

The Political Economy of U.S. Food Policy

University of Rochester, PSCI 235

Fall 2023

crucial for students' success in the course. Participation and attendance will not be graded, but I re-

reviewing the TTTs in advance of exams as well as keeping up with the reading. The midterm exam is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30, 2023; the final is scheduled for December 13, 2023, the last class session of the term. Both will be taken in person (more details leading up to the exams). Please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend either of those days.

Writing intensive More information on this to come, but if you are taking the course as writing intensive, you will be expected to produce a paper of about 15 pages in length in addition to the other course requirements. I recommend that the paper be a more in-depth exploration of your first essay assignment, though I am open to other proposals. A draft will be due midway through the course. I will provide significant feedback on this draft, and a revised version is due on December 17.

Materials One goal of the class is to develop “food-news literacy.” In order to do so and to stay up-to-date on news about food politics, please subscribe to the emails from [www. foodpol i ti cs. com](http://www.foodpolitics.com) and Politico’s Weekly Agriculture. We will discuss items that appear in these newsletters throughout the semester.

We will draw from two required books – listed below, preceded by the abbreviation with which they are referred to throughout the rest of syllabus – as well as from a number of articles in academic journals and the popular press. The articles will be posted on blackboard. The books are available for purchase from the bookstore (or from other book sellers). **THE REQUIRED BOOKS ARE:**

FFA: Poppendieck, Janet. 2010. **Free for All: Fixing School Food in America**. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

FP: Nestle, Marion. 2013. **Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health**. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 10th anniv edition.

Assistance and Resources to Promote Student Success Please feel free to reach out to me at any point during the course with any concerns or information that you would like me to know to support your success this semester.

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility

process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has a number of resources to improve study habits, including one-on-one study skills consultations, study skills course (CAS 142), quiet study space with peer support (Study Zone), and, for specific courses, one-on-one tutoring, drop-in group tutoring, and weekly study groups.

Student success at the University of Rochester includes more than just academic performance. Please feel comfortable speaking with me about challenges you are experiencing within and outside of the classroom so that I may submit a CARE Referral on your behalf. A CARE Referral is submitted when the level of concern for a student necessitates inclusive, multi-layered support from the campus community. The CARE network administrator shares information only with staff who need to know it in order to help you. I **care** about your success and am committed to my role in helping you get connected to appropriate campus resources. Please utilize office hours, and let me know if you are encountering difficulties that are affecting your ability to do your best work.

Academic Honesty Information

Academic honesty means acting with truthfulness and sincerity in carrying out all aspects of our individual and collaborative work, maintaining ownership over our work and acknowledging our debt to the work of others.

Students can best meet their obligation to academic honesty by adhering to the Academic Honesty Policy in all academic matters. This includes completing their work through their own honest efforts and expecting and encouraging honesty among their peers.

The text above is an excerpt taken from <https://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/>, where students may – and should! – also find the full policy.

Suspected violations of academic honesty will be passed along to the Board that oversees such matters. As indicated in the guidelines linked above, the punishments for violations are significant.

Course Schedule

Readings for each day (not necessarily **reading** in the strictest sense). Anything without a link is available on Blackboard, found by the "Short Title" used below.

1 Inequalities in the Food System

No class September 4, 2023

Readings for September 6, 2023: "The Land of Our Fathers," parts 1 and 2 (episode 5 of **1619**)

Readings for October 4, 2023: FFA Chapter 5; **The Poison Squad** (documentary, found here: <https://login.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/login?url=https%3a%2f%2ffod.infobase.com%2fPortalPlaylists.aspx%3fwlD%3d152714%26xtid%3d206157>)

Essay # 2 (legislative analysis) due on October 9, via Blackboard, by 5 p.m.

3 Executing Food Policy (Regulating the Food System)

Readings for October 9, 2023: FFA Chapter 6; "Regulatory Capture" (**Food Politics** blog post: <https://www.foodpolitics.com/2020/09/corporate-capture-in-action-emails-illustrate-the-meat-industrys-role-in-keeping-plants-open-despite-covid-19/>); "Labels for the Blind" (**Food Navigator** article)

No class October 11, 2023

No class October 16, 2023

Readings for October 18, 2023: FFA Chapter 7; "Won't Move" (NPR's **The Salt** article); "Brain Drain" (**Politico** article); "Agency Restoration" (**Politico** article)

Readings for October 23, 2023: FFA Chapter 8; "Cut to the Bone" (**The New Yorker** article)

Essay # 3 (regulatory analysis) due on October 25, via Blackboard, by 5 p.m.

Readings for October 25, 2023: FFA Conclusion; bring in questions to review!!!

MIDTERM EXAM on October 30, 2023

4 Litigating Food Policy

Readings for November 1, 2023: "New Way of Regulating" (chapter 1 from **Up In Smoke**); "Suing USDA" (case filing <https://www.citizen.org/wp-content/uploads/Pork-Line-Speed-Complaint-10.07.19.pdf>); "Dairy Antitrust" (**WSJ** article)

Readings for November 6, 2023: FP Introduction & Part One

5 Activism and the Food System

Readings for November 8, 2023: "Rochester Food Policy Council" (<https://www.healthiski.ds.org/blog/food-for-thought-creating-rochesters-first-food-policy-council>); "Lucky Peach" (two short interviews)

Guest Speaker on November 8: Briana Middleton (reflection due on November 15)

Essay # 4 (local food policy initiative) due on November 13, via Blackboard, by 5 p.m.

Readings for November 13, 2023: **Huerta** (documentary, found here: https://ezp.lib.rochester.edu/login?url=https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C4744779?account_id=13567&usage_group_id=98342); "Penny/Pound" (**The New York Times** article)

Potential Guest Speaker(s) on November 13: TBA (reflection due on November 20)

Readings for November 15, 2023: FP Part Two

Guest Speaker on November 15: Chris Hartman

Readings for November 20, 2023: FP Part Three; "OKC Dollar Stores" (**WSJ** article)

Readings for November 22, 2023: "Anti-Intellectualism and Natural Food" (**Gastronomica** article); "Ugly Produce" (**The Atlantic** article); "Oldie to Goldie" (**JACR** article, just skim); "Michael Dukakis" (**The Boston Globe** article); "Rewarding No-Waste Customers" (**China Daily** article)

Readings for November 27, 2023: FP Part Four

Readings for November 29, 2023: "Corporate Responsibility" (Milton Friedman essay); "Racist Imagery" (**Food Dive** article)

6 Interest Groups and Food Policy

Readings for December 4, 2021: FP Part Five

Readings for December 6, 2021: "Should there be a tax" (**WSJ** article); "Revolving Door" (**Food Politics**): <https://www.foodpolitics.com/2020/12/the-revolving-door-keeps-turning/>)

7 Concluding Food Matters

Essay # 5 (interest group analysis) due on Dec. 11, via Blackboard, by 5 p.m.

Readings for December 11, 2023: FP(fong)6oncludisiAfresw7(o)1rd-31281020RePoo