

Course Syllabus

Who: Dr. Courtney Cecale (she/her)

Office Hours: Thursday after class, 12:30-1:30pm

Office: Back of the hall in the Anthropology Department, First floor, Sycamore Hall

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What: The Cultural Politics of Science

Let's start with an old joke. Two young fish are swimming along. A frog on a lily pad spots them and remarks, "Hello boys! How's the water today?" The two young fish mumble something to the effect of "Just fine, Grandma." After they pass by, one young fish eyes the other and asks: "What's water?"

Scientists, engineers, and medical professionals swim (as they must) in the details of their technical work: experiments, inventions, treatments and cures. It's an intense and necessary focus.

STS and this class, by contrast, draws attention to the water: the social, political, legal, economic, and cultural environment that shapes research and invention, supports or inhibits it – and is in turn shaped by evolving science and technology.

Assignments for the Semester

- Class Engagement 25%
- Response Papers 25%
- GMO Game 10%
- Midterm 20%
- Final 20%

Class Engagement

This class is designed to be a seminar, so come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to join in the discussion.

You will earn points each class period for being an active, respectful and engaged participant and contributing new ideas to the conversation.

Because of ~*~*the times~** there is a good chance this will look different if you, for instance, get sick or have an emergency. We can work out what engagement means if something major comes up.

You will not be graded on our first meeting or finals week, you've got other things to do!

Reflection Papers

You will be expected to write weekly reflection papers throughout the semester on the assigned materials for the week. (Meaning, the paper due week 2 should be on the materials for week 2. If you have any questions let me know!)

Each essay should be ~2 pages, double spaced. They should contain:

- Summaries of the articles
- Your personal reflection on the articles
- At least one quote from the article (preferably not pulled from the first page)
- Any crossovers that you see between the pieces

The goal is to help process what it is that you read, to begin to keep track of the ideas that you've been exposed to, and to create artifacts that you can use on your exams.

** Sh*t Happens**

For the response papers, I have a Sh*t Happens policy that gives you two, no-questions-asked, 48-hour long extensions on any of your reflection papers. Just send me an email to let me know you're using it, and you're good to go. No documentation, no need to explain.

In Class Game

This semester we will be playing a game to help illuminate all of the different actors, pulls, contestations, behind one of the most important scientific realms there is: the science of food.

Instructions will be given in class!

Midterm & Final

Both of these exams will be:

- Short essay based

- Open book, open note
- Taken remotely over Canvas

Information about them will be provided closer to the date, but if you have any questions now or as the semester proceeds, please let me know!

Readings

Full reading List available on the course website.