

## Summer 2021

Food Justice and Community Development

HUSV2401/ENVR2401

Tuesdays- Asynchronous (with exception of week 1, 7/6/21, which will be synchronous)

Thursdays- 1:30-5pm (Dodge Hall 050 and Zoom)

Online & In-person

### Professor Information

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### S-LTA Information

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“Unless we change the underlying value relations of our food system—the contradiction between food as essential for human life and food as a commodity—we will be working on the margins of a system that is structurally designed for profit rather than need, speculation rather than equity, and extraction rather than resilience. This doesn’t mean that the many social innovations challenging the inequities and externalities of the corporate food regime around the world are not worth implementing. On the contrary, our food system needs innovation. But for these hopeful alternatives to have a chance of becoming the norm rather than the alternative within a food system that is structurally favourable to large-scale industrial agriculture, we will need to know what structural parts of the system need changing.” ~Eric Holt- Giménez, Chapter 2, *A Foodie’s Guide to Capitalism*

## ***Course Description***

Does it fascinate you to think about what it takes to get that mouthwatering slice of pizza to your table? Do you want to know more about how to make food choices that are not only good for you, but good for others and the environment as well? Finally, have you ever wondered what it looks like to create large-scale change, as well as how to make a difference at a local level? Working from the foundations of environmental justice, this inquiry seminar will uncover and examine the key dilemmas of the food system in the United States today: including production, access, distribution, and key stakeholders from producers, to retailers, to workers, to consumers. In doing so, it will consider the following questions: 1) What are the justice-related issues facing stakeholders within the food system in the United States? 2) What policies have most influenced the American food system? and 3) What are the opportunities and leverage points for change in improving justice outcomes in this system?

## ***Course Objectives***

In this course, students will examine food justice from diverse theoretical, applied and ethical perspectives (e.g., race, ethnicity, class, culture, equity, law and policy, economy, ecology, sovereignty, and wellbeing). They will also analyze the food justice movement's community development dimensions by looking at organizations/movements struggling to create healthy and sustainable food systems locally, regionally, and globally. This course includes readings, lectures, films, and discussions coupled with experiential learning through both service-learning and other fieldwork (including, but not limited to: field trips to local farms and food hub areas). In all of this, the course's main goal is to *provide preliminary insights and understanding* about our complex food system: from the social, environmental, and economic factors related to food production, processing, and distribution; to food's impact on health and nutrition; to how people access food based on geographic and socioeconomic indicators. In addition, students will analyze these justice frameworks as they intersect with creating a context for change in our food system from multiple perspectives- grassroots, organizational, business-driven, and political.

As a result of participating in this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate topics central to considerations of food justice, including how food is grown, processed/manufactured, accessed, and the impact of food on health and nutrition;
- Articulate the role of multiple stakeholders working for positive social change in our food system, including grassroots, organizational, business-driven, and political change;
- Explain the foundational theories that shape food justice and their connection(s) to community development;
- Demonstrate their ability to communicate clearly and inspire reader or audience interest and understanding through their speaking and writing;
- Analyze one or more social issues through the lens of food justice and community development;
- Demonstrate critical reflection of service through guided activities.

### ***Experiential Service-Learning***

A key approach of achieving our learning outcomes in this course is through experiential *service-learning*. We have several community partners for this term, and each student will be in a small group working with one organization for the duration of the class. These opportunities are:

- City Sprouts (only available for students in Boston: in-person service)

City Sprout's school garden provide middle school age students exposure to hands on science learning and urban gardening. This is especially impactful for students that live in areas with little to no access to nature. City Sprouts has set up gardens around Boston Public Schools across the city and provides tuition free summer and after school programs for the students. Over the summer, City Sprouts is looking for volunteers to help maintain the school gardens while school is not in session.

- Old West Church

Old West Church's Food Forest seeks to provide food for the Boston community. Each week, they hold 2 community meals and are looking for ways to collaborate with local food pantries to provide food for them. Food justice is a large part of Old West Church's identity and this is how they contribute to

Boston's Food Justice movement. As they continue to grow the food forest, their goal is to implement a program where they can provide affordable meals to families in Boston, with an equitable and just process of sourcing the food. For the food that they can't produce in their own food forest, they plan to partner with BIPOC farmers and pay them fair prices for their produce.

- The Data Culture Group

Northeastern Professor Rahul Bhargava and Connection Lab Director Emily Bhargava have created a data sculpture to expose the impact of Covid-19 on food insecurity in Massachusetts. The sculpture is a table built out of 1659 utensils. This is the average number of new households that applied for SNAP benefits every day in Massachusetts during the early months of the pandemic. The sculpture will be displayed at different sites around the city of Boston to demonstrate how Covid-19 has impacted the food security of individuals in Boston. The sculpture is intended to raise awareness of food insecurity, to increase engagement in the issue, and to connect people who are struggling to make ends meet with food resources.

- Afrimerican Culture Institute

The institute is working on a project, the Cultural Nutrition Program, to promote African Diaspora Community Development through cultural nutrition education. The project goals include finding healthy cultural food recipes / options to introduce to the students that reflect their cultural backgrounds; developing programs/events to improve student engagement, cultural education and popularity of proposed food options; and developing community networking and partnerships to aid with programming, authenticity and diversity.

## ***Readings & Resources***

### ***Readings***

**Most of the readings for this class come from our required texts:**

Gaddis, J. (2019). *The labor of lunch: Why we need real food and real jobs in America's public schools*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Holt-Giménez, E. (2017). *A foodie's guide to capitalism: Understanding the political economy of what we eat*. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press and Food First Books.

Mares, T. (2019). *Life on the other border: farmworkers and food justice in Vermont*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

**Other supplemental article readings will be posted on Canvas in the Weekly Modules. Assigned readings should be completed for the week they are assigned. Specific updates will be made in class and posted on Canvas.**

***The instructor reserves the right to make changes in or additions to the readings and assignments in the syllabus. These changes will be posted in advance on Canvas and/or announced in class. It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for class updates.***

- Civil Eats: <http://civileats.com/>
- Marion Nestle's Blog: <http://www.foodpolitics.com/>
- Mark Bittman NY Times Opinion pieces: <http://bittman.blogs.nytimes.com/>
- Tom Philpott Mother Jones food pieces: <http://www.motherjones.com/authors/tom-philpott>
- Agricultural Justice Project: <https://www.agriculturaljusticeproject.org/en/about/>
- Domestic Fair Trade Association: <http://fairfacts.thedfta.org/>
- Barry Estabrook's Blog: <http://politicsoftheplate.com/>
- The Food and Environment Reporting Network: <https://thefern.org/>
- A Summary of Farm Policy News: <http://farmpolicy.com/>
- Racial Equity Tools: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/home>
- Feeding America, Food Insecurity in the U.S.: <http://map.feedingamerica.org/>
- Real Food Media: <http://realfoodmedia.org/>
- Continuum of Internalized Superiority: <https://movetoamend.org/sites/default/files/ContinuumOfInternalizedSuperiority.pdf>
- Map of Native Land: <https://native-land.ca/>
- The Field Guide to a Regenerative Economy: <http://fieldguide.capitalinstitute.org/>
- Fair World Project: <http://fairworldproject.org/>
- Bread for the World, Hunger Report: <http://hungerreport.org/2016/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/HR2016-Full-Report-Web.pdf>
- Food & Land Sovereignty Resource List for COVID-19 (Compiled by Soul Fire Farm, Black Farmer Fund, and Northeast Farmers of Color): [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1B66EvxSza8\\_zPdEqF0rYUXGJqA5vRBCqu7zPPPDRQlw/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1B66EvxSza8_zPdEqF0rYUXGJqA5vRBCqu7zPPPDRQlw/edit?usp=sharing)

## Additional Course Information

### **Canvas & Zoom**

We will utilize Canvas for the communal elements of the course—i.e., this is where the syllabus, course schedule, and assignments will be posted. We will also be using the Discussion Board on Canvas to post responses to questions posed in each weekly module and to dialogue with one another about those topics. In addition, we will use Canvas to send you class emails and announcements.

Most weeks, if not all, we will meet via Zoom during our scheduled class time. If you are unable to attend, please let me know in advance. There will be work to prepare you to make the most of those sessions in Canvas, but note that nothing is meant to be a heavy lift, but rather to inspire your curiosity around and exploration on the topics of food justice and social change.

*The instructor reserves the right to make changes in or additions to the assignments in the syllabus. These changes will be posted in advance on Canvas and/or announced in our synchronous class meetings. It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for class updates.*

### **Honor Code**

Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. Refer to your student handbook for details. **Students who submit someone else's work as their own will receive a failing grade (0 points) for the assignment.** Please see: <http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/> and [https://nuonline.adobeconnect.com/\\_a833303360/academicintegritychecklist/](https://nuonline.adobeconnect.com/_a833303360/academicintegritychecklist/) for more details.

## **Requirements**

1. Attendance for our synchronous sessions is highly recommended and class participation via Canvas discussion boards is mandatory and will count toward your final grade. If you are unable to attend synchronous sessions, please make arrangements with the instructor- in which case the class can be recorded and you are responsible for reviewing presented material. **You must turn in all required assignments to successfully pass this course.** During our synchronous meetings, please arrive on time and come prepared to participate in class discussions. If you are going to be late turning in an assignment, are going to miss a class session, or have any other disruptive emergencies, please let me know beforehand so we can make other arrangements.
2. Class Rules of Engagement: In this class we will discuss important issues that have social and political dimensions to them, as well as political, environmental, and ethical consequences. As such, it is important that we create an atmosphere that allows for rigorous discussions, for students to feel that all positions supported by evidence can be heard, and all positions can be subject to legitimate scrutiny. I do not grade you on your politics or ethical positions. I grade you on your participation and your capacity to make, construct, and critique an argument.

At times this semester we will discuss issues and events, watch videos, or read materials that may be disturbing to you because they describe or depict current or historical acts of violence, environmental destruction, classism, sexism, and/or racism. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to the course material, either with the class or with me afterwards, I welcome such discussion as an appropriate part of our coursework.

3. Late Assignments: All discussions and assignments should be turned in on, or in advance of, the deadline. Extensions will be granted only in special, extenuating circumstances and with sufficient advance notice (more than three days prior to the stated deadline).
4. Written Assignment Guidelines

While much of the writing you will do in the course is reflective in nature, it should still:

- Be well-organized, well written, and engaging to read;
- Use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar;
- Address all discussion and/or assignment components;
- Clearly demonstrate an understanding of the topic;
- Fully explain your ideas and go beyond simple generalizations to the specifics, nuances, and challenges involved;
- Illustrate your ideas with examples, facts, or stories; and
- Draw on key concepts from class discussions.

All written work should follow consistent style guidelines for citation and format (I recommend APA). Written work must be submitted on or prior to stated deadlines via Canvas in the appropriate place. If you would like clarification on any assignment, or if you have any questions or concerns about your grades, please make an appointment to meet to discuss these issues.

### ***Accessibility Statement***

Please view the Northeastern University Disability Center's website for information regarding requests for academic accommodations at <http://www.northeastern.edu/drc/>

### ***NU Writing Center***

For additional assistance with your writing, please access services at the NU Writing Center. See: <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/writingcenter/tutoring/online-appointments/>

### ***Methods of Instruction and Learning***

Class material and learning may include the following: class lectures, large and small group class discussions, written assignments (both informal and formal), group presentations/debates, video/multi-media presentations, discussion boards, one-on-one meetings, and experiential service-learning.

### ***Land Acknowledgment***

What is a Land Acknowledgment?

A Land Acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

Why do we recognize the land?

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honoring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. It is important to understand the long-standing history that has brought you to reside on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. Land acknowledgments do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation. It is also worth noting that acknowledging the land is Indigenous protocol.

Northeastern University (<https://provost.northeastern.edu/oidi/about/>)

We would like to acknowledge the territory on which Northeastern University stands, which is that of the Wampanoag, the Pawtucket, and the Massachusetts People.

While visiting campus, please honor the continued efforts of the Native and Indigenous community leaders who work to preserve the history and culture of the tribes which make up Eastern Massachusetts and the surrounding region. Today, Boston is still home to many indigenous peoples, including the Mashpee Wampanoag and Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and many more in our region.

For more information, please visit: North American Indian Center of Boston (<http://www.naicob.org/>).

For information on resources and services provided by the Commission on Indian Affairs of the State of Massachusetts, please visit: Commission on Indian Affairs, State of MA (<http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/dhcd/indian-affairs.html>)

<http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland>

<https://native-land.ca/>

### ***Title IX***

*Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from sex or gender-based discrimination, including discrimination based on gender-identity, in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.*

Northeastern's Title IX Policy prohibits Prohibited Offenses, which are defined as sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship or domestic violence, and stalking. The Title IX Policy applies to the entire community, including students, faculty and staff of all gender identities.

If you or someone you know has been a survivor of a Prohibited Offense, ***confidential*** support and guidance can be found through **University Health and Counseling Services** staff (<http://www.northeastern.edu/uahcs/>) and the **Center for Spiritual Dialogue and Service clergy members** (<http://www.northeastern.edu/spirituallife/>). By law, those employees are not required to report allegations of sex or gender-based discrimination to the University.

Alleged violations can be reported non-confidentially to the Title IX Coordinator within ***The Office for Gender Equity and Compliance*** at: [titleix@northeastern.edu](mailto:titleix@northeastern.edu) and/or through **NUPD** (Emergency 617.373.3333; Non-Emergency 617.373.2121). Reporting Prohibited Offenses to NUPD does **NOT** commit the victim/affected party to future legal action.

Faculty members are considered "responsible employees" at Northeastern University, meaning they are required to report all allegations of sex or gender-based discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator.

In case of an emergency, please call 911.

***Please visit [www.northeastern.edu/ouec](http://www.northeastern.edu/ouec) for a complete list of reporting options and resources both on- and off-campus.***

## Evaluation of Learning/Grading

- **Class Participation/Completion of Online Components & Activities - 30 points**

Each week by Tuesday, the full module for the following week's session/topic will be posted on Canvas. Students are required to complete the readings, review the posted/supplemental materials, complete any activities, and post in the associated Discussion Boards (both the content-related discussion board and the Food in the News discussion board beginning Week 3) no later than the Thursday of the assigned week **before** the synchronous class session (with the exception of Week 1, when materials will be due Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>). Your contributions to the discussion boards will be graded for completion and thoughtfulness and will contribute to the class participation grade (but will not receive individual grades). If you are missing a post or do not post a sufficient post on a given week you will lose 4 points, and if you post late on a given week you will lose 2 points.

- **Reading Summaries (dates vary, you will sign up in class on 7/6)- 20 points (10 points x 2 summaries/student)**

Throughout your academic career you will be asked to summarize and respond to the materials you engage with. This assignment will ask you to choose a text and explain its purpose within the context of our course theme- partially so everyone can benefit from all of the rich readings assigned while acknowledging that this is a 7-week course and it may not be possible to read and deeply consider each of the readings in this short time. Therefore, you will be responsible for representing the main ideas and your thoughts on them in summary for your peers for two different readings throughout the term (signup will happen during the first day of class). Your audience for this assignment is your instructor and your classmates. You should thoroughly represent the main ideas and key points of the reading, as well as provide accurate textual evidence throughout.

Requirements: Your summary should accurately and objectively represent the authors' purpose and main ideas in about 1-2 pages.

To achieve your purpose with your audience, use the following strategies in your summary:

- Introduce the text in the beginning of your summary so your readers know which text you are summarizing. Include the author (or authors') names, the date of publication, and the publication title within the first few sentences;
- Focus on the writer (or writers') arguments by reporting the text's thesis and supporting ideas. Show that you understand the "big picture"—the writer's (or writers') purpose and how they support it;
- Avoid giving examples and evidence that are too specific, to maintain the focus of the overall argument of the article. Feel free to generalize about types of evidence, kinds of examples, and rhetorical strategies used by the authors to support their argument;
- Use author tags/citations so that your reader understands that you are reporting authors' ideas;
- Use an objective tone and a mix of paraphrased and quoted source material.

The next part of your response should be about 1-2 pages and should answer the following question:



- Was the author(s) successful at reaching his or her purpose with his or her intended audience? Your response should answer this question by including a thesis, reasons to support your thesis, and evidence to support your reasoning. Choose at least one of the following features on which to focus your response:
  - Purpose: Are the text's aims clear?
  - Audience/Reader: Did you, as the reader, accept the author's claim?
  - Thesis/Main Ideas: Do the main ideas support the thesis?
  - Organization & Evidence: Did the author support his or her contentions in a logical order?
  - Language & Style: Did the tone and style support the author's purpose?

Overall Strategies:

Begin your essay with a summary of the article and then lead into your response with an effective transition from an objective academic summary to an analytical response that is well supported with textual examples. Although writers have successfully combined summary and response, it's best to keep them separate for this assignment. Submit this assignment in the Module for the week it is assigned to the class (the Thursday before it's assigned to class- for example, the summaries for the week 2 readings should be posted NO LATER than Thursday, July 8).

Length of Summary: 2-4 pages

\*Assignment and rubric language adapted from: <https://writing.colostate.edu/comparchive/co150/09-10/phaseoneacademicsummary.cfm>

- **StoryMap\* (due 7/27) - 15 points**

For this assignment, each group will be asked to create a StoryMap utilizing the instructions from the DITI training that includes a minimum of FIVE entries for the area/neighborhood surrounding their community partner organization. As it pertains to food research and include entries such as the available food options - whether grocery stores, restaurants, corner stores, food access points offered by charitable organizations (i.e. pantries or soup kitchens), etc. Essentially, if you lived somewhere near this partner/in this area and didn't have access to a car, where would you get your food from? How expensive or affordable would the options available to you be? Would you be able to find food from a variety of cultural traditions? What sorts of fresh food would be available to you? Research what feels most illuminating to you about what you find and include that in your StoryMap entries.

To complete this task, you should designate one team member whose sole task is to put together the StoryMap, and the entries and relevant information should be decided upon, divided up, and written/researched by the remaining team members.

\*See below: make sure this is also added/linked to your team's ePortfolio website.

- **Food in the News Voicethread/Recorded Presentation (dates vary, you will sign up in class on 7/6) - 10 points**

Each student will sign up (sign-ups will take place during our first class on 7/6) to record a brief 10-15 minute presentation on how what they've chosen ties into topics we've been discussing in the

course, a source link, and 1-2 discussion questions about their source issue as it relates to food/food justice/food sovereignty. These pieces can be pulled from various news sources and/or blogs, other social media, or from attending events or activities. The student should post these materials to the appropriate discussion board in the module on Canvas for the week it is assigned to the class by the Thursday prior (for example, the Food in the News presentations/materials for discussion during week 3 readings should be posted NO LATER than Thursday, July 15).

- **Community-Engaged Learning ePortfolio/Team Project- (ongoing, see relevant dates below) - 25 points total (15 team points possible, 10 points possible for individual final reflection)**

Each team should create a website (through Google Sites, Wordpress, etc.) they can use to compile everything related to their work with their community partner throughout the term. This will include (but is not limited to): your StoryMap, your project proposal, a log of meetings with your community partner/notes from those conversations, drafts of your project and feedback received (as applicable), your final project and any relevant artifacts pertaining to it.

Additionally, you will be given guidance on designating team roles and completing a team contract/agreement- both of which should be documented on your ePortfolio.

Your ePortfolio should be set up and populated with (at minimum) your team roles, team contract/agreement, your project proposal, and your StoryMap **no later than 7/27**.

The ePortfolio should be finalized with meeting log/notes, drafts of your project and feedback received (as applicable), your final project and any relevant artifacts pertaining to it **no later than 8/19**.

Each team member’s individual final reflection should be added/linked to the team’s ePortfolio **no later than 8/19**. Guidelines for this culminating individual reflection are available in our Canvas site.

*We will be providing feedback and checking in with your team and partner organization throughout the term. We have left dates flexible and fluid knowing that each team will be working with a different partner organization, and will be working on and around different deadlines. If you require our assistance in project planning/management or want/need more structure as a team, don’t hesitate to let us know and we would be happy to work with you to provide that.*

**Summary of Evaluation of Learning/Grading and Dates**

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Class Participation/Completion of Online Components & Activities	Ongoing	30 points
Reading Summaries (2 per student)	Ongoing (sign-ups will take place on 7/6, first summaries due for those signed up for Week 2 readings on 7/8)	20 points
StoryMap	7/27	15 points

Food in the News Voicethread/Recorded Presentation	Ongoing (sign-ups will take place on 7/6, presentations will begin on 7/15)	10 points
Community-Engaged Learning ePortfolio/Project	<p>7/27- ePortfolio set up + populated with team roles, team contract/agreement, project proposal, and StoryMap</p> <p>8/19- ePortfolio should be finalized with meeting log/notes, drafts of your project and feedback received (as applicable), your final project and any relevant artifacts pertaining to it</p> <p>8/19- individual final reflections due (posted on/linked on ePortfolio)</p>	25 points (15 team, 10 individual final reflection)

**TOTAL: 100 points**

A = 93-100	C = 73-76
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69
B = 83-86	D = 63-66
B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
C+ = 77-79	F = 59