

Syllabus

Our goal in this class is to talk about relationship between food systems and conflict over recent history, focusing on conflicts in the Middle East. As food systems globalize, tension exists between local farmers and global supply chains. Current food systems are fundamentally unsustainable, but solutions to sustainable agriculture have not often been deployed within the Middle East. Often, conflict has been cited as a complicating factor in the growth, continuation, and shift to sustainability among agriculture and food ways in the Middle East. Conflict, caused by totalitarian regimes and climate change alike, can and has interrupted supply chains in past and present-day food systems in the Middle East. These interventions and interruptions must be explored and understood to adapt Western ideas of sustainability and apply them to the arid and unstable environments of countries like Iraq and Syria. We will explore questions like the following: What are the implications of those interruptions on the daily lives of those living within the borders of countries like Iraq and Syria? Do solutions to food systems in conflict lie in seeking food security or food sovereignty? What impacts do these unstable food systems have on the short and long-term health of local communities? How can we understand what a more sustainable food system might look within the context of climate change and war in the Middle East? How can an anthropological lens provide insight into these issues?

The course will trace the aspects of the food system, including production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste/recycling. Exemplar conflicts will be chosen to highlight one aspect of the food system that failed. The disruption of agricultural production in Iraq occurred during economic sanctions after war in the 1990s and after attacks by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in 2014. The 2011 Arab Spring Revolution is in part attributed to bread riots among food insecure populations, highlighting distribution issues. Modules will include methodological skills. Transcripts from my own research in Iraq will be analyzed for themes regarding the past economic sanctions and current violence from ISIS on the local food system. Demographic and Health survey data will be studied in the class to illustrate trends in Yemeni compared to Egyptian health outcomes before and after the 2011 revolution using simple statistical analyses.

Themes explored in the course:

- The impacts of conflict on agricultural production in the Middle East
- The consequences of conflict on the flow of commodities throughout the Middle East
- The function of proxy wars through conflict and commodities
- The relationship between food systems and health and the diseases caused by their disruption
- The potential applications of sustainable agriculture in conflict areas
- The nature of politics and how they construct food systems and food access

Students successfully completing the course will be able to:

- a) Analyze qualitative interview data for themes related to food, conflict, and health
- b) Engage critically with discourse on the Middle East regarding food systems, conflict, and health
- c) Comprehend and analyze quantitative statistical “big” data on health in the Middle East
- d) Discern differences between media presentations of the Middle East in different parts of the world and articulate critiques about each perspective on the region as it relates to food and health

Books to be purchased (required):

- (1) Woertz, Eckart. 2013. *Oil for Food: The Global Food Crisis and the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- (2) Singer M, & Hodge GD, eds. 2010. *The War Machine and Global Health: A Critical Medical Anthropological Examination of the Human Costs of Armed Conflict and the International Violence Industry*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

All other book chapters or articles assigned will be made available through Canvas Course Reserves. These texts can be purchased or rented from Amazon, Chegg, and other services. Both are also available as physical copies in the library, and Singer's book is available with online access through the library as well.

Grading System

25% - Interview Analysis Project: Interview transcripts will be provided from my research in Iraq among farmers and other workers in the food system. Partners will be assigned. Each group of two people will analyze the same interview, first separately, and then together. In addition to providing the analyzed interview transcript, students will also write a 2 page paper, typed, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, single spaced with references that reflects on the relationship between the themes from the interview and the course material as well as the differences in coding schemes between partners and how that might affect interpretations of qualitative data.

25% - DHS Analysis Project: Two datasets will be provided to the class, one with data from the Yemeni Demographic and Health Surveys from 1991-2 and 2013, and one with data from the Egyptian Demographic and Health Surveys from 1992 and 2014. Groups of three to four students will be assigned to work together and produce a report containing simple statistical tests based on class instruction. The weight of the grade will be placed on the interpretation of the findings in relation to class material and discussion about food systems and health in conflict. While the burden of data analysis can be shared, each group member will turn in their own 2 page paper, typed, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, single spaced with references that describes how the data were cleaned and analyzed as well as providing an argument for data trends rooted in class material.

25% - Middle Eastern Media Content Final Analysis Project: For their final class project, students will choose a topic related to food or health in a recent Middle Eastern conflict (e.g. cholera in Yemen or malnutrition in Iraq), and they will study at least one news sources each from the United States, Europe, and the Middle East (in translation) discussing the same story (minimum of 2 news sources). They will critically analyze the contents of each video and compare the differences, tying the issue of focus in each story back to course material. The final report should be 6 pages typed, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, *double spaced*, and formatted with an a) introduction, b) methods, c) results, d) discussion.

25% - Class Participation: Please attend all classes, participate in class discussion, group work, and ask questions in class. There will be two class debates during the semester, where groups will be assigned the class before to an opinion that they have to defend with evidence. They will be given the class time the day before the debate to meet with their groups and research evidence together for their position. These class debates, if participated in enthusiastically, can buffer the student against classes missed during the semester.

Extra Credit: The student survey given on the first day of class will provide 5 extra credit points that can be used on any assignment throughout the semester. There is currently no other extra credit built into the course, but if there are relevant lectures or activities happening on campus, one such experience can be submitted for consideration. If approved, then following the event, a single-spaced page long write up is required via email.

This class will rely on the **Emory Honor Code** to handle any academic misconduct during the semester. Please refer to Article 4: Academic Misconduct here: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

Other Important Notes for Class

Email Policy: I will do my best to respond to emails from students within 48 hours. Include “ANT 385” or “Food Systems Class” in the subject line.

Pronoun Policy: All students are encouraged to share their preferred pronouns with me privately via email before class. There will also be a student survey on the first day of class for those who feel comfortable disclosing that way.

Food in Class: Our class is scheduled over lunch time, so please bring your lunch. You can also bring food to share if you feel so inclined, and it is financially feasible and comfortable for you to do so. I will also be trying to bring food to class to share on occasion, since I am a food anthropologist and love to cook. For anyone with food allergies, please note those on the student survey on the first day of class.

Classroom Engagement: For classroom discussions and debates, listen fully to others presenting their views. Respect others in the classroom as they share their opinions. Participation will be key to learning in the classroom.

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Assignments and Course Schedule

Assignments are shown below on the day they are due. All assignments must be uploaded electronically to Canvas before the beginning of that class, otherwise they will be considered late.

All readings will be available on Canvas in their relevant module. The full citations for all readings can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Wednesday, Jan 15	Unit #1: Food and Conflict: Introduction to food systems and the Middle East and considering the differences between food insecurity, food sovereignty, hunger	(1)(Holt-Giménez, 2010) (2)(Messer & Cohen, 2007) (3) (Collinson & Macbeth, 2017)	
Monday, Jan 20	MLK Holiday	No Class	
Wednesday, Jan 22	Production: food security versus food sovereignty in conflict interruption	(1)(CIRS, 2012) (2)(Zurayk, 2014)	
Monday, Jan 27	Production and Water: Middle East and problems of production related to water and water insecurity	(1)(Woertz, 2013) - Ch.3 & Ch.8 (2)(Wutich & Brewis, 2014)	
Wednesday, Jan 29	Production: The consequences of failure in production such as Arab Spring and media coverage of Arab Spring	(1)(Johnstone & Mazo, 2011) (2)(Femia & Werrell, 2013)	Media Content Analysis Final Project Made Available on Canvas
Monday, Feb 3	Production: sustainable solutions to problems of production	(1)(Chappell, 2007) (2)(Zurayk, 2010) (3)(Al-Zu’bi, 2019) (4)(Julia Travers, 2018)	
Wednesday, Feb 5	<i>Analyzing Systems: Interviews along the food chain</i>	(1)(Bernard, 2011) – Ch. 19: Textual Analysis II Schema Analysis, Grounded Theory, Content Analysis, and Analytic Induction	Interview Analysis Project Assigned
Monday, Feb 10	Production: Food systems and the role of oil economies in the ME	(1)(Woertz, 2013) - Ch.9 “Oil-for-Food Policies?”	

Wednesday, Feb 12	Distribution: reasons behind global distribution and ways global supply chains break down	(1)(Woertz, 2013) - Ch.1 “The Gulf Food Security Predicament”	
Monday, Feb 17	Distribution: complications for food distribution in conflict zones and sustainable alternatives	(1)(Dahan, Saul, & Wilkin, 2015) (2)(Abboud, 2017) (3)(Vittersø et al., 2019)	
Wednesday, Feb 19	Consumption: nutrition, cultural food preferences, and the impact of conflict	(1)(Egal, 2006) (2)(Schwartzstein, 2017) (3)(Chen, Pei, Deng, & Wang, 2018) (4)(Esterik, 2013)	Interview Analysis project due
Monday, Feb 24	Consumption: Food aid and the Middle East	(1)(Woertz, 2013) - Ch4. “The Food Weapon: Geopolitics in the Middle East” (2)(Clapp, 2012) - (Ch.1)	
Wednesday, Feb 26	Class debate: group brainstorming and researching your assigned opinion	(1)(Eklund, Degerald, Brandt, Prishchepov, & Pilesjö, 2017) (2)(Kimaro, 2017)	
Monday, March 2	Class debate: can sustainable solutions work in conflict zones?	<i>Review what you need to from class and elsewhere to prepare for debate</i>	
Wednesday, March 4	Unit #2: Health and conflict: introduction	(1)(Levy & Sidel, 2016) (2)(Pedersen, 2002) (3)(Singer & Hodge, 2010) - Introduction	
March 9 – 13, 2020	SPRING BREAK		
Monday, March 16	Physical health: short term health outcomes related to nutrition and conflict-related famine and food insecurity	(1)(Henry & Macbeth, 2017) (2)(Wells, 2016) - Introduction	
Wednesday, March 18	Case Study: Iraq and 1990s sanctions	(1)(Drèze & Gazdar, 1992) (2)(Harding & Libal, 2010) = Singer and Hodge Ch. 2 “War and Public Health Disaster in Iraq” (3)(Pellett, 2011) (4)(Hills & Wasfi, 2010) = Singer and Hodge Ch.4 “The Causes and Human Costs of Targeting Iraq”	
Monday, March 23	<i>Analyzing Systems: Big data on health – the DHS</i>	(1)(Bernard, 2011) – Ch. 20 “Univariate Analysis”	DHS Project Assigned
Wednesday, March 25	<i>Analyzing Systems: Practicing descriptive statistical analyses in Google Sheets</i>	Bring your laptop	
Monday, March 30	Physical Health: long term physical health outcomes related to conflict and nutrition	(1)(Lumey et al., 2007) (2)(Panter-Brick, Casiday, Hampshire, & Kilpatrick, 2010)	
Wednesday, April 1	Example: Intergenerational poor physical health and the food system in the Middle East	(1)(Clarkin, 2010) = Singer and Hodge Ch.1 “The Echoes of War: The Effects of Early Malnutrition on Adult Health”	
Monday, April 6	Mental health: short term mental health outcomes related to conflict and nutrition	(1)(Mowafi, 2011) (2)(El-Shaarawi, 2016)	DHS project due
Wednesday, April 8	Case Study: Palestine	(1)(Bornstein, 2010)	
Monday, April 13	Mental Health: long term mental health outcomes related to conflict and nutrition <i>Review of Media Content Analysis for Final Project</i>	(1)(Susser & Lin, 1992) (2)(Brown, Susser, Lin, Neugebauer, & Gorman, 1995) (3)(Abunimah & Masri, 2003)	
Wednesday, April 15	Class debate: group brainstorming and researching your assigned opinion		
Monday, April 20	Class Debate: solutions to a broken food system that integrate physical and mental health concerns– what are our options?	<i>Review what you need to from class and elsewhere to prepare for debate</i>	

Wednesday April 22	Media content analysis project work in class		
Monday, April 27	Media content analysis project	Submit assignment	Media content analysis project due

Recommended Books, Articles and Resources*

*see subsequent bibliography for full citation

Methods	Iraq	Production	Distribution	Consumption	Justice
(Bernard, 2011)	(McDowall, 2004)	(Boserup, 1965)	(Mintz, 1985)	(Harris, 1985)	(Nestle, 2013)
(Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011)	(Tripp, 2000)	(Netting, 1993)	(Hawkes, 2008)	(Farb & Armelagos, 1980)	(Alkon & Agyeman, 2011)
(Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011)	(King, 2014)	(Magdoff & Tokar, 2010)	(Sen, 1981)	(Wilk, 2006)	(Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010)

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- Collinson, P., & Macbeth, H. (2017). Introduction. In P. Collinson & H. Macbeth (Eds.), *Food in Zones of Conflict: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*. New York: Berghahn Books.
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