**ENVS 361**

**Diet and Planet**

**Course Description:**

Explores relationships between food and the environment through analysis of food consumption and its biological, social, and environmental outcomes including how industrialization influences farming methods, dietary practices, and biocultural diversity.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Describe the relationship between cultural diversity and biological diversity.
2. Identify dietary and cultural influences on agrobiodiversity.
3. Describe the stages and methods of food production and consumption with special regard to health, environment, society and economy in food production, consumption, and distribution.
4. Analyze the historical and contemporary development of food practices and traditions that encourage positive and negative biological, social, and environmental health outcomes.
5. Evaluate the influences of industrialization on farming methods, dietary practices, and biocultural diversity.
6. Assess the effectiveness of governance, policy, and social norms in forming dietary regimes.

**Teaching Philosophy:**

Critical Pedagogy: This class is your class. I consider myself a co-learner and facilitator of the learning process in this course, and I need your participation and contribution to accomplish that. In this class, we will take a critical approach to environmental studies through critical reading, thinking, self-reflection, and respectful dialogue. I believe learning occurs through collaboration with others. I expect you to be open to and respectful of others' experiences and perspectives, but most importantly to be critically reflective of your own perspectives and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with all the voices put forth in this class, but I ask that you seek to gain an understanding of other perspectives, ideas, and ways of thinking about the world and sustainability. I also expect you to reflect on your own biases (we all have them) and how your biases influence your reading and discussion experiences.

I value following student interests and needs as much as possible. This means that the course is continually evolving as we co-create it with our collective insights, interests, and knowledge.

Applied Learning and Research: I believe that the best learning occurs when students and instructors are able to make connections between theory and practice. Direct hands-on experience deepens ones understanding of course materials (i.e. readings and lectures) and places the concepts of the curriculum into the context of “real-life” situations. I incorporate experiential learning through in-class and out of class activities that will help challenge students to become culturally aware and civically engaged.

**Course Outline:**

This course will be divided into three units, each with its own subgroupings. Within each section students will gain a deeper understanding of how food habits influence agrobiodiversity on the farm and biocultural diversity around the world.

**One**: Biodiversity and Human Health – This unit will begin by discussing the role biodiversity in human health. We will begin by discussing the evolutionary process and the vital role in which biodiversity plays. We will explore ecosystem health and the human influence on it. This unit will provide students with a strong foundation for understanding the intersection of biodiversity and cultural diversity.

**Two**: Industrialization and Simplification – This unit will trace the development of the industrial diet, also known as the “standard American diet” and its impact on biodiversity loss, degraded environmental health, loss of traditional knowledge and cultures, and the struggle of healthy eating. Students will explore the influence of public opinion, policy, special interests, and cultural norms in the creation of dietary regimes. Students will also understand how these regimes continue to transform through time as values, cultures, and technologies change.

**Three**: Valuing Food, Health, and Diversity – In this unit, students will investigate multiple dimensions of biodiversity within the production of food. We will explore everything for genetic diversity to seed diversity. We will highlight the cultural practices that help maintain biodiversity and their impact on human health. We will also analyze, discuss, and critically engage with local, regional, national, and global laws and policies that both promote and hinder biocultural diversity.

Week 1: Introduction to the concepts of nutritional ecology

Week 2: Biodiversity

Week 3: Cultural diversity

Week 4: Biocultural diversity

Week 5: Agroecosystems: ecology, nutrition, and culture

Week 6: Food regimes - where they come from and how the persist

Week 7: Simplification on the farm - causes and effects

Week 8: Simplification on the dinner table - causes and effects

Week 9: Development of nutritionism and its outcomes

Week 10: Spatial colonization in the super market

Week 11: Double food pyramid

Week 12: Global undernutrition and malnutrition

Week 13: Agroecology

Week 14: Recovering biocultural diversity

Week 15: Sustainable diets

Week 16: Final

**Required Texts:**

1. Winson, Anthony. 2013. *The Industrial Diet: The degradation of food and the struggle for healthy eating*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
2. Nabhan, Gary Paul. 2016. *Ethnobiology for the Future: Linking Cultural and Ecological Diversity.* Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
3. Hayes, Denis and Gail Boyer Hayes. 2015. *Cowed: The hidden impact of 93 million cows on America's health, economy, politics, culture, and environment.* New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company Inc.

**Evaluated Criteria:**

1. **Contribution** (30 pts): A portion of this class will be based on discussions, activities, and group projects. I have labeled this category as contribution instead of participation because we will be learning from each other in this course and you are required to contribute your ideas, thoughts, questions, perspectives, and experiences to the class. It is essential that you be present in both body and mind to create a positive learning environment for you and everyone. You will be evaluated on your contribution through occasional in-class assignments, online discussion forums, and by demonstrating your engagement with the readings, thoughtful questions, and willingness to engage respectfully with others. Please keep in mind that because this class relies heavily on student contributions and group work. You will be missed when absent. Your experience and the overall course will be better if you are an active participant and to be an active participant you need to be present.
2. **Journal Responses** (60 pts. 10 pts. each): These short writing assignments will let me know what you are getting out of the reading, what you find interesting, and what might need more explanation. These responses also let me know how you are comprehending and synthesizing course content and how through reflection you are actively participating in the meaning making process.
   1. Each critical response is based on the previous 2 weeks of reading. Each response should be approx. 300-500 words.
3. **Discussion Forum** (10 pts.): Throughout the semester there will be several discussion forums for students to respond to. Each response should be a well throughout out paragraph that encourage more thought providing ideas and questions for the class. Individual responses will not be graded, rather grades will be based on your overall contribution throughout week 1-8 and 9-16.
4. **Journal Reflection Paper** (50 pts):Throughout the semester you have engaged in critical reflection through your journal entries. This is your opportunity to look back through those entries and become a producer of knowledge, not simply a consumer. While we have read case studies, analyzed theory and policy, and discussed the ethnographic experiences of others, this is you opportunity to be a part of the meaning making process and assess how the knowledge and experiences you have gained in this class has transformed your thinking and habits while engaging with the theory and concepts form class. 800-1000 words.
5. **Midterm/Final** (50 pts. 25 pts. each): Throughout the semester there will be two in-class assessments about course materials. Students will be expected to make clear connections between the concepts, theories, and methods discussed in class with the course readings, guest lectures, and films.

**Grades are calculated as follows:** A=>93; A-=90-92.9; B+=88-89.9; B=83-87.9; B-=80-82.9; C+=78-79.9; C=73-77.9; C-=70-72.9; D+=68-69.9; D=63-67.9; D-=60-62.9; F<60.

**University Credit Hour Policy:** Students enrolled in face to face courses should spend at least six hours per week engaged in study for the class.

**University Writing Requirement:** All students are expected to meet the university mandated written requirement of write 2,500 words in this three-unit course. This will be satisfied through in-class assignments and discussion forums, one case study research project (2,000-2,500 words), and a midterm and final.

**Technology:** I *do* allow the use of laptops and tablets, but I ask those who wish to use them be mindful that technology can bedistracting for other students. If the use of computer or other devices becomes distracting, I may alter my policy as necessary.

Please *turn off or silence your cell phone* and put it away for the entirety of the class. If you must make a call or text, please leave the classroom. Be respectful of your classmates.

**Cougar Courses:** You are expected to check Cougar Courses and your email associated with your Cougar Courses account so that I can communicate with each of you electronically. All materials should be *typed and double-spaced with 12pt font using Times New Roman font*.

**Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are due electronically using Cougar Courses.** All assignments are due and should be uploaded to the Cougar Courses webpage unless they are scanned notes or other written materials including in-class activities, field notes, sketches etc.

**Late work and absence:** In order to maximize the benefit to you, I am committed to correcting your work and getting you feedback in a timely fashion. For these reasons, **I do not accept late work**. If you are going to miss a class, a workshop, or a deadline for a valid and *documentable reason*, please do everything you can to let me know in *advance* so that we can arrange whatever alternate means may be necessary to fulfill the course requirements.

**Plagiarism**: Plagiarism is copying any work – written, visual art, music – and presenting it as your own original work. When you include the words, ideas, art, or music of another person in your class assignments, you must fully acknowledge your sources by naming the source artist/author and publication. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form, and students found plagiarizing will receive a “0” for the assignment and will be referred to the CSUSM administration.

**Academic Honesty:** Students will be expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty and integrity, as outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy. All assignments must be original work, clear and error-free. All ideas/material that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. Any quoted material should give credit to the source and be punctuated accordingly.

Students are responsible for honest completion and representation of their work. Your course catalog details the ethical standards and penalties for infractions. There will be zero tolerance for infractions. If you believe there has been an infraction by someone in the class, please bring it to the instructor’s attention. The instructor reserves the right to discipline any student for academic dishonesty, in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the university. Disciplinary action may include the lowering of grades and/or the assignment of a failing grade for an exam, assignment, or the class as a whole.

<https://www.csusm.edu/policies/active/documents/Academic_Honesty_Policy.html>

**ADA Statement:** Students with disabilities who require academic accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300 and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, TDD (760) 750-4909 or by email at: dss@csusm.edu Students authorized by DSS to receive accommodations should meet with me during my office hours, or in another private setting, in order to ensure your confidentiality.