

Native Foods and Farming of the Americas

NAS 123, Spring 2019, CRN 92029

Hart Hall #1130, Tuesdays and Thursdays

12:00-1:30 pm, with

Professor Liza Grandia

emgrandia@ucdavis.edu

Office hours, Tu/Th 2-3 pm & short consultations
after class

My office is in Hart Hall, 2nd floor #2419,
530-752-0357

[http://www.signupgenius.com/go/
5080f45a8aa2ca20-spring](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f45a8aa2ca20-spring)

with Ms. Tatiana Sierra as Reader,
tdsierra@ucdavis.edu



Course description

The extraordinary agro-diversity of native foods of the Americas -- maize, potatoes, tomatoes, chocolate, avocados, peanuts, peppers, squashes, beans, and many more fruits -- has transformed your palate and the world. Beyond learning the fascinating cultural history of many of these foods (which will make you the delight of dinner dates for years to come), we will examine a series of social, economic and environmental problems faced by indigenous farmers today: *pesticides exposure, GMOs, free trade agreements, commodity booms and busts, migrant work, land grabs, harvesting rights, etc.*

There are no pre-requisites, but a related, introductory NAS, anthropology, social science, or sustainable food course (e.g. NAS 001, NAS 010, ANT 002, CRD 20, etc.) would be useful.

GEs: Domestic Diversity, Oral Literacy, Science & Engineering, Social Sciences, World Cultures

Course objectives.

By the end of the quarter, students taking the course should be able to:

- ❖ converse fluidly about foods and cuisines of the Americas -- ethnobotany, social use and customs, methods of cooking and consumption, and major related social issues
- ❖ contextualize the history of agricultural domestication
- ❖ assess the impacts of Spanish conquest and colonization on native foods
- ❖ understand and debate the consequences of genetically modified foods, especially corn, for not just for consumers but for indigenous farmers
- ❖ describe the ecological and social logics of milpa and forest gardening
- ❖ articulate how corporate globalization (GM technology transfer, trade disputes, land grabs,

immigration flows) is transforming food production and consumption across the Americas

- ❖ analyze discourse about “food justice” and “decolonization of the diet”
- ❖ define and delineate the key tenets of food sovereignty as led by indigenous & peasant movements

Beyond these key topics, students will receive instruction & guidance on reading strategies, critical analysis, and oral & written articulation of intellectual ideas.

Course format

There will be two 1.5-hour class sessions each week that integrate lecture, discussion, small group activities, student presentations, films and film clips. We will try to touch upon all the readings in class, but regardless of whether they are discussed overtly or indirectly, you are still responsible for having read them and may be tested on the material. As a rule of thumb, you should be spending an average of 8 hours a week outside of the classroom on your assignments and weekly class preparation. From time to time, the professor may ask you to read or view related news items or websites.

Required readings

There are **five required books**, which you can acquire at the campus bookstore or from another bookseller.

1. Coe, Sophie. 1994. *America's First Cuisines*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
2. Foster, Nelson, and Linda S. Cordell, eds. 1992. *Chilies to Chocolate: Food the Americas Gave the World*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
3. **Johnson, Silvia. 1997. *Tomatoes, Potatoes, Corn and Beans*. Antheneum, First edition. **NOTE, you will need to order this online.
4. Altieri, Miguel. 2004. *Genetic Engineering in Agriculture: The Myths, Environmental Risks and Alternatives*. Oakland: Food First Books
5. Weir, David and Mark Schapiro. 1981. *Circle of Poison: Pesticides and People in a Hungry World*. Oakland: Food First Books.

All other required readings will be available on **Canvas** (\$) under “Files.” Additional “**recommended**” readings may be posted by week/topic to Canvas, but you will only be responsible for the assigned reading material in the book and packet on the exams.

Reading tips: I am told this course has “a lot” of reading compared with others at UC Davis. One of the steps to becoming a persuasive writer and orator is the ability to read broadly and synthesize information from many difference sources. The point is not to memorize what you think might be on the test but to use the materials for critical thinking. You should be drawing concrete evidence, facts, and data from the texts, but I try not to make exams an exercise in rote memorization, but instead a space in which you can show what you’ve learned.

Many students ask what they should be “getting” from the reading. The first step is to *do* the reading. The course is front-ended with more reading at the beginning and tapering off by the end. You might be able to earn a C/D on exams from active listening to lectures, but if you want to make an A, please know there will be some surprise questions drawn exclusively from the reading. I will do my best to cover the highlights and key points of the reading, but as an upper division social science class, I do expect that you do the reading. For any 4 unit course, you should be budgeting about 8-10 hours a week. Subtracting 2 hours for long-term projects and assignments, that’s about 5 hours for reading per week for reading an average of 70 pages.

In the end, I hope you can recall for yourself trivia, anecdotes, and above all social justice stories that you could relate to others over a meal about the foods served. If you do active reading and take notes about what captures your own interest, you should do just fine in the class. The point is not to memorize like in a science class, but to read connectively and notice ideas and patterns across the articles.

Evaluation

My courses are never graded on a curve. Everyone has the hypothetical opportunity to make an A, but this is not the default grade. Perhaps I am old fashioned, but mediocre work should fall in B to D range, not an A minus. The final point average will be translated into letter grades according to this scale.

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
93-96 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-

Grade petitions: I invest considerable effort into ensuring that our grading is fair and equitable. If a clerical error has been made, please do bring that to my attention. Otherwise, I strongly discourage grade petitions. They must be submitted in writing within one week of the released grade, accompanied by a photocopy of the graded item (not the original). Bear in mind that working harder and showing improvement over the quarter will more likely result in an overall grade bump than quibbling about an individual assignment.

Attendance, curiosity, and participation

Be less curious about people and more curious about ideas. – Marie Curie

It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education. – Albert Einstein

The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity. – Dorothy Parker

Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers. – Voltaire

Punctuality, participation, and a passion for learning will put you on the right path to the grade you want. Please be on time for class. If for some reason, you need to leave early, just let me know before we begin and exit quietly. As a medium-sized class, attendance and participation is especially important, so come prepared to engage and discuss each week! You should be taking extensive notes on the reading and lecture and come prepared for each class meeting. If you are shy about spontaneous participation, you may want to write down some prepared comments in one or more of these genres: comparison, synthesis, query, critique, curiosity, or critical analysis.

Since we will be sharing food and, hopefully, good times, let's make a good effort to learn names and interests. To that end, by the end of the first week of class, please post your answers to a 2 page questionnaire with a selfie about why you are taking the class - a personal or family story, an extra-curricular experience, a love of cooking, whatever!

How will I quantify participation? You will receive a score for 15 of our 17 substantive sessions, which allows you two excused absences, no questions asked. You get 3 points to showing up on time and 3 points for signs of active listening (taking notes, nodding, smiling, and demonstrating other signs of paying attention) [6 x 15 = 90]. I may also occasionally ask you to write "minute papers" and/or micro quizzes regarding lecture or reading that I will then grade on a scale of 3 points in lieu of your active listening points. Under no circumstance should you text, surf the web, or disrupt the class with private chatting. I will subtract all 6 points for any instance of poor manners (surfing, chatting, tardiness, texting, falling asleep, or being disruptive in some other way).

In addition, as a “good guest,” you should at least four times in the quarter make a substantive public contribution. Some of you may talk and participate a lot more than this. Your enthusiasm and effort will be reflected in my discretionary points (10 points, in other words, potentially the difference between a C & a B or a B & an A). Everyone can make a basic effort to engage, especially with the group presentations -- asking or answering a question, making a comment, describing a connection with the readings, noting a current event, etc. Your participation has to be public. (It doesn't count to sit and have silent thoughts!). To keep track of your participation, you will download a booklet of 4 “coupons” (from Assignments) and fill them out with a brief sentence summary of each participation event. Cut them up and staple them into a little coupon booklet and bring it on the last day of class.

Extra credit. I can give you 10 points extra credit for attending a recommended event. If I happen to be there and can see you are paying attention, you are lucky... If it's an event I can't attend, then write up a paragraph or two about the content and your reaction to it to get the credit.

Item	Date	Description	Mode	Points
Exams & papers				400
Midterm #1	May 2	Bring a blue book - short answer and essay	In class, regular time	150
Midterm #2	May 23	This will be based on the group food projects		150
Final (midterm #3)	June 7, 10:30 am	Take the final exam, focused on contemporary issues *Or* elect to do a research report on a research topic (to be discussed)		100
Food projects				350
Group	presentation day	Oral presentation on the social issue of choice (including food sharing)	in class, <15 minutes + 5 for questions and discussion	100
Group	presentation day	Take-out materials: traditional recipe, fact sheet for the class to study, ten sample test questions, any other useful study materials	Posted to Canvas § <i>Take-out Files/Recipes.</i>	100
Individual	Within one week of presentation	1) Nonfiction writing on your topic 2) Page about your contribution to the group.	Hard copy to the professor; Digital backup uploaded to Canvas	150
Participation				150
	April 9	Get to know you questionnaire	Short questionnaire + photograph uploaded to § Assignments	20
	15 of 17 classes	Active learning	15 sessions * 6 points	90
	June 6	Being a good guest (class participation, a minimum of 4X during the quarter)	Reiterated in a sentence or two in your printed coupon book	20
	TBD	Pop quizzes	If reading lags....	10
		Overall	<i>my discretion</i>	10
Total				1000

Food projects

By the 3rd week of class, we will have organized 8 groups (with 8 people each) for 30 minute group presentations during the 6th-8th weeks of the quarter. Each group will have no more than 20 minutes to present and then field questions for 10 minutes and hopefully share food from a traditional (pending a democratic class vote on this). These creative, ethnobotanical presentations should explore a key contemporary economic and/or political economic issue in relation to the social/cultural history of the food, how and where it's farmed, and how it was prepared.

The best presentations will have the feel of a good dinner party: rich with good stories, anecdotes, and tantalizing trivia and be provocative enough to stir debate. For each food, the whole class will read relevant pages from the assigned books. Each group will provide a "take out" bag with a recipe, fact sheet, 10 sample test questions, other key study guides.

Group projects are not everyone's forte, so the assignment also has an individual writing component (shared privately only with the instructor/grader).

(1) A 3-4 page nonfiction piece; this could take the form of a newspaper article, an op-ed, a creative essay, advocacy letter, a scene from a dinner conversation, etc. Whatever you choose, you need to have a central idea or thesis or advocacy point - *due one week after the presentation* (uploaded to § Assignments)

(2) A half page description, list or bullet points summarizing your contribution to the group (what research you did, what you read, and what you learned personally). I really don't want to hear "tattling" stories. If the group dynamics are challenging, why don't you describe instead how you were a problem-solver?

- #1 Beans.....Compared with meat consumption, climate, diet for small planet
- #2 AvocadosPlantations and displacement of small farms
- #3 Amaranth, chia, quinoaRevitalization of ancient crops; health food crazes
- #4 Sunflowers, cashews and/or peanutsRise of food allergies
- #5 Vanilla, allspice, or another spicePlantation agriculture; boom & busts from synthetic competition
- #6 Chocolate.....Fair trade, how fair is it?
- #7 Chili peppers.....Agroecology, small farmer survival
- #8 TomatoesMigrant worker conditions in the Central Valley

We will do several rounds of first and second choice sign-ups, so that everyone is happy with her/his/their topic.

How each group divides up the work is up to each unique group, but some of the roles / elements are:

- Collector of professorial advice from office hours
- Spokesperson
- Recipe research and presentation — *remember, it must be a traditional recipe!*
- Cooking
- Fact sheet
- AV/presentation
- Social issue research**
- Dinner trivia
- Test questions

I don't expect that everyone will speak in the presentation; you are welcome (if not encouraged) to pick your most charismatic speaker(s).

Manners, rules, and academic customs

1. **Chemical sensitivities.** Let's keep neurotoxins out of the classroom! You are kindly requested to refrain from wearing perfume/cologne or other cosmetic product with heavy synthetic odors, including scented laundry products (detergents, softeners, dryer sheets). For scent-sensitive individuals, chemical fragrances can disrupt memory and concentration, among other adverse health impacts.
2. **Plagiarism** and cheating will not be tolerated. Turning in the same paper you wrote for another class definitely counts as plagiarism. I will refer any cases of academic dishonesty to Student Judicial Affairs and you will receive a zero for the given assignment or test, likely resulting in a failing grade in the course. For tips on avoiding plagiarism problems, see:

<http://cai.ucdavis.edu/aip.html>

3. **Make a friend.** If you miss class, ask a fellow classmate for notes or handouts. I will also try to figure out how to share podcasts for people with excused absences and/or students who may have other special needs.
4. **Faculty email:** The professor treats her email like regular postal mail. That means she only checks her email thoroughly once a day (usually in the late afternoons) and prioritizes them by urgency and importance. Do not expect immediate responses, nor any response over the weekends. As the slow food movement has taught us, faster is not always better. I would prefer you speak to me *in person* for any substantive questions either in office hours (see 1st page) or right after class for quick matters or concerns.

Note: I am not your secretary. I do not accept assignments by email! I will not print your assignments. You are forewarned that I delete assignments submitted by email or Canvas messages!

5. **Think before you write:** Students are expected to read announcements that are addressed to the class through Canvas. When in doubt, ask a friend first. If it's something only I can answer, then please do ask me, but I work 80 hour weeks and field 200+ emails a day.
6. **Office hours:** I organize my office hours in 15 minute slots through Signup Genius. If they get crowded, I may switch to open hours with flexible length meetings, but this will be announced in class. Please come prepared for office hours with a piece of paper and a pencil and topics you wish to discuss. Come fragrance free.
7. **Special needs or concerns.** Any student with documented special learning needs or concerns should speak with me during the first two weeks of the quarter about any accommodations needed. I have a disability, too (see above about chemical sensitivities) and serve on the campus disability advisory committee, so I empathize with disability accommodations.
8. **Illness/conflicting appointment.** Life happens. You have two free absences, no questions asked, so if you are contagiously ill, please stay home and get better. If you want a copy of the podcast, email the Reader or whatever arrangements are announced in class when I figure out the technology
9. **Missed/early exams.** Note the date of exams on your calendar now and make travel plans accordingly. **I do not give early or make-up exams.**
10. Any **revisions to the syllabus** that are announced in class will take precedence over this document. Any added or substituted material will always be posted to Canvas (you won't need to purchase any new material).

11. **Slides.** To encourage better listening and note-taking, please know that my pedagogical policy is NOT to post lecture slides on Canvas. No adversary, supervisor, boss, or any other figure of authority in your future professional life is going to do so or spoon feed you notes. One of the essential skills of college is learning to take dynamic, memorable notes. If you are having trouble doing so, I encourage you to ask questions, read online tips about note-taking, talk with me after class, tape record for yourself, take advantage of the “curiosity corner,” organize study groups, or whatever else you need to do to learn the material.
12. **Technicalities:** Please turn in digital assignments in compatible software, I can open iWork software (Pages and Keynote), Microsoft suite, and PDFs. I cannot open Prezi or will not register to see any other new-fangled online presentation. Convert them to PDF.
13. **Naming:** In pedagogical contexts with students, I go by **Professor Grandia** or **Dr. Grandia**, in person and/or in writing. I’m not “Miss Grandia,” “Ms. Grandia,” and definitely not “Mrs. Grandia.” If we should become genuine friends after you graduate, you will be more than welcome then to call me by my first name.

For more information on my research and links to my publications, see <http://nas.ucdavis.edu/faculty/liza-grandia>.

Stay in touch!

In one quarter we can only scratch the surface of the food histories, cultural topics, and social justice issues associated with the amazing agro-diversity of the Americas. To support future learning and connection to unfolding food justice issues, I have set up four ways for students who have taken this course to stay in touch. I suggest you use your permanent email account to join rather than your UC Davis account.

- 1) To be on an infrequent **email listserv** go here:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en#!forum/alumsnativefoods>

*Note anyone can send messages to the group with this address:
alumsnativefoods@googlegroups.com

- 2) Request to join the closed **Facebook** group, go here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/506395176191854/>

- *Note, you can join without “friending” me so don’t worry about me seeing your Friday night party pics. I welcome and encourage you to add content to the feed. I learn a lot from what students share.*

- 3) To join the **Linked In group**, go here:

https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=6985428&trk=my_groups-tile-grp

- *This can be a powerful way you can connect professionally with other folks for job searchers and project coordination.*

- 4) If you want to link separately with me on Linked In to connect to my broader networks, then you should send me an individual invite from your account. While I don’t “friend” active students on Facebook, I do appreciate adding students to my Linked In account because it enables me to see what you go on to do in life!

It’s your choice whether to join one or all four, depending on your web-social preferences.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings	Total
1a	April 2	Introduction	§ Warman, "Corn and Capitalism" intro, 1-11 > Acquire your books, post your personal statements & photos by April 1, 5 pm. > Glance at Foster and Cordell, 163-7	[4]
I. Staple problems				
1b	April 4	Industrial agriculture (with Katie Murphy)	§ Pollan, pp. 15-64, 85-108 § Localwashing (2 pages) § What the Farm-to-Table Got Wrong	73
2a	April 9	Pesticides & the Green Revolution Debate: Local vs. Organic	β Weir and Shapiro, <i>Circle of Poison</i> § Davis, "How Keeping Your Food Bug-Free" § Mexican cactus, Chinese ginger top the list § From farm to table § Organic diet cuts pesticide exposure	70
2b	April 11	Domestication, forest gardening, and the milpa	• Coe, pp. 1-8 § Reina, pp. 1-20 (you can skim 10-15) § Corzo and Schwartz, 69-86 § Ford and Nigh, 13-18	48
3a	April 16	People of maize, Guatemala v. Monsanto	• Coe, pp. 8-16, § Grandia, "Sacred Maize against a Legal Maize," 1-27	32
3b	April 18	GMOs, Malthus, and food security	β Altieri, <i>Genetic Engineering in Agriculture</i>	70
II. Colonial encounters North, Central, South, East				
4a	April 23	Aztecs / Maya - (maize continued and squash a little...)	• Coe, pp. 88-168, o.k. to skim a little; • *Key pages in Coe, pp. 228-52	24 + 80 skim med
4b	April 25	Inca / potatoes & gender	• Coe, pp. 169-210 (skim), 16-18 • Johnson, pp. 64-84, 110-11 • Foster and Cordell, 95-104 • Weatherford, 77-101	75
5a	April 30	North American foodways (English settler encounters & plantation agriculture)	• Coe, pp. 37-41 • Johnson, pp. 1-25, 112 § Herbicide glyphosate in Vancouver Sun § LaDuke, White Earth Band recognizes wild rice § For tribes.. § Bray and Nelson, "Revitalizing Native Foodways"	46
5b	May 2	MIDTERM		
II. Banquet of food projects				
6a	May 7	Overview - colonial encounters TOUR OF GARDEN	• Coe, pp. 27-30, 37-40 • Foster & Cordell, xi-xvii, • Johnson: 1-6	44
6b	May 9	#1 Beans #2 Avocados	• Johnson: 26-37, 115-16 • Foster & Cordell, pp. 61-80 • Coe, 28, 44-46	36
7a	May 14	#3 Amaranth & chia, quinoa #4 Peanuts, sunflowers, cashews	• Foster & Cordell, #2, pp. 15-34; #9, pp. 123-142 • Coe 34-36 • Johnson, pp. 51-63, 116	36

Day	Date	Topic	Readings	Total
7b	May 16	#5 Vanilla and/or spices (e.g. allspice) #6 Chocolate	• Coe, pp. 50-58, pp. 58-60 • Foster & Cordell, #3, pp. 35-46; #8, pp. 105-22 • Johnson, p. 95-110, 114	41
8a	May 21	#7 Peppers #8 Tomatoes	• Foster & Cordell, #6, pp. 81-94; #1, pp. 1-14 • Coe, pp. 46-50; 60-65 • Johnson, pp. 84-94	22
8b	May 23	Midterm # 2 on group projects Discussion of final options (research report instead of final)	§ Recommended, Wikipedia timeline of food	
Symbol codes: § - Canvas • Book Selection β Read the whole book @ Recommended reading # Chapter pp. pages				
III. Food sovereignty today				
9a	May 28	Land grabs, peasant movements, and food sovereignty	§ GRAIN report on land grabs (3) § Edelman, "Bringing the Moral Economy" (15) § Rossett, "Food Sovereignty" (3) § Wittman, "The Origins and Potential of Food Sovereignty," p. 1-14, book excerpt + appendices (14)	35
9b	May 30	Old is new again: Agroecology, biochar, slowness....	§ Perfecto and Vandemeer, "Biodiversity Conservation" § Peasant Agroecology, Via Campesina experiences § Ford and Nigh, <i>Maya Forest Garden</i> , excerpt 155-68 § Corzo and Schwartz, Traditional home gardens	40
10a	June 4	Seeds	§ Shiva, Manifestos on Food and Seed § Nabhan, seeds on seeds § Nazarea - preface excerpt § Nazarea - book reviews (2)	20
10b	June 6	Climate change, obesity, and/or other contemporary issues continued....wrap up	Topics to be determined by popular vote	0
Hard copy of contemporary reports are due - at the final OR take the final - Friday, June 07, 2019 at 10:30 am				
Symbol codes: § - Canvas • Book selection from a book you purchased • β Read the whole book I have tried to estimate the pages to help you plan your homework but in removing and adding new articles, some tallies may not be updated.				