

## **FALL 2016**

Food Justice and Social Change  
FSEM 1101-08  
Fridays 11:45am-1:25pm  
Ryder Hall 141

### Professor Information:

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“Food justice seeks to ensure that the benefits and risks of where, what, and how food is grown, produced, transported, distributed, accessed and eaten are shared fairly” (Gottlieb and Joshi, 2010, p. 6).

### ***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 through readings, media, discussion, and field trips 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 impacted the workforce in the American food system? and 3) What are the opportunities and leverage points for change in improving justice outcomes in this system?

### ***Learning Outcomes***

The main goal of this course is to *inspire curiosity* and *provide preliminary insights* 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, it

will review justice frameworks to provide 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:

- Name key insights of 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, organization, business-driven, and political change;
- Identify one or more skills that they can use to contribute to or engage in their community;
- Analyze one or more social issues through the lens of the course's discipline and/or topic;
- Demonstrate critical reflection of service through guided activities.

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

A key component of achieving our learning outcomes in this course is through experiential and *service-learning*. For this course we have three main partner organizations.

1) Sustainable Business Network (SBN) of Massachusetts: <http://sbnmass.org/>

Launched in 1988 as the Responsible Business Alliance, the Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts (SBN) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Cambridge, MA with the mission to build a Massachusetts economy that is local, green and fair. In September 2013, SBN celebrated 25 years of supporting and building local entrepreneurship. With over 1000 locally owned and independent businesses, affiliates and individuals participating in SBN's projects and programs, SBN remains the leading organization of sustainable business in the state.

There are two options of what to volunteer for with SBN:

- Boston Local Food Festival; Sunday, September 18, 2016
- Independent group project for anyone unable to attend this event

2) The BPS Experience Lab/The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics: <http://newurbanmechanics.org/>

The BPS Experience Lab is a collaboration of the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics and the BPS Office of Innovation. We aim to identify ways to improve the 'experience' of being part of the district, for all of our constituents: students, teachers, parents, community members who might live down the street from a school. Announced by the Mayor in fall 2015, the Lab has been in operation since spring 2016, tackling experiments such as BPS

yellow bus transportation, personalized learning and ed tech access, innovations in school meals, and the registration and assignment process for families entering the district.

Jaclyn Youngblood from the BPS Experience Lab will visit our class on 10/7 to discuss the specifics, but each of you will visit a BPS school to observe their school lunch process and to interview students about their school lunch experiences. If you are absolutely unable to go to any of the times available (we will have a schedule in October), you will be given an alternate project to assist with their school nutrition innovation, such as setting up a time to interview a local food entrepreneur.

3) Fresh Truck: <http://www.freshtruck.org/>

“We love Boston and we’ve been committed to making it a healthier city since 2012. It all started while Josh was working as a health educator at the MGH Charlestown Healthcare Center. He kept hearing from his families that it was difficult to shop for healthy food — at that time, the only grocery store in the neighborhood was set to be shut down for a year-long renovation. It was this experience and some in-depth research that inspired Fresh truck to rethink the traditional grocery store model, make it mobile and bring it to the people that need it the most. Since our launch in 2013, we have sold more than 17,000 lb of fresh food, cultivated a citywide network of community health partners, and our neighborhoods have embraced us warmly. We’re hearing the stories of kids trying their first sweet potato and families preparing meals together. We have a big vision for the future of food and healthcare, and we are only just getting started.”

We will be hearing in class from Alyson Chow, then each of you will sign up for a volunteer shift on the Fresh Truck that fits your schedule.

### ***Resources***

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/>

### ***Blackboard***

We will use Blackboard (BB) for the communal elements of the course—i.e., this is where the syllabus, course schedule, and assignments will be posted. You will also be using the Discussion Board on BB to post responses to the readings. In addition, we will use BB send you class emails and announcements.

### ***Evaluation of Learning/Grading***

- **Class Attendance & Participation- 25 points**

You are expected to be present, engaged, and prepared for every class session. We only meet a limited number of times throughout the semester, therefore for all of us to get as much out of this experience as possible, we must all commit to making the most of our time together. Each absence will result in a loss of 5 points, being tardy (even a minute late) will result in a loss of 3 points. If you are in class on time & engaged, you will earn an 'A' (full 25 points) for this portion of the grade.

- **Film Reflection- 15 points (due 9/25 on Blackboard)**

We will not have class on 9/23. No formal class meeting. Pick a movie from the list below, watch online, on Netflix, or check it out from the library, and write a 250-500 word brief summary and personal reflection/reaction on our Blackboard discussion board (What did you learn? What do you want to learn more about?).

Options (if you have another you'd like to propose, just let us know):

*Food Chains*

*Food, Inc.*

*Fed Up*

*A Place at the Table*

*Just Eat It*

This reflection post will be graded using the 'Reflection Post Grading Rubric' posted on Blackboard under 'Course Material'.

- **Haymarket Reflection- 15 points (due 10/6 on Blackboard)**

We will travel to the Haymarket area as a class on Friday, 9/30 during our class time. You will be given a brief guide for your observations during our time there, and will be expected to post a 250-400 word reflection on our Blackboard discussion board about your observations and reactions (due 10/6). More information will be handed out in class prior to our journey.

This reflection post will be graded using the 'Reflection Post Grading Rubric' posted on Blackboard under 'Course Material'.

- **Experiential Service-Learning- 45 points**

See the descriptions above for more information on this component of our course. You will earn 15 points for each of your experiential service-learning experiences, and we will carve out time in class to reflect on and share out about these experiences.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Points</b>
Class Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	25 points
Film Reflection	9/25	15 points
Haymarket Reflection	10/6	15 points
Experiential Service-Learning: Sustainable Business Network	Volunteer (one): 9/18 Independent Project	15 points
Experiential Service-Learning: BPS Experience Lab	Sign up on 10/7 for one observation and/or interview	15 points
Experiential Service-Learning: Fresh Truck	Multiple dates available (sign up on Blackboard/Google Docs)	15 points

**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

## Course Calendar\*

Date	Topic
Sept 9	<p>Class Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review syllabus, course outcomes</li> <li>• Introduction to the Sustainable Business Network- 9/18</li> <li>• What is food justice to you?</li> <li>• Food + Justice = Democracy: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydZfSuz-Hu8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydZfSuz-Hu8</a></li> <li>• Your Favorite Meal (Activity)- <i>do some research and bring what you find for next time!</i></li> </ul>
Sept 16	<p>Social, Environmental, and Economic Dimensions of Food Production and Distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish 'Your Favorite Meal' Activity</li> <li>• Feeding Cities: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLWRclarri0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLWRclarri0</a></li> </ul> <p>Labor in the Food System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Chain Workers Alliance</li> </ul> <p>Guest: Annika from Fresh Truck</p> <p><i>Reminder Boston Local Food Festival is Sunday, 9/18</i></p>
Sept 23	<p>No formal class meeting. Pick a movie from the list below, watch online or on Netflix, and write a 250-500 word brief summary and personal reflection/reaction on our Blackboard discussion board (post by 9/25).</p> <p>Options (if you have another you'd like to propose, just let us know):</p> <p><i>Food Chains</i>  <i>Food, Inc.</i>  <i>Fed Up</i>  <i>A Place at the Table</i>  <i>Just Eat It</i></p>
Sept 30	<p>Observation Field Trip- we will meet at Ruggles Station in front of the turnstiles and travel to Haymarket together to visit two sites:</p> <p>Historic Farmer's Market: <a href="http://www.boston-discovery-guide.com/haymarket-boston.html">http://www.boston-discovery-guide.com/haymarket-boston.html</a></p> <p>Boston Public Market: <a href="https://bostonpublicmarket.org/">https://bostonpublicmarket.org/</a></p> <p>You will be given some guidelines for observation during our trip- be sure to reflect, engage, and be aware- we will discuss over the next couple of weeks.</p>

Oct 7	<p>Social, Environmental, and Economic Dimensions of Food Production and Distribution Labor in the Food System</p> <p>Jaclyn from The BPS Experience Lab/The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics-introducing our experiential service-learning project with them, preparing you to engage!</p> <p>Service-Learning Reflection In Class- Boston Local Food Festival &amp; Fresh Truck</p>
Oct 14	<p>Access, Food Deserts, and Food Apartheid (eating nutritionally-sound food on a budget)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Chrissy Beluk, Northeastern Alum, discussing her experiences with the food system as a student</p>
Oct 21	<p>Food's Impact on Health and Nutrition</p> <p>Special Guest- TBA! MEET IN RP 909</p>
Oct 28	<p>Guest Speaker: Dr. Chris Bosso, School of Public Policy, discussing agricultural &amp; food policy</p>
Nov 4	<p>Join with Erika Koss's Class- presentation by Burundi Friends International MEET IN RP 909</p>
Nov 11	<p>NO CLASS- Veteran's Day</p>
Nov 18	<p>Justice Frameworks &amp; Social Change</p>
Nov 25	<p>NO CLASS- Thanksgiving Break</p>
Dec 2	<p>Last Class- Wrap-Up, Reflection, and Evaluations</p> <p>Possible: 'World in Your Cup' Coffee Talk</p>

\*All of this is subject to change, and changes will be announced in advance.