AFRO 224/ CWL 226/ IB 299:
Humanist Perspectives of the Afro-Am Experience
Race and Food Security
Spring 2021
Lecture: MW 2:00 – 3:20pm: Class Zoom Link | Password: 290710 | Meeting ID: 829 5208 1664

Professors:
Dr. Bobby J. Smith II, Ph.D., bobbyjs2@illinois.edu
Department of African American Studies
Office: 205 Department of African American Studies Building (1201 West Nevada Street)
Office Hours: By Appointment
Professor Smith Office Hours Link
Password: OH495

Dr. Esther Ngumbi, Ph.D., enn@illinois.edu
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Office Hours: Tuesday 11a-1p (Schedule Appt.)
Professor Ngumbi Office Hours Link
Password: 918075

Course Description
Achieving food security across the world calls for an understanding of the racial inequalities that impact the ways in which food is produced, consumed, processed and distributed. Yet current food security strategies largely ignore issues of race while focusing on the productivity of agricultural methods and environmental sustainability. In this course, students will critically analyze and explore the food security continuum—from the soil to the fork—through humanist frameworks derived from an Afro-centric world view of agri-food systems. Such a view of food security enlarges our understandings of food access issues and how Black communities are working to build socially just and sustainable food systems for all. This course is designed for students interested in food and environmental systems, African American studies, and community development.

Course Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, through rigorous, engaged, socially conscious, and interdisciplinary class discussions, students should be able to:
1. Identify food issues through Afro-centric humanistic frameworks and learn how to develop sustainable food systems solutions that are socially just, inclusive, and equitable for all.
2. Analytically approach questions and problems of food security at the intersection of race, food, both domestically and internationally.
3. Describe the social, political, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions of complexities surrounding achieving sustainable food security in the 21st century including racial inequalities.
4. Think critically and frame multidimensional understandings of food access issues, food systems and food insecurity both in the US and in Africa.
5. Use a variety of approaches to research and describe local, regional, and international perspectives on food security that include not only issues of race, but also of class and gender.

Course Requirements
- Attendance (10%): Students will be expected to attend all class meetings.
- Participation (10%): Students will be expected to contribute to all class discussions.
- **Readings (20%)**: Students will be expected to complete all readings and complete any assignments associated with the readings before class.

- **Essays (60%)**: Students will be expected to complete and turn in all required essays for the semester on their respective due dates. All essays must be typed (in a clear and readable print format), printed, and stapled. Please use 12-point font, double spacing, one-inch margins, and APA, MLA, or Chicago formatting for citations and works-cited. All papers should have titles.

**Course Grading System**

Although the University of Illinois does not have a standard percentage associated with letter grades, in this course we have developed the following grading scheme:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
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<th>Numerical Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>77-79.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>93-96.99</td>
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<td>90-92.99</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>70-72.99</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>87-89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>67-69.99</td>
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<td>83-86.99</td>
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<td>63-66.99</td>
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<td>80-82.99</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60-62.99</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
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**Course Policies**

**Statement on University Policies and Regulations**: As the instructors for this course, we respect and uphold all University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically handicapped, visually and/or hearing-impaired student; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to our attention.

**Statement on Academic Integrity**: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Illinois Student Code as ‘it is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions.’ In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the student code is an “F” for the term.

* Please know that it is our responsibility as instructors to uphold the academic integrity policy of the University, which can be found here: [http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-401.html](http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-401.html). Please note that you are responsible for reading this policy. Do not hesitate to ask us if you are ever in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or any other breach of academic integrity.

**Statement on Emergency Response Recommendations**: Emergency response recommendations can be found at the following website: [http://police.illinois.edu/emergency/](http://police.illinois.edu/emergency/). Please review this website and the campus building floor plans website within the first 10 days of class: [http://police.illinois.edu/emergency/floorplans/](http://police.illinois.edu/emergency/floorplans/).

**Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**: Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
should self-identify to the instructor to ensure protection of the privacy of their attendance in this course. See http://registrar.illinois.edu/ferpa for more information on FERPA.

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** To ensure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class are asked to contact Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) and see us as soon as possible, or make an appointment to see us, or see us during our office hours. DRES provides students with academic accommodations, access, and support services. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TDD), or e-mail a message to disability@uiuc.edu, http://www.disability.illinois.edu/.

**Semester Calendar and Schedule**

This course is separated into three units as indicated below. The first unit examines issues of food security in the Africa context. The second unit examines issues of food security in the United States context. The final unit examines issues at the nexus of the Africa and US contexts.

**Note:** This course has no required books. All course readings will be posted on Illinois Compass.

As we navigate this unusual and uncertain semester surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some useful resources:

- University COVID-19 Information and Updates
- COVID-19 Mental Health Resources
- UI Counseling Center COVID-19 Resources
- Remote Learning Resources

**Week 1**

**Monday, January 25 | Course Introduction Syllabus and the U of I Food Security Plan Report**

**Unit One: Race and Food Security in Africa | Professor Ngumbi**

**Wednesday, January 27 | Food Security around the World**


**Week 2**

**Monday, February 1 | Food Security Continuum.**


**Wednesday, February 3** | Food Insecurity, Hunger and Poverty in Africa-Understanding the Dynamics

**Week 3**

**Monday, February 8** | Food Insecurity, Hunger and Poverty in Africa-Understanding the Dynamics (continued) | **Assignment 1: Unit 1**


**Wednesday, February 10** | Can Africa Achieve Food Security?


**Week 4**

**Monday, February 15** | Communicating and Advocating for a Just and Equitable Food Security System in the US and around the World (Learning the art of writing opinion pieces) | **Assignment 2 Info.**

**Wednesday, February 17** | Break – Non-instructional day [NO CLASS]

**Week 5**

**Monday, February 22** | Attaining Food Security: Role of policy and international markets-Guest Lecture – (Consulting with Hope Michelson-Tentative Speaker)

**Wednesday, February 24** | Can we Improve Global Food Security? and the Role of Gender in Achieving Food Security?

Week 6

Monday, March 1 | Food Security: Drawing the Parallels that exist between the US and the rest of the world. Class discussion.

Wednesday, March 3 | Reframing Food Security Issues in a globally connected world


Unit Two: Race and Food Security in the United States | Professor Smith

Week 7

Monday, March 8 | Perspectives on the Duality of Race and Food


Wednesday, March 10 | Defining Food Security in the US Context


Week 8

Monday, March 15 | Food Insecurity, Hunger, and Poverty

Assignment 3: Film Response Paper


Wednesday, March 17 | Food Insecurity, Hunger, and Poverty (continued)

Week 9

Monday, March 22 | Black Farmers, Farmworkers, Native Americans, and Food Security


Wednesday, March 24 | Break – Non-instructional day [NO CLASS]

Week 10

Monday, March 29 | Black Farmers, Farmworkers, Native Americans, and Food Security (cont.)


Wednesday, March 31 | Inequality, Resistance, and Food Security in Historical Contexts


Week 11

Monday, April 5 | Inequality, Resistance, and Food Security in Historical Contexts (cont.)


Wednesday, April 7 | Unit Two Review and Paper Discussion: Rethinking Race and Food Security
Week 12

Monday, April 12 Guest Lecture: Metropolitan Food and Environmental Systems

Dr. Megan Dailey, PhD, Director, Metropolitan Food & Environmental Systems
College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, UIUC

Wednesday, April 14 | NO CLASS

Unit Three

Weeks 13-15

Monday, April 19: Course Review/Theme Building |
Group Research Project Topic Discussion: Food Security in a Post-COVID World
Assignment 4 Due

Wednesday, April 21: Group Research Project Meetings – In Class

Monday, April 26: Brief Research Proposal Presentations

Wednesday, April 28: Group Project Work Day – NO CLASS

Monday, May 3: Student Presentations | Wednesday, May 5: Student Presentations