**Sociology of Food and Agriculture** (last update Oct. 23)  
Soci 137, Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Tracy Perkins  
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Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:10-3:30, Chemistry Building room G-06

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursday 3:45-5:00, Downing Hall room 1123-G

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

“Most of us are about as eager to change as we were to be born, and go through our changes in a similar state of shock.”

- James Baldwin

**The aims of this course are to:**
- Develop your sociological imagination.
- Become familiar with the US food history, politics and activism.
- Develop familiarity with the politics of knowledge and build critical thinking skills.
- Improve reading comprehension of scholarly and popular texts.
- Improve research skills.
- Improve ability to write for a public audience.
- Improve media and information literacy
- Create a productive, respectful and creative learning environment and intellectual community in class.

**Required Readings**

Please acquire the book below. All other required texts will be available on the course Blackboard site.


Note: Please consider the syllabus on Blackboard as the master syllabus, as it will be regularly updated.
Class Time
Our class time will take a variety of formats, including lecture, large group discussion, small
group discussion, film, class activities, and time for individual written reflection. I encourage
you to ask questions during lectures. A few guidelines:

- Come to class prepared by having done all the assigned reading and taking notes on it.
- Bring your readings (hard-copies are preferable) and notes to class every day, you will
  often need them for small-group work.

Names and Gender Pronouns in the Classroom
I will provide an opportunity in class for every student to share their preferred name and gender
pronoun (he, she, they, etc.). For example, I will ask you to call me Dr. Perkins, and to reference
my gender with the words “she” or “her.” Share whatever pronoun you feel most comfortable
with in a classroom setting. Please make every effort to call your peers by their preferred gender
pronouns for the duration of the semester.

Keep in mind the following campus statement on federal Title IX law:

“Howard University reaffirms its commitment to provide students with educational opportunities
free from sexual harassment and discrimination based upon gender, gender expression, gender
identity, sexual orientation, or marital status. In furtherance of this commitment, the University
strives to maintain an environment in which all members of the University Community are: (a)
judged and rewarded solely on the basis of ability, experience, effort, and performance; and (b)
provided conditions for educational pursuits that are free from gender-based coercion,
imimidation, or exploitation.”

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>% of course grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>Each class session</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading responses</td>
<td>11:59 pm Monday evenings*</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia project</td>
<td>Thursdays before class, multiple due dates. Final article due Dec. 11, 10am</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Nov. 20 and 27</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection paper</td>
<td>Dec. 11, 10am</td>
<td>10%</td>
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* See “Reading Responses” section below for due dates for the first week of class.
Wikipedia
Wikipedia is a crowd-sourced online encyclopedia that has become a primary source of information for a global audience. Some Wikipedia articles are of high quality, while others are low-quality. Your primary course assignment this semester will be to find a food/agriculture related topic that is under-developed on Wikipedia and to add content accordingly. This will involve you learning how to assess Wikipedia articles, find relevant academic publications on the topic, summarize the existing academic research, and integrate your summaries into Wikipedia. It will also help you practice writing for a public audience and responding to the critiques of others. You will be supported in this effort by Dr. Perkins and two staff members from Wiki Education, Helaine Blumenthal and Shalor Toncray.

Your first step will be to “join” our course on Wikipedia at the following link: https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/courses/Howard_University/Sociology_of_Food_and_Agriculture_(Fall_2018)?enroll=ekacptrb. To do so, you will be prompted to create a user account - please do not create a user name that connects to your offline identity. All other assignment details will be found on our course dashboard at this link. Wikipedia assignments are due on Thursdays before class.

Reading Responses
You are responsible for writing one reading response each week that covers all the readings assigned for that week. These will be due on Monday nights before our first class of the week on Tuesday. You will upload them into the “Reading Responses” section of our class website on Blackboard as PDFs or Word documents. If you use any of the author’s words in your response, be sure to use appropriate parenthetical/in-text reference information (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/02/). Each reading response should be 500-800 words long, and should include:

1) A brief description of the key points made in each reading
2) A comparison of the assigned readings
3) Your analysis of the readings
4) Any questions you may have

These should be short but polished piece of writing, with correct spelling and grammar used to support thoughtful content. The only exception to the above timeline is for the first week of class, when you will turn in your reading response on Wednesday August 22nd (covering only the reading assigned for August 23rd). You may upload your responses until 11:59 pm of the day the reading responses are due, when Blackboard will close the assignment. Late responses will not be accepted. You may miss three reading responses without penalty. These three "passes" are designed to accommodate disruptions to your studies that are outside your control such as illness, deaths in the family, and other emergencies. If you complete readings responses for all of the readings, you will receive 2 extra credit points towards your final grade.

Attendance and Late Assignments
- All students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. Class announcements related to schedule changes and grading will be made at the beginning of each class session.
• Attendance will be taken in this class. I expect you to attend class regularly, but do not need to know your reasons for any missed days. If you are absent from classes, you are still responsible for the work missed and the announcements made.

Communications
• The less time I spend responding to individual e-mails, the more time I have to prepare for leading a high-quality class. To that end, before you send me a question via e-mail, first check my syllabus to see if the information you want is listed there. Also, I will not respond to questions about the concepts covered in class via e-mail. Conceptual questions typically require lengthy responses and discussion, and are therefore best asked in class or office hours.
• I will use Blackboard to send periodic class announcements via e-mail. You may set your Blackboard account to whatever e-mail account you use most frequently. Plan on checking this account daily.
• Please turn your cell phone off and leave it in your bag for the duration of class.

Plagiarism
• Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarizing on exams, is a serious violation of the University’s norms of conduct. Students who plagiarize or cheat on assignments or exams receive an F in the course and will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Science for further sanctions, including possible suspension from the University. Read the Academic Code of Student Conduct for more information: https://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm

Disability
Howard University is committed to providing an educational environment that is accessible to all students. In accordance with this policy, students who need accommodations because of a disability should contact the Dean for Special Student Services (202-238-2420) as soon as possible after admission to the University or at the beginning of each semester. Please document and discuss your disability with me during the first week of classes. Find more information about how to get academic accommodations here http://www.howard.edu/specialstudentservices/.

Resources
• Tutoring at Howard: https://ous.howard.edu/tlss-tutoring-schedule
• How to get tested for a learning disability: https://www.howard.edu/specialstudentservices/DisabledStudents.htm
• Howard University Counseling Service https://counselingservice.howard.edu/
• For your questions about using Blackboard
  ○ http://www.howard.edu/technology/services/applications.html
  ○ https://help.blackboard.com/Filter/Student/College_or_University
• For help finding information, ask a librarian! https://library.howard.edu/friendly.php?s=library/contactus#s-lib-ctab-8716879-2
• Tips on how to study effectively http://www.howtostudy.org/index.php
Class Schedule

Aug 21


Unit 1: Origins of the US Food System

Aug. 23


Aug. 28


Aug. 30: Wikipedia Day


Sept. 4


Unit 3: Labor

Sept. 6


Sept. 11

Library training with Ms. McKenzie. Meet in Founders Library, Room 116

Labor, and Advocacy, edited by Charles D. Thompson, Jr., and Melinda F. Wiggins. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

- Optional


  - Excerpts
- Optional

Sept. 18:


Sept. 20


Unit 3: Industrialization

Sept. 25:


Sept. 27


Oct. 2

**Unit 4: Land**

**Oct. 4:**

**Oct. 9**
Screen in class: *Homecoming: Sometimes I Am Haunted by Memories of Red Dirt and Clay*

- Optional

**Oct. 11:**
- Optional:

**Unit 5: Consumption**

**Oct. 16:**

**Oct. 18:**

Oct. 23:

Oct. 25:

Oct. 30
• Optional
  o https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/04/07/396664685/tea-sugar-reshaped-the-british-empire

Nov. 1

Nov. 2. Last day to withdraw from course

Nov. 6:

Unit 3: Hunger

Nov. 8

Nov. 13
Screen in class: *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*


Nov. 15:


**Unit 4: Class presentations and The Cooking Gene**

Nov. 20

*Class presentations*

  - Pgs. 1-98

Nov. 22: No class, Thanksgiving holiday

  - Pgs. 99-198

  *Optional:*

Nov. 27

*Class presentations*

  - Pgs. 199-320

Nov. 29

  - Pgs. 321-425

**Final Wikipedia contributions and reflection papers due during our assigned exam time:**

*Tuesday December 11th by 10am, via Blackboard.*