Ethnic Studies 3010
Decolonize Your Diet: Food Justice in Communities of Color
Cal State East Bay

Professor Luz Calvo
Office:
Office Hours:

Course Description
This course explores ancestral foods of Greater Mexico (i.e. Mexico and the Southwest US). Students will learn how to apply the framework of decolonization to issues facing Mexican, Central American, and Indigenous communities in the US. By looking at traditional Mexican and Indigenous foods and cooking techniques, we will find a path toward reclaiming health and building strong communities. This class will conduct a critical race analysis of the Standard American Diet (SAD) to find out why so many Latino/a and Indigenous people in the US are unhealthy and battling disease. We will consider the obstacles faced by all communities of color when it comes to food security.

Knowledge Base #1: Key terms in Ethnic Studies: critical race theory, environmental racism, food deserts, food sovereignty, indigenous epistemologies, food justice, colonization, decolonization, sustainability, gender, exploitation, ancestral knowledge, cultural resiliency, cultural resistance, ancestors

Knowledge Base #2: Key terms in Slow Food Studies: Standard American Diet, Farmer’s Markets, CSA, Food as Medicine, GMO, Organic crops, COFA, Slow Food Movement

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to accurately apply Ethnic Studies disciplinary concepts to the study of food, including:
   - Explain and use decolonial frameworks
   - Define and use key disciplinary terms: food sovereignty, food justice, food deserts, sustainability,
   - Explain and critique the slow food movement
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to effectively conduct or plan research focusing contesting food injustice and/or on the recovering, reclaiming, or nurturing the health of communities of color in the US
3. Identify key research issues in the field of "food studies" and conduct an appropriate literature review
4. Write research-based hypotheses or research questions pertaining to food justice for people of color in the US
5. Collect data or use existing data to address food justice in communities of color
6. Analyze data about availability of healthy food in communities of color
7. Students will explain in writing, using examples, how communities of color have struggled to maintain their culture and their health using ancestral knowledge
8. Students will demonstrate advanced skills in oral and written argument in Ethnic Studies

**Required Texts/ The MENU**

Michael Pollan, *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*
Winona La Duke: Food as Medicine
For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook
Additional articles posted on Blackboard

**Course Requirements**
1. Food diary—5 POINTS
2. Final Exam (study guide will be developed collectively)—20 POINTS
3 Oral Presentations “Palabra”
   A: Present a family food story using two (2) concepts from Knowledge Base—10 POINTS
   B: Oral presentation group’s research findings—10
4. Course Attendance and Participation (class discussions/exercises and participation in the online blog, including responses to reading, lecture, films, and some outside "exercises")—25 POINTS
5. Research paper process: 30 points
   A. Literature Review
   B. Data Collection
   C. Hypothesis Statement

**Grading Scale**
100-90 A; 89-80 B; 79-70 C; 69-60 D; below 60 not passing

**Policies**

**Late Work:** I only accept late work in the event of a genuine emergency. Please provide documentation, such as a doctor’s note.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. One absence will be excused without a note. I will deduct three points for every unexcused absence after that. If you are sick, please do not come to class. Please do check with your classmates and make up missed work.

**Academic Dishonesty:** By enrolling in this class the student agrees to uphold the standards of academic integrity described at [http://www20.csueastbay.edu/academic/academicpolicies/academicdishonesty.html](http://www20.csueastbay.edu/academic/academicpolicies/academicdishonesty.html)

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, or if you would need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, please contact me as soon as possible. Students with disabilities needing accommodation should speak with the Accessibility Services.
Emergency information: California State University, East Bay is committed to being a safe and caring community. Your appropriate response in the event of an emergency can help save lives. Information on what to do in an emergency situation (earthquake, electrical outage, fire, extreme heat, severe storm, hazardous materials, etc) may be found at http://www.aba.csueastbay.edu/EHS/emergency_mgnt.htm
Please be familiar with these procedures. Information on this page is updated as required. Please review the information on a regular basis.

Week ONE: Our Food Heritage(s)

Tuesday

Introductions to each other

Opening Ceremony/Palabra

Small Group Exercise: What is one food that reminds you of your family/culture? (Get everyone’s answer! Assign a note taker to take notes. Next: What do you think of when someone says "healthy food choice"? (Again, take notes on each response. There is no "right" answer.)

Blog Assignment: Write up what you shared in the small group

Thursday

READ BEFORE CLASS: "For Indigenous Eyes Only: Beginning Decolonization" and Decolonizing Indigenous Diets by Waziyatawin and Michael Yellow Bird (Online article—Find in "Course Materials")

In class writing assignment: Study the article "For Indigenous Eyes Only." How do the authors define "colonization" and "decolonization?" They are writing of a native audience. Does these terms apply to you/your people? Why or why not? How? How not? Write an honest two-paragraph response to these questions. Post to the blog in the "comments" section.

Week TWO: Colonization/Decolonization

Tuesday

Read: Food Justice, Chapter ONE

Due in class: Food diary for three (3) consecutive days. Write down EVERY single thing you ate/drank for three days, including water! Also note amounts. Don't try to be "good" (whatever that means to you): Just be honest.
The point of this exercise is for all of us to see a "beginning point" and for me, your professor, to have a better sense of the reality of my students. There will be *absolutely* no judgments. Also, you will not be required to share your assignment with anyone else (except your professor/confessor!) Submit on through Blackboard assignments.

**View in class:** *Agueda Martinez: My Country, My People*, 1977 Dir. Esperanza Vasquez

**Thursday**

**Mini-Lecture on Food Safety:** Hand washing, keep your area clean, wash produce, refrigeration, etc.

**Cooking Demo:** Sopa Azteca

**Week THREE: The Food System**

**Tuesday**

**Read:** Start *Food Rules*

**View In class:** *Food, Inc.*

**Discussion:** Link info in *Food, Inc* to theory of decolonizing our diet. What is the importance of the film to communities of color? What is included and not included in the film? How accessible are the solutions?

Review of Terms: Empty Calories, Standard American Diet, Slow Food Movement, Farmer’s Markets

Blog: Post your answers to discussion questions on the blog

**Thursday**

**Read:** Michael Pollan's *Food Rules* in its entirety BEFORE class!

**Mini Lecture:** Race, Class and the Slow Food Movement

**In class writing assignment:** Compare your food diary to Pollan's Food Rules

Blog: Rewrite in class writing assignment and post to blog

**Week Four: Food Insecurity and Food Deserts in Communities of Color**

**Tuesday:**

**Read:** "From Food Crisis to Food Sovereignty" by Eric Holt-Gimenez
Read: Growing up in a Food Desert in Oakland
Local: http://oaklandlocal.com/blogs/2011/02/growing-food-desert

**Mini Lecture:** Defining a research question. What is a hypothesis?

**View in class:** The Garden (2008)

**Blog question:** How would you design a study to determine if the neighborhood you grew up in is a food desert. What data would you need to collect? What terms would you need to define?

**Thursday:**

**View before class:** TED X Talk: Ron Finley: A guerilla gardener in South Central LA
**Read:** Food Deserts: “Towards the Development of a Classification”

**Blog:** What is the research hypothesis in the above article? What data did the author collect? What kind of sources did the author cite? How did the author build on previous research?

**Cooking Demonstration:** Frijoles con quelites (beans and greens) and making corn tortillas from scratch

**Week Five: Food Research**

**Tuesday**

**Read:** Food Justice, Chapter TWO
**Mini Lecture:** How to write a literature review and related questions [What is a scholarly source? Why is it important to cite sources? How to cite sources? How to paraphrase, summarize, and incorporate direct quotes. What is a hypothesis? What counts as data?]

**Visit from Librarian:** Where to find sources?

Form teams on these research topics:
- **Option One:** Research Food Deserts and Food Sovereignty
- **Option Two:** Research Ancestral Foods and Immigrant Knowledge

**Thursday**

**Read:** Food Justice, Chapter THREE
Cooking Demo: Quinoa Stew and Chia Fresca

Eat with your team! Begin designing research projects.

**Week Six: The Latino/a Immigrant "Paradox" and Critical Race Theory**

**Tuesday**

**Reading:** Calvo and Esquibel, “Decolonize Your Diet: A Manifesto”
NYT article: [The Health Toll of Immigration](#)

**Mini-Lecture:** The Latino/a Immigrant "Paradox"

**Group Exercise:** Professor will pass around several studies on the immigrant paradox. Students will evaluate one of these studies by asking: What assumptions does the study have? How does this assumption lead to potentially false conclusions? How does racism and sexism negatively influence the validity of research? If immigrants were studying themselves, would you think they (we) would do differently?

**Research Question Exercise:** Work with your small group to develop a research plan to gather information on Latino/a immigrant food practices. Who would you interview? What questions would you ask them?

**Thursday:**
**Read:** Food Justice Chapter FOUR

**In-class exercise:** Origins of foods

**Week Seven: Food is Medicine**

**Tuesday**

**Read:**

Guest Lecture: Curandera: Atava Garcia-S

Demonstration: Medicinal Teas

**Thursday**

**Read:** Winona La Duke: Food as Medicine
**Video:** Tohono Odham “The Deserts Perfect Foods”
Week Eight

**Tuesday:**
- **Read:** *Food Justice*, Chapter Six
- **Due:** Drafts of Literature Reviews. Peer review in class.

**Thursday:**
- **Read:** *Food Justice*, Chapter Seven and Eight
- **Group Work:** Work in groups to prepare research presentation

Week Nine

**Tuesday:** Presentation of Research Projects on Food Deserts

**Thursday:** Presentation of Research Projects on Recovering Ancestral Knowledge/Immigrant Food Cultural Knowledge

Week Ten

**Tuesday:**
- **Due:** Write up of Research Project: [Components include 1. Literature Review, 2. Research Hypothesis, 3. Research Method 4. Preliminary Findings]
  
  Collective Exercise:
  Develop Final Exam Study Guide

**Thursday:**
- **Read:** *Food Justice*, Chapters NINE and TEN

**Potluck:** Everyone bring his/her/their best ancestral dish! Dish MUST follow Pollan's food rules.

  Circle Share: Closing ceremony

**Final Exam Period:** Final Exam


Wang, M. C; Kim, S.; Gonzalez, A.A.; MacLeod, K. E.; and Winkleby, M. A. 2007. Socioeconomic and food-related physical characteristics of the neighbourhood environment are associated with body mass index, journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 61:491-8.