

ANTH H597.05: The Global Food Crisis

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Lectures:

Pre-requisite: Honors status, junior or senior standing

Introduction: The global food crisis refers to the recent, sharp increase in the price of food staples and the resultant political instability and rising levels of food insecurity and hunger experienced by human populations around the world. The goal of this course is to provide you with a fuller understanding of the multiple factors contributing to the food crisis, a greater awareness of the impact the crisis is having on the livelihoods, food security and health of people living in developed and developing settings around the world and an appreciation for the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in solving this global dilemma. To achieve this goal we will draw on the most current literature from a range of disciplines including anthropology, biology, economics, geography, nutrition and political science and first hand experiences gained through fieldwork on local farms and in food pantries.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor as soon as the quarter begins and are responsible for seeking available assistance from the office of disability services 292-3307, prior to or at the beginning of the quarter. I rely on the office of disability services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies.

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand what the food crisis is, the major debates regarding the factors thought to be contributing to it, the economic and health impacts it is having on human populations across the globe and how people around the world are responding to this global dilemma.
2. To gain proficiency in the use and interpretation of anthropometry (measures of the body) for understanding the nutritional status of individuals and populations.
3. To learn the basics of human nutrition, methods for collecting dietary data and proficiency using a professional dietary analysis software package to calculate, analyze and assess your own dietary intake.
4. To gain research skills and practice applying the scientific method. This will be achieved by conducting the diet project and developing your own independent research project.
5. To gain greater awareness of our own dietary choices, the factors that influence them and their relationship to this global issue.

Course Requirements and Goals:

1. Lectures: Lectures will be used to convey the fundamental concepts involved in the debate such as: what are bio-fuels? Who is producing them and how do they differ from other fuel sources? What is meant by food security and dietary adequacy and how are they measured? What are GMO's and what role might they play in addressing food production issues?
2. Discussion: In-class discussions will be used to go into further depth on more complex topics such as the role of US food aid and trade policies in the recent crisis, the ethics of access to safe and adequate food for all people and the spread of bio-engineered crops. This seminar setting will allow you to gain experience debating and articulating your ideas.
3. Weekly writing assignments and response papers: For each class you will write a one-page synthesis paper of the assigned readings. These are meant to give you practice synthesizing ideas, in many instances, from multiple disciplines and should help you prepare for discussion. Response papers will challenge you to take a position on a debated issue regarding the food crisis and support that position based with additional readings that go beyond the course syllabus.
4. Diet project. The multi-step project is meant to provide you with an opportunity to apply the nutritional knowledge you learn in class to your own diet, gain a greater awareness of your own dietary habits, the factors that influence them and their relationship to the global food crisis. In addition, you will get hands-on experience with the methods used to collect and analyze dietary data and practice writing a research report.
5. Independent field research project: This activity is meant to provide you with the rare opportunity of actually using what you learn in the classroom to design and conduct your own research project at a local food pantry, small-scale farm or urban garden project.

As the class will be a combination of lectures and in-depth discussion of the reading and writing assignments, class attendance is mandatory. You will also be expected to participate in 2-3 scheduled trips outside of class time (local farm, food pantry and urban garden)

Academic misconduct: Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and all suspected cases will be reported to the Committee On Academic Misconduct (COAM).

Classroom etiquette: The classroom is a learning environment. To maintain that environment we must be respectful of one another's ideas, effort and time. This is especially critical in a small class that includes a lot of discussion. Please arrive on time and turn your cell phone off during class.

Outside class communication: CARMEN will be used for all outside of class communication regarding assignments, upcoming events and any other important class news. Outside of office hours, please feel free to contact me via email or phone.

Required Reading:

Text: McNeill JR. 2000. An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. p. 421.

Text: Patel R. 2007. Stuffed and Starved, the Hidden Battle for the World Food System. New York: Melville House Publishing. p. 398.

Text: Winne M. 2008. Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty. Boston: Beacon Press. p. 192.

Articles: Primary literature, book chapters and reports of international organizations make up most of the readings for this course. Numbers on the course schedule correspond to specific readings listed in the bibliography found at the end of the syllabus.

Evaluation:

Grades: Grades will be based on the total of 100 points you achieve on the exams, assignments and in-class activities. A \geq 93, A- 90-92, B+ 88-89, B 83-87, B- 80-82, C+ 78-79, C 73-77, C- 70-72, D+ 68-69, D 63-67, D- 60-62, <60 is a failing grade.

1. Weekly one-pagers / discussion participation - 25%. These are synthesis pieces you will turn in each class period. They should help prepare you to participate in our in-class discussions.
2. Response papers (2) - 15%. For the first response paper you will be asked to respond to the film: We feed the world. For the second response paper you will be asked to take a position on the debate regarding whether or not access to food should be a basic human right.
2. Diet Project- 3-part assignment (30%). Part 1: Collection of detailed data on your own dietary intake over a three, consecutive day period. Part 2: From the data collected in Part 1, you will use dietary software to calculate the nutritional value (energy, carbohydrate, protein, fat, micronutrients) of your three day diet and assess its adequacy. Part 3: Using the information on the geographic origin of the foods you consumed during the 3-days above and additional data from your 2-day eat local challenge, you will compare the content and variety of your diet (normal vs. eat local challenge) and create a visual presentation that illustrates the extent to which you depend on a globalized food market. Your grade will be based on your final report and your oral presentation.
3. Final project (30%). This will be a 10-12 page paper based on the fieldwork you conduct over the course of the quarter. You will identify a question of interest related to the food crisis that you can address on a local farm, urban garden project or at a food pantry. You will meet with me during the 4th week of classes to clear your topic and discuss your data collection ideas and strategies. The project is due on the date of your final exam.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
	Defining the issue	
Class 1	Defining the food crisis Case studies: Africa, Latin America, USA	
Class 2	<i>Film: We feed the world</i>	#1 Grew #2 Hart
	PART I: Evolution of a Crisis	
Class 3	Discussion: Film <i>We feed the world</i> Topic: How did we get here? Part I DUE: RESPONSE PAPER 1	McNeill: Chap 1-4
Class 4	Topic: How did we get here? Part II	McNeill: Chap 5-8
Class 5	Topic: How did we get here? Part III DUE: DIET PROJECT – PART 1	McNeill: Chap 9-12
Class 6	Topic: Bio-fuels: Environmental and Human Dimensions	#3 FAO 2008 #4 Bourne
Class 7	Topic: Food as a commodity I DUE: FIELD RESEARCH QUESTION	#5 FAO 2006
Class 8	Topic: Food as a commodity II In Class Debate: Access to food as a human right	#6 Lien #7 Eide #8 Jacobsen
	PART II: Consequences of the food crisis	
Class 9	Topic: Human nutritional needs in evolutionary perspective DUE: RESPONSE PAPER 2	#7 Walker #8 Peters #9 Ulijaszek #10 Leonard
Class 10	Topic: Measures of nutritional status In class exercise: Anthropometry	#21 WHO 1995
Class 11	Topic: Interpreting nutritional status In class exercise: Data analysis	#21 WHO 1995
Class 12	Topic: Political economy of food production and distribution	Book: <i>Stuffed & Starved</i> #22 Webb
Class 13	Topic: Food insecurity and hunger I – developing world DUE: DIET PROJECT – PART 2	Book: <i>Stuffed & Starved</i> #23 Himmelgreen
Class 14	Topic: Food insecurity and hunger II – developed settings	Book: <i>Stuffed & Starved</i> #24 Drewnowski #25 Crooks
Class 15	Discussion-Fieldwork	
	PART III: Seeking solutions to the food crisis	
Class 16	Topic: Challenges and future directions I Biofuels and crop choices	#26 Haddad 2002 #27 Rosenweig #28 USAID 2003
Class 17	Topic: Challenges and future directions II Food as a commodity	Book: <i>Closing the Food Gap</i>
Class 18	Topic: Our diet in global perspective, consumption and impact	Book: <i>Closing the Food Gap</i>
Class 19	Topic: Local food movements & eating local challenge	Book: <i>Closing the Food Gap</i> #29 Nestle: Chap 4, 5, 6
Class 19	In Class Presentations I DUE: DIET PROJECT – PART 3	
Class 20	In Class Presentations II	

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