

York University  
Faculty of Environmental Studies  
**Course Title: *Food, Land and Culture***  
Fall 2016, ENVS 5011

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Office hours: Tuesday 10am to noon, or by appointment.

### **Catalogue Description:**

This course examines food, land and people from a critical interdisciplinary environmental perspective. Students will have the opportunity to pursue their own interests related to food politics, planning, education, sustainable and alternative agriculture, human-animal relationships, and ethics, from a local and/or global perspective.

### **Course Description**

Food has a material and symbolic life with connections to place, culture and history. In the form of commodity, food also signals shifts in our relationship to land. The encoding of food featured in art and film reveals different forms of agency that elucidate uneven power relations, oppression, identity, patterns of consumption, production and commodity shifts. Reflecting on concepts of land and culture through treaty history in Canada and the revitalization of Indigenous food harvesting, to colonial food practices in the Caribbean and North America, to the examination of commodities such as sugar and the modernization of food processing, to recipes and food preparation as experiential research, and more recent debates around food sovereignty and security, we will critically examine the politics of food, land and culture to encourage your own research interests.

### **Learning Objectives**

The objectives of the course are:

- to better understand the role of food as a material of sustenance and in representing social, political and cultural conditions;
- to introduce food research through film, artwork, and literature often emerging from personal narratives;
- to understand the social, political and cultural connections between land and food, including Indigenous perspectives;
- to better understand global food systems functioning in the everyday.

Specific outcomes of the course are:

- the ability to discuss and explain how food relates to land and culture;
- the ability to critically understand, discuss and explain the differences between food security and food sovereignty;
- the ability to critically analyze social, political and cultural issues related to food;
- the ability to apply and transfer new understandings and knowledge to your own research.

### **Approach and requirements**

Course material is a catalyst for activating your research interests and finding your own voice within the discourse and scholarship. This seminar course includes guest speakers, film screenings and required readings that will inform and be central to lectures, presentations and discussions. You are expected to attend all class meetings, complete required readings prior to class time, and arrive prepared to engage actively in class discussions. Mutual respect is expected.

This course will be evaluated following FES's standard S/U for the graduate program. If you would like a letter grade please advise me in the first week. In order to complete the course, students are required to

complete the following assignments (printed assignments should be handed to the course director at the beginning of class).

Assignments (details to follow)

**Weekly critical reflection paper**

**Seminar Presentations**

**Recipe analysis**

**Final paper, proposal and presentation**

### **Academic honesty and Academic integrity**

York's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty states:

*"Academic honesty requires that persons do not falsely claim credit for the ideas, writing or other intellectual property of others, either by presenting such works as their own or through impersonation. Similarly, academic honesty requires that persons do not cheat (attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation), nor attempt or actually alter, suppress, falsify or fabricate any research data or results, official academic record, application or document..."*

*Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist."*

Full policy available at <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

### **Tentative course outline and required readings (Draft: to be revised and formatted)**

Readings listed under each week should be completed for class discussion on that same week.

Readings are available through e-resources services of York University Libraries (unless a url is provided).

<b>September 13</b>	<b>Week 1: Introductions – for Starters</b>
<b>September 20</b>	<b>Week 2: Value of food from sustenance to the market</b>
<b>September 27</b>	<b>Week 3: Commodity - White Flour</b>
<b>October 4</b>	<b>Week 4: Colonialism and Food Relations</b>
<b>October 11</b>	<b>Week 5: Food and Art</b>
<b>October 18</b>	<b>Week 6: Wild Rice: Tradition and Controversy</b>
<b>October 25</b>	<b>Week 7: Food Security and Food Sovereignty</b>
<b>November 1</b>	<b>Week 8: Food Terminal/Terminal Food</b>
<b>November 8</b>	<b>Week 9: The Market</b>
<b>November 15</b>	<b>Week 10: Cookbooks and the written recipe</b>
<b>November 22</b>	<b>Week 11: Food and memory</b>
<b>November 29</b>	<b>Week 12: Final Feast (Final Paper Presentations)</b>

### **Research Involving Human Participants**

Students who conduct a research study using human participants must submit the following for approval prior to the conduct of research:

1. a copy of a proposal outlining the purpose of the research and the methodology to be used
2. a copy of the Faculty of Environmental Studies Human Participants Research Protocol Form.
3. A copy of the Written Informed Consent form or a script of Verbal Informed Consent (Verbal informed consent is permissible only in extenuating circumstances, where written communication is not feasible)

A sub-committee will review this material. Reviews will take up to 2 weeks from the date of submission. If the research is not approved prior to the conduct of the research, then the research will not have received research clearance and will be deemed unacceptable for submission as a component of this course.