

ENVIRONMENT 25
5 units

**Good Food for Everyone:
Health, Sustainability and Culture**
(Tentative Syllabus)

Lecture: Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:00 – 3:05, Kinsey Science Teaching Pavilion Room 1240B
Discussion Sections: TBA

Instructors: James C. Bassett, Viraj Sawant
Bassett's Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:05pm - 4:05pm
Viraj's Office Hours: TBA
E-mail: TBA

Course Description

This course is a broad introduction to issues relating to food with an emphasis on health, sustainability and culture. Health issues the class will explore include the science of nutrition, hunger, famine, obesity, food safety, and eating behavior and psychology. Sustainability topics encompass the interaction of food systems (both cultivated and wild) with key environmental challenges such as water quantity and quality, energy, biodiversity and climate change, as well as fair food production practices. Cultural and societal dimensions of food include questions about how class, race and gender shapes food access and food's meanings to different groups historically, nutrition and agriculture policy and law, economics of food systems, and artistic engagements with food. Readings will be assigned from the course texts and from supplemental articles and other material. Weekly discussion sections will be used to follow up topics addressed in lectures and readings and to engage in additional individual and group exercises.

Required Texts

Guptill, A.E., D.A. Copelton, and B. Lucal, *Food and Society: Principles and Paradoxes*, Polity, 2nd edition, 2017.

Edelstein S., *Food Science*, Jones & Bartlett, 2018.

Barber, D., *The Third Plate*, Penguin Books, 2014.

Pollan, M., *In Defense of Food*, Penguin Books, 2009.

Web Sites

<http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/teaching-the-food-system/>

<http://food.nationalgeographic.com/>

Grading Criteria

Grades will be determined as follows:

Discussion and participation	20%
Project	30%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	30%

Discussion and Participation

The participation grade will be based upon participation in lecture and in discussion section activities. The “Reflective Writing” assignments will be included here.

Project

All students will submit an individual project that may take one of the following forms:

Essay. A short essay (6-8 pages if double-spaced, 12 point, 1-inch margins). This is not a research paper. Rather, it is meant to express your own thoughts, while at the same time demonstrating an understanding of the course material. Your essay should make explicit reference to the subject matter of at least six of the course readings, as well as other course concepts and facts as appropriate; but it should not summarize. It should instead use reference to the readings and course material to make one or more broader points.

Research Proposal. The student identifies an interesting and important research question, undertakes a review of pertinent literature, and describes a study that would address the question. Examples might be at what age does food advertising begin to affect children, would food taxes affect consumption, are genetically modified foods safe, will people overeat “healthier” versions of products like chips and French fries feeling they are lower in calories, and how do public perceptions of the food industry affect public policy?

Placing Experience in the Broad Context. Students may choose to volunteer or work in a setting pertinent to the topics of the class, and then write how the local experience relates to broader knowledge on the topic. For instance, a student working in a soup kitchen might interview its directors, then write about choices kitchens must make between feeding more people cheaper (unhealthier) foods and serving healthier foods to fewer individuals, reviewing what has been written on the topic from other settings. A student working with the UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative – Food Pod could integrate that experience with what is known globally. Please discuss how the knowledge you acquire from the broader context might be used to improve local programs. Please obtain permission of the instructor to insure the proposed topic fits with the aim of the assignment.

Independent Project. Students may choose to create a project of their own, say a film, a video of children's food ads documenting themes used to sell food, a presentation that might be used in schools, an analysis of legal cases on a particular topic, etc. Students may

work with a partner or as a team, but the amount of work should reflect the number of people involved, and the same grade will be assigned to those participating in a team or group. This option affords students the opportunity to be creative and to pursue work in a medium of interest to them. Please obtain permission from the instructor. Student is also responsible for creating (with TA approval) a grading rubric to fit their individualized project.

Exams

There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. Both exams will be closed book and will consist of a mixture of multiple-choice and brief-answer questions.

Prerequisites

There are no required prerequisites.

Course Outcomes

At the end of the course a student should:

1. Have an increased knowledge of historical and current issues regarding sustainability and human health aspects of food.
2. Understand the interrelationships between different disciplines, historical time frames, cultures and geographical settings on food-related issues.
3. Gain an appreciation for the broader role of food in shaping human cultures and social systems and for the importance of food in literature and the arts.

Environment 25

Good Food for Everyone: Health, Sustainability and Culture

Date	Session Description	Readings
Week 1, Tuesday Course Introduction and Overview	Good food is healthy, sustainably produced and culturally meaningful; basic concepts in food systems; history of food systems	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 1, 2, and 3 Pollan - I; One & Two
Week 1, Thursday Science and Nutrition	Molecular basis of food; macronutrients and micronutrients; origins of food texture and flavor; nutrition and physiology; physical and mental development)	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 4, 5, and 6 Pollan - I; Three & Four
Week 1: DISCUSSION	Introductions and Mindful Eating exercise	FS chapter 1; F&S chapter 1 Be prepared to talk about the "Discussion" questions found at the end of the chapters of both texts.
Week 2, Tuesday Human Health	Psychology and appetite triggers; eating behaviors and body image; sports nutrition; cardiovascular disease; obesity; food and aging; public health and education systems; diet debates	Meeting:
Week 2, Thursday Human Health (cont.)		Meeting: Barber - Chapters 7, 8 and 9 Pollan - I; Five & Six
Week 2: DISCUSSION	[Prepare for food label exercise]	FS chapter 2; F&S chapter 2 & 3 Be prepared to talk about the "Discussion" questions found at the end of the chapters of both texts.
Week 3, Tuesday Production	Agriculture and aquaculture; food processing and transport; food economics; food law and policy; food safety)	Meeting: Barber: Chapters 10, 11, and 12 "GMO" article
Week 3, Thursday Natural Resources and Environment	Water; energy; elemental cycles; air quality; climate change)	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 13, 14, and 15 Pollan - I; Seven & Eight
Week 3: DISCUSSION		FS chapter 4; F&S chapters 4 and 5 Be prepared to talk about the "Discussion" questions found at the end of the chapters of both texts.
Week 4, Tuesday Natural Resources and Environment	Biodiversity; genetically modified foods; food waste, composting and waste-to-energy)	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 16, 17, and 18 Pollan - I; Nine & Ten

Week 4, Thursday Distribution and Access	Marketing and advertising; hunger, famine and obesity; food conflicts; food justice; food politics	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 19, 20, and 21 Pollan - II; One & Two
Week 4: DISCUSSION	Midterm	FS chapter 5; F&S chapters 6 & 7 Be prepared to talk about the "Discussion" questions found at the end of the chapters of both texts.
Week 5, Tuesday Cultural and Social Perspectives	Food and cultural identity; food and gender, race, ethnicity and orientation; aversions and taboos; food and social media	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 22, 23, and 24 Pollan - II; Three; 1), 2), 3)
Week 5, Thursday Arts and Humanities	Food literature, representations in art, food art	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 25, 26, and 27 Pollan - II; Three; 4), 5)
Week 5: DISCUSSION		FS chapter 18; F&S chapter 8 & 9 Be prepared to talk about the "Discussion" questions found at the end of the chapters of both texts.
Week 6, Tuesday Future of Food	Food security; innovations; good food for 10 billion people?	Meeting: Barber - Chapters 28, 29, 30 Pollan - III; One & Two
Week 6, Thursday Presentations	Final Exam	Barber: Chapter 31, Epilogue Pollan: III; Three & Four

Book "codes" in Readings column:

Food Science = FS

Food & Society = F&S

The Third Plate = Barber

In Defense of Food = Pollan