ENVST-UA 331: FOOD PRODUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
4 credits
FALL SEMESTER 2022
MW 2-3:15
60 5TH AVENUE, ROOM 261

INSTRUCTOR: SONALI SHUKLA McDERMID, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
CONTACT: sps246@nyu.edu
OFFICE HOURS: MON 4:00-6:00 PM
OFFICE LOCATION: 285 MERCER STREET, 7TH FLOOR, OFFICE 703
CLICK HERE TO MAKE AN OFFICE HOURS APPOINTMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: ENVST-UA 100, Environmental Systems Science

Roughly 40% of our Earth’s land surface is devoted to agriculture. Grasslands have been plowed over for industrial sized farming operations; forests have been razed to make meat, fuel, and other commodities. The food we eat has a significant environmental impact, and, in turn, our food system stands to be tested by a changing environment. Food Production and Climate Change provides a survey of our current global food system embedded within larger environmental systems that it both impacts and depends on. We will explore the evolution of intensive food production, specifically in how humans have changed the land surface, and our overall environmental systems, in order to meet increasing food demand. We will also learn how climate change, and the associated extreme events and variability, will challenge our ability to grow and harvest crops in a timely fashion to meet nutrition standards across the world. The impacts of climate change on food production vary largely across geographic, economic and even gender space. Finally, this course will assess the environmental footprint of current food system trajectories and evaluate emerging alternatives for a range of environmental, socio-economic, and nutritional outcomes.
REQUIRED MATERIALS:

This course will require weekly readings, prescribed per lecture on the Course Schedule, linked below and [here](#). These readings will either be provided as a pdf on Brightspace (under “Resources”), or you will need to search for and download the reference through NYU Libraries or your log-in. If you are unfamiliar with how to search for and acquire references, please see me.

Readings should be done over the week they are assigned at a minimum. Doing them in advance of lecture will help you to derive the most out of them.

**Guidance for scientific papers:**
I have indicated the sections on which to focus. You will rarely have to read the “Methods” sections. Rather, in general for scientific papers, I suggest focusing on Abstract, Introduction, Figures/Captions, and Discussion/Conclusions. This will help you get a working understanding from the readings sufficient enough for classroom discussion. Please make an appointment with me if you are finding these works challenging!

The variety of reference mediums is meant to serve a multi-fold purpose for you: it will familiarize you with the field’s cutting-edge research, and enable you to evaluate the public’s response to such research and how it is communicated. Some of these readings, particularly those taken from scientific literature, may be dense and may prove initially challenging. In these cases, other materials will be supplied to help you gain a more complete understanding of the findings and implications. You will also be required, and encouraged, to conduct literature searches to access more information and delve more deeply into weekly topics.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- On-time attendance to Lecture and Participation
- Completion of weekly readings
- Completion of weekly written assignments
- Completion of one group presentation and policy brief
- One Final Term Paper

*It is NYU policy that all work is expected to be your own. Plagiarism of any kind will result in a failing grade for the class, and referral to an academic dean. Plagiarism includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else’s work as your own; or copying verbatim from any source. You are subject to CAS’s guidelines for Academic Integrity: [http://cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity](http://cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity)*
You will be expected to attend every class, as the readings will cover some of the topics we discuss in class in more detail, but not all topics. Your active listening in class will help you to create a more thorough response to some of the homework prompts. This is college, and so I also expect that you will take initiative to look further into terms and topics you are unfamiliar with in the readings (this includes asking me). Active participation will be encouraged, and there will be many opportunities to do so, as an individual and as discussions questions posed to groups of students in class, so please be ready to take advantage of these opportunities. I also encourage out-of-class discussion on readings and response topics, and if several of you are pursuing similar lines of research for your final paper, I expect that you will discuss this amongst yourselves. However, at all times, all work should be your own.

GRADING CRITERIA

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<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Integrated Assessment</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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Summary of Assessment Items and Due Dates:

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Item</th>
<th>Assigned</th>
<th>Due*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HW 1</td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>9/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW 2</td>
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<td>10/7</td>
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<td>HW 3</td>
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<td>HW 4</td>
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<td>HW 5</td>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>12/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIA Presentation</td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>Week of 12/5</td>
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<td>RIA Policy Brief</td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>12/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>12/21</td>
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*Accepted until 11:59 PM (timestamped) on the date indicated. All submissions will be uploaded to NYU Brightspace unless otherwise indicated/discussed.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will have an assignment approximately every other week. The assignment will be posted on Brightspace, so please check the Table above for the Date Assigned.

When assigned, you will have approximately one (1) week to complete each assignment. These will comprise short answer questions designed to test your comprehension and critical thinking of the assigned readings and issues discussed in class. The questions will generally ask you to summarize or describe various concepts in your own words, and then challenge you to apply these concepts in thinking about climate-agriculture interactions. The responses will most often be written, in short-answer form. You will also be asked to provide overviews and references for your final paper, and this will help you to plan for it in advance.

Assignments are expected to be typed using 12 pt font and 1.5 spacing (double spacing is not acceptable).

Assignments should be uploaded to Brightspace (please do not share a Google Doc with me). You may use “Pages” instead of “Word”.

Assignments must have a filename per the following example: McDermid_HW1.doc. Assignments that do not have a name in the filename will automatically be deducted 2 points.

Late homework will not be accepted, unless you have discussed an extension with me prior.

GROUP PRESENTATION AND POLICY BRIEF

You will also work in groups of 4(ish) to sketch out a “Regional Integrated Assessment” of climate and agriculture for a region/area of your choice. For this project, you will be evaluated (10% of grade) based on a group presentation as a group and 5-page “policy brief”. More details on this component of your grade will be provided in class, and a rubric will be posted. Periodically, you will be given time in-class to work together, but you are also expected to coordinate outside of class.

See link under “Grading Criteria” above for more information.

TERM PAPER

The term paper will be “open topic”, in that the student may choose any topic related to the themes discussed in class. As part of the homework assignments, students will submit a topic proposal and preliminary list of references to the instructor for approval. If the topic does not meet instructor approval, the student may seek the instructor’s guidance on
how to construct a topic that is appropriate. A template/rubric for the final paper will be provided during the course.

The term paper is to be 12 pages, 1.5 line spacing, including references. You may choose whatever citation style you like, but please use it consistently. A minimum of 7 primary references are required, but you may choose to include more.

I would encourage you to seek help from the NYU Bobst Librarians in conducting a proper literature search for your papers.

See link under “Grading Criteria” above for more information.

DISABILITY DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is www.nyu.edu/csd. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU’s Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
726 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10003-6675
Telephone: 212-998-4980
Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114
Web site: http://www.nyu.edu/csd

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, PLAGIARISM, AND CHEATING

https://cas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/cas/academic-integrity.html

Academic integrity means that the work you submit is original. Obviously, bringing answers into an examination or copying all or part of a paper straight from a book, the Internet, or a fellow student is a violation of this principle. But there are other forms of cheating or plagiarizing which are just as serious — for example, presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written); writing a sentence or paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea(s) without a reference to the source of the idea(s); or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both instructors have given their permission in advance). Receiving or giving help on a take-home paper, examination, or quiz is also cheating, unless expressly permitted by the instructor (as in collaborative projects).
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

See here for weekly break-down of topics, lectures, and readings:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UQMs3ERahgDuNjeOWBR-o4yUE6STjzxYZIMwSQuzcVA/edit#gid=0