Food serves as one of our most tangible interfaces on a daily basis between ourselves and the environment. Through a study of the development of agricultural systems, circulations of foods and foodways, and lacunae where food insecurity and nutritional deficiencies emerge, we can glimpse a better understanding of the longstanding relationship between ourselves and the environment, at both global and local scales.

While sufficient food is now grown to feed the world’s population, the distribution of food and access to nutritious calories remains a challenge for people in under-developed countries as well as in surprising places in the developed world. And further concerns remain for accommodating future population growth, while acknowledging there have been environmental costs and potential health trade-offs to even reach this point. So our course will examine how we have built the systems of food production and reshaped our environment in the process, with a goal to considering what we might be able to do going forward in several different registers of the human-environment relationship: improving the environmental outcomes of our food production systems, improving our relationship with food consumption and creating more equitable access to healthful food for more people around the world and around our own communities.

Goals: How has food and the environment come to be this way, and what might we be able to do about this going forward? By the end of this course, you should have attained competency in two distinct sets of objectives, and consider for yourself a third:

First, through lectures and readings, you should become familiar with broad concepts and terms that shape the debates over food and the environment.

Second, you should become familiar with how environmental and food issues impact particular places we study, including locally in Los Angeles as well as parallels in seemingly far off (but still interconnected) places in
the Global South, with the aim that you can extrapolate these concepts to yet other places where you have experience or will come into contact in the future.

Third, I ask that you think through your own potential for bettering lives, places, and the environment—the ones we study and the ones you will inhabit in your own future trajectory.

**Grade components:** 60% quizzes (3 quizzes worth 20% each); 39% research paper (proposal 10% and paper 29%); 1% completing the online course evaluation at the end of the course.

**Quizzes:** Quizzes are given in class as listed in the table below. There are no alternate times or make-up quizzes available. Students who are registered with OSD please arrange through OSD for quiz-taking as appropriate.

Quiz format varies, tending to include short answer, blank-completion, multiple choice, diagrams, and short essay questions. Material is drawn from course lectures as well as key concepts from the readings. Readings will be available on the course website (visible once you are logged in).

**Paper:** research plan: 10%—hard copy due in class week 4 (Tuesday)

final: 29%—hard copy due in class week 6 (Thursday)

The research paper will be on a topic of your own choosing; it must relate to food and the environment—while broad latitude of topics will be considered, the paper should fit the political ecology, political economy, development studies, or environmental studies perspectives of our course. Please do not submit topics that fall entirely outside these parameters: e.g. “a history of Chinese restaurants in the San Gabriel Valley” or “Kogi tacos: LA’s cross-cultural tastes;” both are interesting cultural phenomena, but not appropriate to this course. You may check with the instructor if you are unsure whether your topic is appropriate. The project should be your own—something you are interested in (or something we have learned a little about in the course but you want to go further in exploring) and are driven to learn more about. For completing the paper you will draw your research from existing, academic sources—books and journals.

**Due Tuesday, August 28th,** you are required to submit a research plan. This submission will be about 3-4 pages total, comprised of five components:

1. a paragraph that describes as specifically as possible what you intend to study; embedded within this first paragraph you must include a thesis question or statement of what you are actually going to research;
2. a second paragraph that describes why you believe the topic is important or relevant; and
3. the remainder of the paper will describe your plan of how you will go about answering your thesis using a variety of sources;
4. a list of about 10 sources you may use for your research (these sources must be academic—books and journal articles— websites are not acceptable sources per se; the list should be in a bibliographic format according to an accepted style guideline (Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.);
5. a list of about 3 to 5 keywords that encapsulate your topic.

The grading of the research plan will be based on completeness of the above criteria.

**Due Thursday, September 13th,** the final paper will be submitted in class. The finished paper should be about 2500-3000 words, including notes, citations, and an abstract.

Grading of the research paper is qualitative: a sufficient paper that meets the parameters of the assignment will fall in the ‘C’ range, good papers get ‘B’s, and superior papers earn ‘A’s. Incomplete or deficient answers may receive ‘D’s or ‘F’s. Criteria I use to evaluate a paper are:
Does the paper have a thesis? Is the thesis sufficiently academic?

Does it meet course subject matter?

Has background literature been sufficiently addressed? Does the literature fit the thesis? Has the literature been reasonably integrated? Is there a trajectory to the use of the literature?

Are suppositions well founded and logical? Do they support the research question? Is the argument reasonable? Is it interesting?

Is sufficient data introduced to provide evidence? Do data support the hypotheses or fit the trajectory of the thesis? Is the evidentiary scope and sequence introduced according to a coherent and logical structure?

Do conclusions align with the thesis and the argument? Are they useful, important, or interesting?

Is the writing academic in tone? Does the writing provide clarity and organization to the ideas? Is the writing precise; is the terminology used precise? Is the text free of spelling and grammatical errors?

Missed deadlines (for each date listed above) are penalized a step-grade per day late (for example, a B+ drops to a B after the first day, to a B- by the second day late).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture content</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1 the end of eating paleo | Tue 8/7 introduction to the course environmental impact—the end of eating paleo—Neolithic Revolutions—inventing agriculture—food and the division of labor in society | required: 
Diamond, 1999, Guns, Germs and Steel: The rise and spread of food production  
recommended: 
Bellwood and Oxenham, 2008, The expansions of farming societies and the role of the Neolithic Demographic Transition  
Hershkovitz and Gopher, 2007, Demographic, biological, and cultural aspects of the Neolithic Revolution: a view from the southern Levant |
| Thur 8/9 | food in the division of labor in society—the environment as given, the environment as altered—entering the anthropocene | required: 
Diamond, 1987, The worst mistake in the history of the human race  
Scott, 2009, The art of not being governed—Concentrating manpower and grain, slavery and irrigated rice  
recommended: 
Balter, 2010, The tangled roots of agriculture  
Scott, 1998, Seeing like a state—An agriculture of legibility and simplicity |
<p>| 2 population and food insecurity cases from Senegal and Rwanda | Tue 8/14 | demographic transition—can we all drink orange juice?—food and the population treadmill—rural carrying capacities—climate, agriculture, and the new waves of migrations—diversifying economic strategies | required: Malthus, 1798, An essay on the principle of population (select chapters) Weeks, 2011, Population recommended: Kenny, 2011, The good news: the end of the Malthusian trap |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Food insecurity—high-value cash crops vs. devalued subsistence—food swamps and literal swamps—the water-tables of Table Mountain—Philippi and the fight for tablescraps—sand-mining to build homes but only for others waste water and wasting water—the last drop</td>
<td>Battersby-Lennard and Haysom, 2012, Philippi horticultural area</td>
<td>GreenCape, 2017, Water market intelligence report Smithsonian, 2015, How to predict a famine</td>
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<td>8/30</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>when urban agriculture is not the answer—growing at the edge of Ulaanbaatar—resource scarcity—dangerous elements, exuded wastes</td>
<td>Midmore and Jansen, 2003, Supplying vegetables to Asian cities: is there a case for peri-urban production? Zavisca, 2003, Contesting capitalism at the post-Soviet dacha the meaning of food cultivation for urban Russians</td>
<td>Bayarsaihan and Coelli, 2003, Productivity growth in pre-1990 Mongolian agriculture spiralling disaster or emerging success Drum, 2013, America's real criminal element: lead</td>
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<td>9/4</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>guest lecture: Megan Hanson Founder of RootDown LA—Executive Director—Renegade Nutrition Educator when urban agriculture is the answer—cities as their own hinterlands—home on the Grange—edible schoolyards—Urban Farm Organization</td>
<td>Rees, 1992, Ecological footprints and appropriated carrying capacity—what urban economics leaves out</td>
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<td>6 food futures</td>
<td>Tue 9/11</td>
<td>industrializing production, industrialized eating—mechanization—from Green to Gene Revolutions—GMO crops—Chakrabarty decision regularization and de-regulation—the Farm Bill—USAID and food sustainability—Fair Trade—precision agriculture</td>
<td>required:</td>
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<td>Appadurai, 1988, How to make a national cuisine: cookbooks in contemporary India</td>
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<td>Spang, 2000, The invention of the restaurant: private appetites in a public space</td>
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<td>Thur 9/13</td>
<td>quiz 3 in class some futures for food—propagating new food systems from the roots up—being/becoming active—your role and what you can do</td>
<td>required:</td>
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<td>FAO, 2014, The State of Food Insecurity in the World</td>
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<td>Shiva, 2014, Seeds of Doubt</td>
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<td>McEntee and Naumova, 2012, Building capacity between the private emergency food system and the local food movement: Working toward food justice and sovereignty in the global North</td>
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<td>Scoones, 2007, Can GM crops prevent famine in Africa?</td>
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<td>Shiva, 2001, Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply</td>
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**Bibliography:**


