

SOCI 388

Sociology of Food and Eating

Instructor: Dr. Martha McMahon

Course Description:

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS: This course will look at how sociologists try to make sense of what is often called the food system. It will start by looking at the food on our plates as embodying complex networks of social and ecological relations. It will ask you to stop seeing the food on your plate as simply lettuce, carrots, fish or meat. It will review some of the identified problems. It will examine efforts to change the food system, in particular by localizing food. Although we may start with what is on our plates the course ties what is on your plate to some of the biggest issues of our day – climate change, global social justice, hunger, health, (de-)colonization the more-than-human world of other creatures and democracy for example. While many food studies courses centre the perspectives of urban consumers, we will centre not just farmers but the efforts of Indigenous and global peasant, fishers and small farmers’ movements to make social change. Particular attention will be paid to gender and to interrogating the assumptions about nature and society that underlie much of the food social movement in Canada and the US. The course is designed to help bridge divides between local activism and academic analysis. Framing the course will be the question of how food and agriculture can be organized in ways that are ecologically sustainable and socially just. The course is designed to learn about, respect and appreciate the diversity of multiple kinds of relationships with land and (often multi-species others) who help feed us, communities and others, and study issues of food in ways that de-centre privilege and our geo-political location within the University of Victoria on the un-ceded [and](#) traditional **territory** of the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

- SOCI 215 recommended prior to SOCI 388.

¹ This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official

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