ADBI 2010.01 Eating and the Environment, 3 credits

Woods College of Advancing Studies
Spring 2018 Semester, January 16 – May 15, 2018
ONLINE Synchronous, Tuesdays 6:30 – 8:30

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Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation’s finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
There is no bigger impact on Earth than agriculture. And food consumption has the single largest impact on our health. Eating and the Environment focuses on themes of industrialized and sustainable agriculture, including: soil resources and pollution; water and air pollution; pesticides,
herbicides and fertilizers; the farm bill; tropical deforestation; food additives and nutritional supplements; food safety and emerging infectious diseases; meat and dairy sustainability ramifications; GMOs; and climate change. We will have a series of pro/con debates in the class, where students will investigate both sides to a topic and to formulate a concrete opinion based on scientific facts and reasoning.

**Course Parts:**

Part 1 - Fundamentals

The first part of class will be a series of lectures: the principles of economics as they pertain to agriculture; agricultural styles and practices; soil resources and problems; and the myriad ways we pollute the Earth’s air, soil, and water as we obtain food. This is a series of pre-recorded lectures to view at your convenience each week.

Part 2 - Debates

The second part of class will be a series of pro/con debates. You will be the moderator in a series of debates on the subjects listed below. If you are not the moderator, you will be graded on your participation in the debate. Participation is a vital part of your grade, so even if you are not the moderator, you should be doing some background reading each night so that you can take part in the discussions. To be successful in this course, you will be doing a lot of reading, some of which will be self-guided. There are many fantastic scholarly journals and even popular magazines that deal with these topics, as well as newspapers, so please stretch beyond the internet. You will be responsible for a balanced write-up of your subject, as well as for participation on the days you are not presenting.

This course is a hybrid of synchronous (must be online together) and asynchronous (pre-recorded lectures, video documentaries, or online quizzes).

**Dates you MUST be online are:**

1/17 (course introduction) 1/31 (debate)

2/14, 2/21, and 2/28 (debates)

3/14, 3/21, and 3/28 (debates)

4/11, 4/25 (debates)
5/2 (debate, wrap-up, summary)

Note: a camera and microphone would be fantastic, but not necessary. You can go right onto the Canvas site, under “Conferences” and click on “join meeting in progress” Note: as we are doing a lot of reading and documentary film viewing, we need only to be on line from 7:45 – 9:15 each evening.

Part 3 – OPTIONAL Field Trips/Guest Speakers

For the third part of class, we will take up to eight field trips and/or have guest speakers. These are optional, unless they take place during class time, and will be online. More information is found in the appendix at the end of this syllabus:

- Dining Hall Tour, Massachusetts College of Art (Chartwells) Frank Tripp, Head Chef, and Cory Laznic, Dining Director, February 17, 2017 at 9:45 AM
- Open Table, Dorchester, and/or Field Trip/Guest Lecture Jon Belber, Holly Hill Farms, Scituate, MA, April 7, 2017 10:00 AM
- Earth Day, College of the Fenway, April 11th, 12-2 PM
- Muddy River Research Symposium, April 13, Wheelock College, Brookline, 4:30 - 6:00 PM
- The Food Project, West Roxbury, MA, April 28, 2017 9:00 AM
- Harvard Center for the Environment Lecture (TBD)
- Northeastern University Exhibition Kitchen, Barbara Lynch talk and lunch

Part 4: Films

We will view documentary films about food and agriculture during the course of the class. The below is an ambitious list, and we will likely modify what we see during the course of the semester. You are encouraged to view them all, if you have the time and interest. The ones I put on the syllabus are suggestions, and I will poll you on the first day to see if you have seen these. If you have already seen the suggested films, please use the link below, or other films if you clear them with me first, to select an alternate documentary film for you, and I will tailor your quiz accordingly. The documentaries are: Food, Inc.; King Corn (the companion, Big River is DVD only,
and can be seen in class only); Cowspiracy; More than Honey; Sushi: The Global Catch; Farmageddon; Forks over Knives; Dive; Food Beware: The French Organic Food Revolution

http://firstwefeast.com/eat/best-food-documentaries-that-you-should-watch-right-now/fed-up-2014 (Links to an external site.)

Part 5: Quizzes

Quizzes are open book and open notes, but no internet use allowed, and no cutting and pasting. The quizzes are administered on Canvas, during class time, and are timed. All quiz submissions are run through TURNITIN anti-plagiarism software prior to my reading it. Any suspicious submissions will result in failing the course and referral to Boston College’s Academic Honesty board. This includes your quiz submission being similar to a classmate’s because you are taking them together in the same room and are collaborating. This is an online course, and your absolute integrity is a requirement. I am so thankful that, for as long as I’ve been teaching online at WCAS, I have not had one case of plagiarism or cheating. To act in a manner other than absolute academic integrity is to make a mockery of academia and to your classmates, and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the course without a refund. Just don’t do it, and we won’t have any problems.

Textbooks & Readings (Required)

Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States, Seth Holmes, 2013, University of California Press, 234 p. provides an intimate examination of the everyday lives and suffering of Mexican migrants in our contemporary food system. An anthropologist and MD in the mold of Paul Farmer and Didier Fassin, Holmes shows how market forces, anti-immigrant sentiment, and racism undermine health and health care. Holmes’s material is visceral and powerful. He trekked with his companions illegally through the desert into Arizona and was jailed with them before they were deported. He lived with indigenous families in the mountains of Oaxaca and in farm labor camps in the U.S., planted and harvested corn, picked strawberries, and accompanied sick workers to clinics and hospitals. This “embodied anthropology” deepens our theoretical understanding of the ways in which social inequalities and suffering come to be perceived as normal and natural in society and in health care.
Nourished Planet: Sustainability in the Global Food System, Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition

Mangos from India, pasta from Italy, coffee from Colombia: every day, we are nourished by a global food system that relies on our planet remaining verdant and productive. But current practices are undermining both human and environmental health, resulting in the paradoxes of obesity paired with malnutrition, crops used for animal feed and biofuels while people go hungry, and more than thirty percent of food being wasted when it could feed the 795 million malnourished worldwide. In Nourished Planet, the Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition offers a global plan for feeding ourselves sustainably. Drawing on the diverse experiences of renowned international experts, the book offers a truly planetary perspective. Together, these experts plot a map toward food for all, food for sustainable growth, food for health, and food for culture. With these ingredients, we can nourish our planet and ourselves.

Big Chicken: The Incredible Story of How Antibiotics Created Modern Agriculture and Changed the Way the World Eats, Maryn McKenna, 2017, National Geographic, 400 p.

In this eye-opening exposé, acclaimed health journalist and National Geographic contributor Maryn McKenna documents how antibiotics transformed chicken from local delicacy to industrial commodity—and human health threat—uncovering the ways we can make America’s favorite meat safer again. What you eat matters—for your health, for the environment, and for future generations. In this riveting investigative narrative, McKenna dives deep into the world of modern agriculture by way of chicken: from the farm where it’s raised directly to your dinner table. Consumed more than any other meat in the United States, chicken is emblematic of today’s mass food-processing practices and their profound influence on our lives and health. Tracing its meteoric rise from scarce treat to ubiquitous global commodity, McKenna reveals the astounding role of antibiotics in industrial farming, documenting how and why "wonder drugs" revolutionized the way the world eats—and not necessarily for the better. Rich with scientific, historical, and cultural insights, this spellbinding cautionary tale shines a light on one of America’s favorite foods—and shows us the way to safer, healthier eating for ourselves and our children.
Eating Promiscuously: Adventures in the Future of Food, James McWilliams, 2017, Counterpoint Press, 352 p. The human practice of farming food has failed. There are 7,500 known varieties of domesticated apples; we regularly eat about five. Seventy-five percent of the world’s food derives from five animals and twelve plants. Factory farmed meat is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions (about 14 percent, larger than transportation) and consumes 75 percent of the water in drought-prone regions such as the West. We are struck in a rut of limited choices, and the vast majority of what we eat is detrimental to our health and the welfare of the planet. But what if we could eliminate agriculture as we know it? What if we could start over? James McWilliams’s search for more expansive palate leads him to those who are actively exploring the fringes of what we can eat, a group of outliers seeking nutrition innovation outside the industrial food system. Here, we meet insect manufacturers, seaweed harvesters, road kill foragers, plant biologists, and oyster farmers who seek to open both our minds and our mouths—and to overturn our most basic assumptions about food, health, and ethics. Eating Promiscuously generates hope for a more tasteful future—one in which we eat thousands of foods rather than dozens—with a new philosophy that could save both ourselves and our planet.

Barber, D. 2015, The Third Plate: Field Notes on the Future of Food, Penguin Press, 321 p. Today's optimistic farm-to-table food culture has a dark secret: the local food movement has failed to change how we eat. It has also offered a false promise for the future of food. In his visionary New York Times--bestselling book, chef Dan Barber, recently showcased on Netflix's Chef's Table, offers a radical new way of thinking about food that will heal the land and taste good, too. Looking to the detrimental cooking of our past, and the misguided dining of our present, Barber points to a future “third plate”: a new form of American eating where good farming and good food intersect. Barber’s The Third Plate charts a bright path forward for eaters and chefs alike, daring everyone to imagine a future for our national cuisine that is as sustainable as it is delicious.

Note: you will be quizzed on these books at each quiz, but I hope you will find yourself referring to them frequently as we debate topics.

Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more - all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas,
In the case of any technical difficulties or concerns, please contact canvas@bc.edu or 617-552-HELP (4357) for immediate assistance.
NOTE: Canvas requires particular computer specifications and wifi access. It is important that you plan accordingly, particularly for courses that have online components.

Course Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge and competency across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in agriculture as demonstrated by food and demographics, agricultural workers, consumers, and producers.
2. Students will demonstrate ethical knowledge and competency pertaining to the science of sustainable agriculture as demonstrated by learning about biodiversity, tropical deforestation, food subsidies, and industrial agriculture.
3. Students will debate the pros and cons of topics related to food toward the end of developing and honing critical thinking skills.
4. Students will gain applied experience through hands on field work at The Food Project in West Roxbury, MA as an optional trip.

Grading

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Quizzes (lectures, documentaries, debates, and books) 45%
Moderating discussion 15%
Class participation when you’re not moderating and on field trips 40%

The undergraduate grading system for Woods College is as follows:

A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
F (.00)
The graduate grading system for Woods College is as follows:

A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00)
B- (2.67), passing but does not count toward degree
C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit
F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Students who complete course evaluations can access grades earlier, as they are posted.

**Deadlines and Late Work**

Late assignments will be given zero credit. Quizzes will be administered four times in the semester. Documentation of a medical or other emergency is required to make up a quiz. There is no making up your debate day if you miss it, though you can switch with other participants in the class if agreeable to both parties.

**Course Assignments**

You should spend about 2-3 hours per week on reading articles, 30 minutes preparing for the pro/con debates, and an additional 1 hour per week studying for the quizzes. Quizzes will be a mix of class lecture material, labs, reading, films, and activities. In addition, you will spend 1-2 hours crafting a complete and thorough laboratory write-up. Films will be shown, on average they will be 1.5 hours a month. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time but the average is approximately 8 hours per week over the semester.

**Course Schedule (subject to change based on guest speakers)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Reading Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/17</td>
<td>Introduction, Course Set-Up, Lecture: Agriculture, Economics, and Food</td>
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1/24 Lecture: Resources and Pollution; Environmental Pollution including air and water
(continue with Holmes book)

1/31 Lecture: Water Resources and Pollution
(finish Holmes book)

2/7 NOTE: WATCH FILMS PRIOR TO QUIZ
QUIZ 1 (will include Holmes Book, and documentary films: Food, Inc., and Food Beware) (start Barber book)

2/14 Soil Resources (finish Barber book)

2/21 OPTIONAL FIELD TRIP: Mass College of Art Dining Hall Tour and Power Food Panel

2/28 Food Resources, part 1 (start Barilla book)

3/14 QUIZ 2 (quiz will include Barber and Barilla books and the documentary films: Cowspiracy, and More than Honey, King Corn, and Big River) (finish Barilla book)

3/21 The Farm Bill; Food Subsidies
Pro __________ Con _________________

Food Additives (colors, thickeners, preservatives, stabilizers, etc.) and Nutritional Supplements
Pro ____ Con _______
4/4  Aquaculture vs. Fishing

Aquaculture ___________ Fishing __ ____________

Emerging Infectious Diseases; Food Safety; The USDA; The FDA; Food Recalls

Pro _________________ Con ________ ____________

(continue McKenna Book)

4/11  Consuming Meat and Milk

Pro _________________ Con ______________________

Genetically Modified Organisms

Pro ______ ________ Con ______ ________

(Finish McKenna book)

4/18  QUIZ 3 Films: Forks over Knives, and Sushi: The Global Catch; Farmageddon (2 of 3)

(Quiz will include McKenna Book and two of the following three documentaries: (start McWilliams book)

(No Class 4/18 due to Easter week)

4/26  GUEST LECTURE: Emma Kurman-Faber, "Food and Art in America's Test Kitchen"

Packaging and Transportation; Food Miles; Local vs. Organic
Written Work

Woods College students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center (Links to an external site.).

Attendance

Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Many instructors grade for participation; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. This is an online course, you are
expected to be at every class, and 5 points will be deducted from your final letter grade for each absence. This does not include excused absences for medical or other emergencies.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

**Accommodation and Accessibility**

Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Woods College courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- **The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC)** ([Links to an external site.](#)) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- **The Disabilities Services Office (DSO)** ([Links to an external site.](#)) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at [www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility](https://www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility).

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**

Students in Woods College courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the
requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site, for more information.

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