ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Courses submitted to the GSC between 2/1 and 4/30 if approved, will be effective the following Spring.
Courses submitted between 5/1 and 1/31 if approved, will be effective the following Fall.

(SUBMISSION VIA ADOBE.PDF FILES IS PREFERRED)

DATE June 25 2010

1. ACADEMIC UNIT: Social and Behavioral Studies

2. COURSE PROPOSED: SBS 194 Food Politics

   (prefix) (number) (title)

   (semester hours) 4

3. CONTACT PERSON:
   Name: Majia Nadesan
   Phone: 36666
   Mail Code: E-Mail: majia@asu.edu

4. ELIGIBILITY: New courses must be approved by the Tempe Campus Curriculum Subcommittee and must have a regular course number. For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact the General Studies Program Office at 965-0739.

5. AREA(S) PROPOSED COURSE WILL SERVE. A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study. (Please submit one designation per proposal)

   Core Areas
   - Literacy and Critical Inquiry—L
   - Mathematical Studies—MA CS
   - Humanities, Fine Arts and Design—HU
   - Social and Behavioral Sciences—SB
   - Natural Sciences—SQ SG

   Awareness Areas
   - Global Awareness—G
   - Historical Awareness—H
   - Cultural Diversity in the United States—C

6. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED.
   (1) Course Description
   (2) Course Syllabus
   (3) Criteria Checklist for the area
   (4) Table of Contents from the textbook used, if available

7. In the space provided below (or on a separate sheet), please also provide a description of how the course meets the specific criteria in the area for which the course is being proposed.

   CROSS-LISTED COURSES: No Yes; Please identify courses:
   Is this a multisection course?: No Yes; Is it governed by a common syllabus?

   Chair/Director (Print or Type) Chair/Director (Signature)

   Cerei Mueller
   6/25/10

Rev. 1/94, 4/95, 7/96, 4/00, 1/02, 10/03
Rationale and Objectives

The importance of the social and behavioral sciences is evident in both the increasing number of scientific inquiries into human behavior and the amount of attention paid to those inquiries. In both private and public sectors people rely on social scientific findings to assess the social consequences of large-scale economic, technological, scientific, and cultural changes.

Social scientists' observations about human behavior and their unique perspectives on human events make an important contribution to civic dialogue. Today, those insights are particularly crucial due to the growing economic and political interdependence among nations.

Courses proposed for General Studies designation in the Social and Behavioral Sciences area must demonstrate emphases on: (1) social scientific theories and principles, (2) the methods used to acquire knowledge about cultural or social events and processes, and (3) the impact of social scientific understanding on the world.
Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

### ASU-[SB] CRITERIA

A SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE [SB] course should meet all of the following criteria. If not, a rationale for exclusion should be provided.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YES</th>
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<th>Identify Documentation Submitted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
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<td>syllabus, course assignments, and course readings emphasize social and economic arrangements involved in food production and distribution. Please see course introduction and list of activities.</td>
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1. Course is designed to advance basic understanding and knowledge about human interaction.

2. Course content emphasizes the study of social behavior such as that found in:
   - ANTHROPOLOGY
   - ECONOMICS
   - CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY
   - HISTORY

Course readings listed in the syllabus emphasize current and historical anthropological and sociological accounts of the social relations of food production. For instance, the readings for week 2 emphasize anthropological accounts of food cultivation systems. The course readings also emphasize economic analyses of resource issues relevant to food production and distribution.
### ASU--[SB] CRITERIA

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3. Course emphasizes:
   a. the distinct knowledge base of the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., sociological anthropological).
   **OR**
   b. the distinct methods of inquiry of the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., ethnography, historical analysis).

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4. Course illustrates use of social and behavioral science perspectives and data.

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The course content delineated in the syllabus and assignments emphasize the knowledge of the social sciences, including the sociology and anthropology of global and regional food production, the social implications of new food production techniques such as GMO, and the social and economic implications of US food consumption.

Course content, syllabi, and assignments all emphasize sociological, anthropological, and economic analyses of global and regional food production systems. Resource issues such as water and oil are discussed in relation to their sociological impacts and the economic relations involved in their distribution.

### THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COURSES ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE [SB] AREA EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CONCERNS:

- Courses with primarily fine arts, humanities, literary, or philosophical content.
- Courses with primarily natural or physical science content.
- Courses with predominantly applied orientation for professional skills or training purposes.
- Courses emphasizing primarily oral, quantitative, or written skills.
<table>
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<th>Course Prefix</th>
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Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria (from checksheet)</th>
<th>How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)</th>
<th>Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course is designed to advance basic understanding and knowledge about human interaction</td>
<td>Syllabus Course Goals: Students should come away with this course with a historically contextualized view of the social and economic challenges and politics of contemporary global and regional food production. Students should appreciate the global political, ethical, and environmental implications and challenges of our food production systems, using both qualitative and quantitative data drawn from the social sciences. Students should have acquired the practical information and research skills to investigate and evaluate the sustainability and social implications of our contemporary food production systems. Students should be able identify and understand future environmental and social challenges in our global and regional food production systems. Finally, students</td>
<td>Course content and assignments emphasize the social implications of extant global and regional food production readings, including the textbook, Pimbert (2010) Toward food sovereignty: Reclaiming diversity and citizenship. Course assignments, including a food diary and food analysis, require students to examine the sociological and economic systems involved in producing and consuming the food in their diets. The students are encouraged to use the Coffee Book as their exemplar. This text addresses the global sociological and economic configurations involved in coffee production, manufacturing, and marketing. So, all resource and sustainability issues are examined in terms of social</td>
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<td>Course content emphasizes the study of social behavior such as that found in anthropology, economics, cultural geography, history</td>
<td>The course fundamentally examines the social organization and social implications of food production systems</td>
<td>For instance, sustainability, a key focus of this course, is an issue that incorporates literature from nearly all of the social sciences, including anthropology, economics, and cultural geography. The main class text focuses on sustainability. The course readings on slow food and food democracy in weeks 11 and 13 also illustrate the course focus on the social dimension and implications of food production systems and consumption.</td>
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<td>Course emphasizes the content of the social and behavioral studies</td>
<td>Course materials emphasize historical, anthropological, economic and sociological approaches to understanding food production and consumption.</td>
<td>Course content and readings look at patterns of social interaction involved in food production in both developed and developing economies. Course content examines how technological innovations, such as the plow and GMO, affect social arrangements and affect economic production and distribution networks.</td>
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Professor: Majia Holmer Nadesan
Office:
Office Hours:

TEXTS:
3. Additional readings available on the internet, at Fletcher Library, and through Fletcher Library’s online reserves.

RESOURCES

ON RESERVE:

National Geographic online http://www.nationalgeographic.com/
The Nation http://www.thenation.com/
Slow Food http://www.slowfoodusa.org/
Sustainable Agriculture in Arizona
http://cals.arizona.edu/extension/sustainableag/smfarms.html

Course Introduction
This introductory course on the subject of food is aimed at promoting critical inquiry into the global and regional social, political, and environmental factors shaping and challenging our food production and consumption. Food production techniques have changed significantly across time. Many of our current food production systems are global in scope, rely on advanced technology, and are resource intensive.

The mass production of food has resulted in an abundance of food in advanced economies, but has failed to ensure adequate food availability for all people across the planet. Moreover, food critics and nutritionists within advanced economies charge that food quality has been compromised by mass production techniques, thereby contributing to obesity. Simultaneously, scientists warn that the primary resources employed in the production of food—including oil, fresh water, and phosphorus—are in short supply or are likely to become more costly, resulting in higher food prices in the near term future. Scientists also warn that environmental change and top-soil degradation pose future challenges in a context of continued global population growth. This course examines
these challenges using sociological, anthropological, and economic frameworks and insights from the social sciences. Proposed solutions to pressing food challenges—including expansion of local food production, food democracy, and slow food—are also examined in relation to sociological, economic, and socio-economic perspectives.

In sum, this course promotes a **historical awareness** of changing food production systems and a **global awareness** of contemporary, international food production and consumption chains through readings and activities that draw upon interdisciplinary knowledge. The course promotes **critical thinking** about previously taken-for-granted diets and encourages students to consider the **ethical** implications of their food consumption in relation to environmental challenges and social justice concerns. Finally, the course raises student awareness about local and civic advocacy pertaining to food quality, democracy, and sustainability.

**Course Goals**

Students should come away with this course with a historically contextualized view of the social and economic challenges and politics of contemporary global and regional food production. Students should appreciate the global political, ethical, and environmental implications and challenges of our food production systems, using both qualitative and quantitative data drawn from the social sciences. Students should have acquired the practical information and research skills to investigate and evaluate the sustainability and social implications of our contemporary food production systems. Students should be able identify and understand future environmental and social challenges in our global and regional food production systems. Finally, students should be able to advocate for public policies and/or social strategies aimed at redressing these challenges using both written and oral communication.

**Course Assignments**

1. **2 Exams (10% first exam; 15% final exam):** Midterm Exam Week 7 and Final Exam scheduled by ASU. Short answer, true/false, multiple choice exams.

2. **Food Diary (20% of total grade) (Due Week 8).** Diary plus 2 page typed analysis
   
   a. Keep a detailed food diary of what you eat per day. Then engage in the 2 types of analysis listed below. Use the *Coffee Book* as your exemplar.
   
   b. Analysis 1: Investigate the ingredients and (supply chain) source of one food commonly consumed in your diet across:
      
      i. **Identify** the food and, if applicable, its ingredients.
      
      ii. **Explain** where the food (and ingredients) most likely came from. For instance, the place of origin for produce (e.g., grapes) is usually labeled (e.g., California). Try to discover how, for instance, grapes are produced in California by googling “California grapes.”
iii. Consider the social relations that are involved in the production of your food product. For instance, how is migrant labor involved in the production of grapes?

iv. Explain what you learned about the source of your product and, if relevant, it’s processing. For instance, how and where are chickens raised and processed?

c. Analysis 2: Evaluate the nutritional content of the food you eat across your 1 week food diary in relation to the quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables, the degree of “processed” food, and the variety of foods consumed.

i. Consider the sustainability of the food production systems involved in producing this food.

ii. Examine the social relations involved in this food’s consumption. For instance, where and with whom you consume this food. For instance, do you eat while driving or do you eat with friends or family?

More detailed instructions will be provided.

3. Advocacy Assignment (20% of total grade): Week 12. Working in groups of 2 students will prepare an argumentative brief. The assignment will be completed as a power-point presentation that can be uploaded to blackboard for other students to read and compare arguments.

a. Students will prepare a pro or con argumentative brief on one of the issues listed below. This project requires students to research their topics and understand the issues pertaining to them. Students should be familiar with the arguments and evidence made on both sides of the issue they adopt. Students will prepare power point presentations that describe the issue they are investigating and summarize their pro or con positions.

i. Pro/Con: The role of genetic engineering in promoting sustainable agriculture and the challenges of GMO.

ii. Pro/Con: The benefits or drawbacks of local food production as public policy and the social challenges involved in more local food production.

iii. Pro/Con: The role of the state in regulating food quality standards for food for children and the role of education in promoting “healthy” eating and lifestyles.

4. Capstone Assignment (35% of total grade): This assignment spans all “food” related courses students are currently enrolled in. Trace a philosophy, spirituality, and political economy of a food item, food-event, or a food type, in one of its perennial, global, complex as well as conflicting dimensions. This is your final portfolio project. (Any use of media is acceptable, e.g., a 30 minute power-point presentation of about 15 slides or standard 8-10 pp. essay, double spaced, one inch margins). Submit the full graded (marked) portfolio along with the final project – due electronically on the assigned final project due day.

CLASS ACTIVITIES AND READINGS
Week 1: Introduction: Introduction to the Course

Pimbert (2010). Toward food sovereignty: Reclaiming diversity and citizenship
Introduction and Chapter 1

Key questions: What challenges exist for food production? What are the issues?

Week 2: Food and Civilization: Traditional Agriculture


Key questions: How did people “create” food through cultivation? How did a technological innovation such as the plow promote greater food production and how did this technology produce new challenges for food cultivation?

Weeks 3 and 4: Resource Limits and Population Growth

National Geographic: On Oil
The end of cheap oil

National Geographic: On Food

Scientific American: Could Food Shortages Bring down Civilization
May 2009. summary available at
http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=civilization-food-shortages

National Geographic: Human trends food and water

National Geographic: On Water
Water Pressure
http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0209/feature1/
Key Questions: What are the key resource issues challenging future food production?

Weeks 5 & 6: Contemporary Food Production and Challenges

Pimbert Chapter 2 “The Making of Multiple Crises in Food, Agriculture, and Environment”

Allen, Katie (2010, June 15). Food prices to rise by up to 40% over the next decade, UN report warns. The Guardian


Is there such a thing as Agroimperialism? The New York Times


Key questions: The world’s population is growing yet pressing problems are arising stemming from the world’s current “food production regime.” What is the nature of this regime? Identify its characteristics. What are the social, environmental, and political challenges pertaining to current and future food production regimes?

Week 7: Food Issues: Biofuels and Food Prices

Daniel De La Torre Ugarte and Lixia (2006). Is the expansion of biofuels at odds with the food security of developing countries? Biofuels, Bioproducts, and Biorefining.

Key question: Cheap oil may be declining and biofuels are widely viewed as a suitable supplement. However, biofuels may create food shortages in the developing world and cause food prices to rise globally. Evaluate these conflicting challenges.

Week 8: Sustainability in Developing World


Key Questions: This week's readings summarize environmental, social, and political challenges for food production in the developing and developed world. Summarize these challenges and anticipate solutions (which will be developed in weeks 10-14)

**Week 10: Food Issues: Bioengineering Challenges and Promises**
GMO and Sustainability, Monocultures, and Health Issues


Key Questions: What are the promises and perils of contemporary bioengineering practices and products?

**Week 11: Food Sovereignty?**

Pimbert Chapters 3 “Food Sovereignty: A Citizen’s Vision of a Better World”


Key Questions: What is food sovereignty and what are its promises for the developing world? What challenges does it face?

**Week 12: US: Regulating Food Quality and Safety**
Diet, Obesity, Food Safety, and Worker Safety


Films: *King Corn* & *Our Daily Bread & Food Incorporated*

*Key Questions:* What challenges exist to the safety and quality of food in the U.S.? How is obesity linked to our dietary regimes? Should government regulation be increased for food quality?

**Week 13: Food Democracy and Slow Food Movement**

Pimbert Chapter 4. The role of local organisations in sustaining local food systems, livelihoods and the environment


*Key Questions:* What opportunities and challenges do local food production and slow food pose?

**Weeks 14 and 15: Capstone Presentations**

Pimbert Part III Chapters 5-7