from the course and additional bibliographic resources, and it should demonstrate critical engagement with the key course themes and analytical frameworks. I will ask you to meet with me individually early in the term to discuss potential topics.

For both options, there will be a set of sub-deadlines:

- Paper or Book Review Proposal (2-3 pages): due by Fri., Jan. 27, end of day (by email).
- Initial Draft: due by Tues., Feb. 28.
- Peer Review Responses: due by Tues., March 7.
- In-Class Presentations: Tues., March 14
- Final Review/Paper: due by Mon., March 20, 9:00am (on D2L).

During the final course meeting (March 14), students will present the results of their research to the entire class, in approximately 15 minutes, in a conference presentation format. You are encouraged to use Powerpoint or other visuals to accompany your presentation. We will discuss this assignment further in the early weeks of the quarter. Feel free to consult with me individually about the paper. The final book review or paper will be due on Mon., March 20.

3. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

This is a small, discussion-based graduate seminar. Your presence and active participation are essential for the learning experience of everyone in the course. You are expected to attend all class sessions, and actively participate in discussion. Everyone should arrive in class having completed all of the required readings, and having read the other students’ postings. Incomplete preparation deprives everyone of the benefit of your insights and analysis, and in a small seminar such as this one, that is especially detrimental.

EVALUATION

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

- Response Papers/Postings: 35%
- Discussion Participation: 30%
- Book Review or Research Paper: 35% (including in-class presentation)
READINGS

Required Books:
These books are available at the PSU bookstore, or online (from Powell’s or other sources).


Readings on D2L: The remaining readings will be posted in electronic form on the course D2L website (under the “Course Content” tab, in “Course Readings”).

Supplementary Readings: The readings listed as “supplementary” for each week are optional, for those who want to read more deeply into a topic, or as potential research sources. If you are very unfamiliar with the topic or theory covered, you may benefit from reading one or more of these pieces. In most cases these will be posted on D2L, but a few will not, in which case I am happy to make copies available if you want them.

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SCHEDULE OF READINGS

JANUARY 10 (Week 1): Setting the Table: Introductions


JANUARY 17 (Week 2): Historical and Theoretical Foundations: Food Regimes; Globalization of Food and Agriculture


On D2L:


Supplementary:


JANUARY 24 (Week 3): Land Grabs, Financialization, and Movement Responses


On D2L:


Supplementary:

JANUARY 31 (Week 4): “Feeding the World”: Neo-Malthusians and Anti-Malthusian Critiques; Organic and Anti-GMO Movements

On D2L:


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**Supplementary:**


FEBRUARY 7 (Week 5): Alternative Agrifood Movements in the U.S.; Farmworker and Food Service Labor; Food Democracy

**Guest Speaker:** Amy Coplen, Ph.D. Candidate, Urban Studies: Organizing Food Service Labor in the Portland Area

On D2L:


Supplementary:


FEBRUARY 14 (Week 6): Peasant Movements in the Global South; Transnational Movements

Edelman and Borras, Political Dynamics of Transnational Agrarian Movements. 1-60.

On D2L:

Wendy Wolford. 2010. This Land is Ours Now: Social Mobilization and the Meanings of Land in Brazil. New York: Duke. (Excerpts)


Supplementary:


FEBRUARY 21 (Week 7): Transnational Movements; Food Sovereignty and Seed Sovereignty

Guest Speaker: Carol Hernández Rodríguez, Ph.D. Candidate, Sociology: Indigenous Movements for Seed Sovereignty and Agroecology in Chiapas, Mexico

Edelman and Borras, Political Dynamics of Transnational Agrarian Movements. 61-102; 151-156

On D2L:


[OVER]
Supplementary:


FEBRUARY 28 (Week 8): Fair Trade

**On D2L:**


**Supplementary:**


MARCH 7 (Week 9): Open-Source Seeds; Localism and Justice

**Guest Speaker:** Jack R. Kloppenburg, Jr., Founder, Open Source Seed Initiative (OSSI), and Professor Emeritus of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**On D2L:**


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MARCH 14 (Week 10): Where Do We Go From Here?; Wrapping Up

→ Student Paper Presentations


On D2L:


(Additional readings, TBA)