

**The Anthropology of Food and Nutrition**  
Department of Anthropology  
McMaster University

**Winter 2018 Course Outline**

Dr. Lauren Sneyd, Ph.D.

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LECTURES: Mondays, 7-10PM  
LOCATION: TSH B105

OFFICE: Office: CNH 502  
OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 5-6:50 PM

TA: Sarah Duignan  
TA EMAIL: [duignase@mcmaster.ca](mailto:duignase@mcmaster.ca)  
TA OFFICE: TBD

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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An anthropological perspective on nutrition at the population level. Prehistoric, historic and contemporary human nutrition, emphasizing links with the environment.

As a common thread throughout the semester, the course will focus on the ways in which food features in anthropology and nutrition. From urban slums in the global south to suburban food deserts in the global north, experiences of food insecurity, inadequate nutrition and hunger are complex and varied. The juxtapositions are stark: malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies coexist sometimes in the same communities with rampant over-nutrition and obesity. Today, many argue that the dominant approach to producing and supplying food is unsustainable and will be unable to provide adequate and appropriate food and nutrition. The course will be organized around the three dimensions of the right to food: the availability of food, the accessibility of food and the adequacy of food to help students to understand the structure and functioning of the global food system. We will pay particular attention to the social, political, economic, and environmental forces that impact food systems at different scales and different populations. In particular, we will explore

ways of assessing the extent to which different parts of the food system adhere to principles of sustainability. It will also aim to enable students to learn how to assess how resilient or robust different aspects of the global food system are to environmental, social, political and economic change.

**Prerequisite(s):** Three units of Level I Anthropology or HLTH AGE 1AA3 (HEALTHST 1A03); and registration in Level II or above in any program. Cross-list(s): HLTH AGE 2AN3

**Learning objectives:**

- 1) To critically engage with tools, concepts and analytical approaches from anthropology to the study of food and nutrition.
- 2) To provide a thorough and critical evaluation of the challenge of maintaining global food security over the next generation while critically engaging with dominate food issues.
- 3) To critically explore possible solutions and alternatives to major food security challenges.
- 4) To enhance students' ability to critically evaluate popular media on food related issues.
- 5) To provide training in writing on food issues.

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**TEXT AND READINGS**

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*It is strongly recommended that students purchase the required text from the University Bookstore. The text is also available on Reserve in the Library.*

Required:

Clapp, Jennifer. (2016). *Food*. Second Edition Cambridge: Polity Press.

Recommended:

Dufour, Darna, , Alan and Peltó, Gretel. (2013). *Nutritional Anthropology: Biocultural Perspectives on Food and Nutrition*, Second Edition. Oxford.

Additional weekly readings from various journal articles, book chapters and technical reports will also supplement the text and will be available on A2L or the Library system. See the weekly schedule below for the list of readings.

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**REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS**

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Reflection 1: Right to Food in Canada 9 February 2018	25%
Reflection 2: Calculate your dietary diversity 9 March 2018 11:55 PM	25%
Reflection 3: Popular media on food related issues 29 March 2018 11:55 PM	20%
An essay-format take-home exam 11 April-13 April 2018 at 11:55 PM	30%

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### LATE PENALTY

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Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of five percent (5%) of the grade for that assignment per day, including weekends and holidays. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days beyond the original deadline without appropriate documentation. Extensions of any deadlines will be given only in the most extraordinary circumstances on medical or compassionate grounds. In these rare cases.

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### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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#### **Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures:**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located on the website above.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies>