

UEP 306: FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Course Topic: Food Systems & Food Justice

Fall 2023

T/Th 1:30-2:55pm

INSTRUCTORS

Sharon Cech, MA Urban Planning

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she/her/hers

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MOODLE

All readings and supplemental media will be available on the course Moodle site:

<https://moodle.oxy.edu/course/view.php?id=38810>

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This community based learning course explores a range of food systems issues from a food justice lens. The course examines how our food system has been restructured over the last century to benefit large-scale agriculture interests, creating a global food system that emphasizes convenience and fast-food solutions for consumers, often to the detriment of low-income people and communities of color. Through in-depth class discussions, on-site field trips, and in-class speakers, the class will delve into the environmental, economic, health, cultural, and social impacts of how food is grown, processed, manufactured, distributed, sold, and consumed in the U.S. The course will use the concepts of a “food system” and of “food justice” as its organizing principles, and will look at different policies, programs, political struggles, and the social and economic and cultural forces that influence and shape the food system and that generate food justice activism.

Through the course, students will:

- Gain knowledge of today's food system, including how food is produced, distributed, consumed, and disposed of and the nature of food system problems and their possible solutions.
- Develop analytic skills to make connections between the food system and economic development, community health, the environment, neighborhood and regional planning, labor, organizing and advocacy, and local, state and federal public policy.
- Identify how and why low-income communities of color are disproportionately affected by market and policy failures to produce and distribute healthy, safe food.
- Gain understanding of the current food landscape and policy debates in Los Angeles by talking with food justice activists, planners and policy.
- Examine the role of planners/practitioners/policy makers in either hindering or promoting food justice and critically evaluate efforts – including grassroots, policy, and planning attempts – to address food issues.
- Develop new strategies and action plans toward food justice.

COURSE/CAMPUS POLICIES & SUPPORT SERVICES

Credit Hour Policy.

UEP 306 is a 4-unit course. On average, you should expect to spend at least twelve (12) hours a week (including in-class time) on this course.

Mid- Semester Progress Reports

For [Fall 2023](#) Mid-Semester Progress reports are available from October 9-22 and Advising Week is October 23-27.

GUIDANCE ON COVID

The most recent guidance on COVID-related policies can be found here:

<https://www.oxy.edu/back-oxy>

- **COVID-Specific Policy on Masks.**

Faculty still maintain the authority to require masks in their classroom, even at times when the College does not have an indoor mask mandate.

- **Importance of Not Coming to Class When Ill.**

Your health and well-being, and that of our community, are essential. If you are feeling any symptoms of illness, please refrain from attending class until you receive a negative COVID test or it has been 10 days since your symptoms began. Please work with Emmons and the COVID Operations team to confirm when and how you can end your isolation. Similarly, if you have been identified as a close contact of

someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please follow all applicable College policies, and wear a high-quality mask when around other individuals for 10 days.

- **Mental Health Implications of Missing Class.**

Your mental health and emotional well-being impacts learning and academic success. Symptoms like depression, anxiety, and trauma may cause loss of motivation, difficulty concentrating, and other issues that make learning difficult. Emmons Counseling staff are committed to supporting the mental health needs of our students. Emmons counseling services are available M-F from 9a-4p and include individual and group therapy, drop-in chats, case management, and referral consultations. Walk-ins are available M-F from 2-4p. All of these services are offered in person and via teletherapy. Students can also utilize the 24/7 confidential hotline at (323) 341-4141. To get connected to any of the free, confidential services at Emmons call (323) 259-2657.

Statement of the Shared Academic Integrity Commitment

Academic Integrity is a shared community value. It is built around trust and respect between members of the Occidental Community, and embodies a commitment to honesty and integrity in every aspect of one's academic life.

All members of the Occidental community are committed to uphold the highest degree of academic integrity. Unless stipulated otherwise, the academic work done for all assignments is expected to be the student's own; students are expected to give proper credit to the ideas and work of others.

Signing the Academic Integrity Commitment at the beginning of every semester represents a student's affirmation to uphold the shared values of honesty and integrity. When signing the Integrity Commitment associated with work in a course, students are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information; nor assisted others in these actions.

[Link](#) to Student Handbook (which includes the framing of the commitment, definitions of Academic Ethics, and Process for alleged violations of the commitment).

Civil Rights & Title IX

In the event that you write or speak about having experienced discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic or sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of

sexual and/or gender-based harassment), as a designated Responsible Employee, I must inform the Civil Rights & Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about resources and support services at Oxy, as well as reporting options both on and off-campus. You have no obligation to respond to the Civil Rights & Title IX Office or to meet with them to discuss support services and reporting options.

If you do not want the Civil Rights & Title IX Office contacted, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with:

- Oxy's Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (young@oxy.edu)
- Oxy 24/7 Confidential Hotline (323-341-4141)

The College's civil rights policies, along with additional resources, can be found at: <https://www.oxy.edu/civil-rights-title-ix>. If you would like to contact the Civil Rights & Title IX Office directly, you may email Civil Rights & Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at afulcher@oxy.edu or call 323-259-1338.

Special Accommodations/Learning Differences (

All academic and housing accommodation requests are managed by Disability Services & Student Support (DSSS). It is a student's responsibility to contact DSSS if they need accommodations or additional support. Any student who has, or thinks they may have, a physical, learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at accessibility@oxy.edu to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>.

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/orsl/academic-accommodations> “

Equity & Justice in an Inclusive Learning Environment

Drawing from the [Shared Academic Integrity Commitment](#) and the [Office of Student Conduct](#), Oxy's commitment to academic integrity is fundamental to being an educational

community. It represents our commitment to respectfully engage with each other and with ourselves. This is especially important when we discuss relevant topics and issues that are unfamiliar and/or at times, uncomfortable. In these situations, it is essential to guarantee the open and thoughtful intellectual exchanges that provide the foundation for teaching, learning, research, and knowledge production, and as such it reflects the high value we place in the processes and products of education at Oxy. With that in mind, classroom exchanges must be grounded in the values of trust, honesty, and respect. Ad hominem attacks are considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

This classroom is a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, gender identities and expressions, national origins, political affiliations, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, abilities, and other visible and nonvisible identities. The wide array of perspectives that each of us contributes to this class is a resource that will strengthen and enhance our intellectual community. All members of this class are expected to co-create and engage in a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class. In this context, we may speak as individuals or we may choose to represent ourselves as a member of a group. You need not represent any group, only yourself, though you may choose to represent a group, if you wish. Additionally, part of equity & justice work is to dismantle barriers to success for all people, particularly those who belong to groups that have been marginalized and minoritized. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your success or accurate assessment of achievement, or if there are ways we can improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally or for other students or student groups, please let me know. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated.

Laptop Lending Program

Students may request a loaner laptop via this form:

<https://oxy.freshservice.com/support/catalog/items/108> and check it out via the Library Information Desk at the Academic Commons. The laptops are Dell PCs and set up with access to the virtual computer lab software (e.g., SPSS, STATA, Matlab etc.).

Student Academic Support Resources

Occidental has an array of available student support services found here:

<https://www.oxy.edu/academics/student-success>

- Students who need support with their time management/organizational skills, online learning strategies, and other study skills, can schedule a 1:1

meeting with our Academic Success Coach. If interested, please email to academiccoaching@oxy.edu to schedule an appointment. In your email, please share what you'd like to work on, and an academic success coach will schedule an appointment with you within a few days.

- The Library's Teaching, Learning, and Research Support (TLRS) offers [library research consultations](#). We also offer peer-to-peer support for learning technologies in the Critical Making Studio on the ground floor of the library (contact Samantha Hilton hiltons@oxy.edu for more information).
- Peer Tutors are available to assist students on discipline-specific peer tutoring for coursework, and content review and study skills support in a variety of academic departments. Information and schedules for drop-in tutoring in [languages](#) and in [all other subjects](#) can be found on their respective websites linked here.
- The Writing Center offers opportunities to work on all forms of writing for any class and other writing tasks such as personal statements, proposals, fellowships, senior comprehensives, and more. We offer peer-to-peer consultations with knowledgeable Writing Advisers and sessions with Faculty Writing Specialists. We are located on the ground floor of the Academic Commons. See the [Writing Center website](#) for more information about our hours and how to drop-in or sign up for appointments. Please contact the Writing Center Director Prof. Prebel (jprebel@oxy.edu) for more information on Writing Center resources.

Intercultural Community Center (ICC)

The ICC aims to reduce institutional barriers for marginalized communities through intentional and meaningful programming, identity-specific services and accessible resources. At the ICC, we practice collective care as an act of rebellion as those of us on the margins fight against attempts to weaponize our oppression and silence our activism. To learn more, contact icc@oxy.edu, or reach out directly to Vanessa Gonzalez-Wright, vgonzalez2@oxy.edu.

Emmons/ Student Health

Your health and well-being has always impacted learning and academic success, and this reality is only heightened as we enter a new season of the pandemic and transition back to campus. Symptoms such as anxiety, depression, loss of motivation, difficulty concentrating, strained relationships, and feelings of not belonging can occur. Emmons Counseling staff are committed to supporting the mental health needs of our students. Due to the nature of our work and the safety for all, Emmons counseling services will continue via teletherapy.

Emmons will provide ongoing individual therapy, walk-ins, support groups and consultations through a virtual platform. Emmons staff will also support students with finding local therapy referrals. In case of an emergency or a crisis, there will be counselors onsite to assist the Oxy community. All students continue to have access to the 24/7 confidential hotline at (323) 341-4141. To get connected to any of the free, confidential services at Emmons call (323) 259-2657 or schedule an appointment online at <https://myhealth.oxy.edu> using your Oxy login credentials.

Lived Name Policy

Occidental College seeks to provide an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment by making it possible for students to use [a lived first name](#) and pronouns on college records when a legal name is not required. Students are encouraged to use Zoom to display their lived name and pronouns.

Land Acknowledgement.

Occidental College sits on the traditional territory and homelands of the Tongva people. Please click through to read more about the [Gabrielino-Tongva tribe](#) and about the practice of [land acknowledgement](#).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

UEP 306 is a 4-unit course. It is expected that students in this class on average will devote at least twelve (12) hours a week to class activities (including in-class time). Letter grades for the course are assigned according to the following table.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
93-100	90-93	87-90	83-87	80-83	77-80	73-77	70-73	67-70	63-67	0-63

Grades for the course will be determined according to the criteria described below.

1. PARTICIPATION – 35%

As a community based learning course, class participation is a primary focus of the class. The participation grade is based on the following categories.

Class Engagement & Attendance – (18%)

Students are responsible for attending and participating in class, being prepared to discuss readings and materials with the group, and having questions prepared for guest speakers.

Students are also responsible for engaging in respectful, open, and thoughtful discussion with each other, the professors, and community partners.

We understand that circumstances this semester may present challenges beyond a student's control in terms of class attendance. Please let us know as soon as possible if you will need to miss a class. We may be able to provide a makeup assignment. Throughout the semester, we also offer several opportunities for extra credit assignments.

This Week in Food – (5%)

On Tuesdays, class will generally begin with a review of “This Week in Food.” Students will upload a food-related article to Moodle from a news source such as the LA Times, New York Times, or other reputable source. The article should relate to the topic indicated in the assignment, which will be covered in class that week.

Assignment: Post the title and link to your article on Moodle the night before class and come prepared with a brief summary and personal reflection to discuss with the group.

Journal Reflections – (12%)

A journal assignment will be due each week that will reflect on the week's readings, classroom presentations and discussions, guest speakers, coursework etc. Note, late assignments will receive half credit.

Assignment: Post your journal reflections on Moodle responding to the listed prompt.

2. COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING PROJECT – 40%

For this community based learning project, students will support [SEE-LA](#) to investigate the relative affordability of their farmers' markets for food assistance customers. Groups of two to three students will be assigned to each of SEE-LA's six farmers' markets. These students (“Schedule A”) will conduct their part of the community based learning project during the first half of the semester. A seventh group will be responsible for analyzing all of the data collected during the first half of the semester. These students (“Schedule B”) will do their part of the community based learning project during the second half of the semester. Make sure to read the [Farmers' Market Price Comparison Assignment](#) closely for important project details and due dates. In summary, the project will be broken down into the following component assignments:

“SCHEDULE A”	“SCHEDULE B”
Neighborhood Profile (10%)	Preliminary Data Findings (10%)

Price Comparison Data (20%)	Summary Report (20%)
Final Group Presentation (10%)	Final Group Presentation (10%)

3. FOOD JUSTICE ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT – 25%

Research Paper – (15%)

At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up to research a prominent food justice organization in the Los Angeles area or their hometown. Students will research the organization's background and focus and must also conduct an interview with a key employee at the organization. Findings will be analyzed in a 4-6 page paper that includes a minimum of five references. Two references must be from journals or other academic sources (APA format - see details in assignment description). A summary of the interview must also be included as an appendix. Make sure to read the [Food Justice Organization Analysis Assignment](#) carefully for important project details and due dates. Papers should address the following topics and questions:

- Food justice / food system issue
- Mission and background of organization
- Analysis

PowerPoint Presentation – (10%)

This will be a 5-minute presentation summarizing your food justice organization research and analysis. The presentation should have 5-7 slides and include references.

Late Assignment Policy.

Missed “this week in food” and “journal reflections” may be submitted past the deadline for ½ credit. If you anticipate that other assignments may be late, please discuss with your professors as soon as possible and prior to the due date. As a community-based learning course with shared assignments that build on other students' work, an extension may not always be possible, but we will do our best to accommodate when necessary.

CLASS SCHEDULE - 2023

PART I: CLASSROOM

Week 1 — Overview & Introduction

Tue Aug. 29	Topic: <i>Introduction to Food Systems and Food Justice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class Intros• Overview of syllabus/schedule• The story of food activity
Thu Aug. 31	Topic: Class/Syllabus Overview Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Journal Entry #1 (due Thu 8/31 before class)• Fill out Farmers' Market Price Comparison group project sign-up form (due Fri 9/1 by 5pm)• Choose and organization for your Food Justice Org Assignment (due Fri 9/1 by 5pm)

Week 2 — Agriculture in the U.S.

Tue Sep. 5	Topic: <i>From the Rise of "Big Ag" to a movement for "Local" food: the Farm Bill and environmental, economic, and cultural shifts over the last century</i> Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Readings and media (<i>*please note, all readings and media will be posted on Moodle, and are not listed in the syllabus</i>)• "This week in food" #1 (due Mon 9/4 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 7	Topic: <i>The history of agriculture in Los Angeles County</i> Guest Speaker: Rachel Surls, UC Cooperative Extension- Los Angeles County Assignments Due:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #2 (due Fri 9/8 by 5pm) • <u>Schedule A & Schedule B</u>: Reach out to the person you would like to interview for your food justice org assignment (suggested by Mon. 9/11)
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Week 3 — *The Corporate Food System & Food Access Solutions*

Tue Sep. 12	<p>Topic: <i>The corporate food system; an examination of consolidation, diet trends, and diet-related illness</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #2 (due Mon 9/11 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 14	<p>Topic: <i>Addressing Food Insecurity in Los Angeles</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Michael Flood, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #3 (due Fri 9/15 by 5pm) • <u>Schedule A</u>: Neighborhood Profile (due Thu. 9/14) • <u>Schedule B</u>: Confirm your interview and have questions ready (suggested Thu 9/14)

Week 4 — *BIPOC Farmers and Workers in the U.S. Food System*

Tue Sep. 19	<p>Topic: <i>Systemic Exclusion of BIPOC Farmers in the U.S.</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #3 (due Mon 9/18 before midnight)
Thu Sep. 21	<p>Topic: <i>Labor and Sovereignty in the Food System</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Carla Peña, UEP Jose Lopez , Food Chain Workers’ Alliance (tentative)</p>

	<p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #4 (due Fri 9/22 by 5pm)
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Week 5 — *Food & Climate AND Food Policy*

Tue Sep. 26	<p>Topic: <i>Food & Climate</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #4 (due Mon 9/25 before midnight) • <u>Schedule B</u>: Complete your interview and write up notes (suggested Tue. 9/26)
Thu Sep. 28	<p>Topic: <i>Hunger, Food Assistance, and Policy</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Nourish California (tentative)</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #5 (due Fri 9/29 by 5pm)

Week 6 — *School Food & Institutional Purchasing*

Tue Oct. 3	<p>Topic: <i>Farm to School</i></p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • <u>Schedule A</u>: Farmers’ Market Price Comparison Data (due Tue. 10/3) • <u>Schedule B</u>: Food Justice Org. Paper (due Tue. 10/3)
Thu Oct. 5	<p>Topic: <i>Institutional Food Purchasing</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: TBD</p>

	<p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • “This week in food” #5 (due Wed 10/4 before midnight)
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Week 7 — Midterm Presentations

Tue Oct. 10	FALL BREAK — NO CLASS MEETING
Thu Oct. 12	<p>LONG CLASS (1:00pm - 2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Midterm Presentations</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Schedule A:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farmers’ Market Price Comparison Group Presentation (due Wed. 10/11 before midnight). Presentations will be given in class on Thu. 10/12. ○ Final Journal Reflection (due Fri. 10/13 by 5pm) • <u>Schedule B:</u> Food Justice Org presentations (due Wed 10/11 before midnight)

Week 8 — Field Trip #1

Tue Oct. 17	<p>LONG CLASS (12pm - 2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)</p>
Thu Oct. 19	<p>Schedule A: NO CLASS</p> <p>Schedule B: Orientation to Farmers’ Market Price Comparison Project</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #6 (due Fri 10/20 by 5pm)

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Week 9 — Field Trip #2

Tue Oct. 24	LONG CLASS (12:00pm-2:55pm) Topic: Community Services Unlimited
Thu Oct. 26	Schedule A: NO CLASS MEETING Schedule B: Data Analysis check-in Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #7 (due Fri 10/27 before 5pm) • <u>Schedule B:</u> Preliminary Data Findings (due Thu. 10/26)

Week 10 — Field Trip #3

Tue Oct 31	Schedule A: NO CLASS MEETING Schedule B: Data Analysis check-in (optional)
Thu Nov. 2	LONG CLASS (12:30pm-2:55pm) Topic: El Sereno Grocery Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #8 (due Fri 11/3 by 5pm)

Week 11 — Field Trip #4

Tue Nov. 7	<p>Schedule A: NO CLASS MEETING Schedule B: Data Analysis check-in (optional)</p>
Thu Nov. 9	<p>LONG CLASS (1:00pm-2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: St. Barnabas Produce Distribution</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • Journal Entry #9 (due Fri 11/10 by 5pm) • Schedule A: Complete your interview and write up notes (suggested Thu 11/9)

Week 12 — *Field Trip #5*

Tue Nov. 14	<p>Schedule A: NO CLASS MEETING Schedule B: Data Analysis check-in (optional)</p>
Thu Nov. 16	<p>LONG CLASS (11:45am-2:55pm)</p> <p>Topic: Urban Agriculture & Access to Land (Charter Bus)</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and media (on Moodle) • <u>Schedule A:</u> Food Justice Org. Paper (due Wed 11/15) • <u>Schedule B:</u> Final Summary Report (due Wed 11/15)

Week 13 — *Final Project Check-ins*

Tue Nov. 21	<p>Topic: Class Feedback & Project Check-ins</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal Entry #10 (due Tue 11/21)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on final presentations
Thu Nov 23	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY — NO CLASS

Week 14 — Final Presentations

Tue Nov. 28	<p>Topic: Final Presentations</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Schedule A</u>: Food Justice Org. Presentation (due Mon 11/27 before midnight) • <u>Schedule B</u>: Final Group Presentation (due Mon 11/27 before midnight)
Thu Nov 30	<p>Topic: Final Presentations</p> <p>Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Schedule B</u>: Final Journal Reflection (due Friday 12/1 before 5pm)