**Class Meetings:** Monday 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Jaharis 156

**Instructor(s):** Dr. Kevin Cody kevin.cody@tufts.edu

**Office Hours:** Wednesday, online from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. or by appointment. Email kevin.cody@tufts.edu to schedule an appointment at least one week in advance.

**Semester Hour Units:** 3 SHUs

**Prerequisites:** No prerequisites

**Course Description:** This course will examine the political and movement dimensions of agroecology as they relate to sustainable food systems transformation. With an emphasis on theory and practice, students will evaluate agrarian social movements advocating for food sovereignty, exploring issues related to governance, power, and collective action across multiple scales. Drawing from international and regional perspectives on agroecology, applied dimensions of the course will focus on participatory-action research and critical pedagogies that advance food systems transformation.

**Course Goals:** The overarching goal of this course is to learn how theoretical frameworks advocating for food system transformation are applied using the principles of agroecology. As such, upon completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

- Identify key principles of agroecology, especially those related to social and political change
- Explain how theoretical frameworks associated with political agroecology are or could be applied to research and education initiatives aimed at food systems transformation.
- Describe the political engagements of state and non-state actors to achieve food sovereignty, particularly in the U.S. context.
- Evaluate efforts by agrarian social movements and agroecological education and training programs for their potential to transform the food system.

**Texts or Materials:** There are two required books for this course that will be accompanied by select academic and popular articles (listed below) that will be available on Canvas. The two required texts are:


Both texts will be available from Tisch Library, and are available to purchase from the respective publishers: https://ugapress.org/book/9780820350288/we-want-land-to-live/ and https://www.routledge.com/Political-Agroecology-Advancing-the-Transition-to-Sustainable-Food-Systems/Molina-Petersen-Pena-Caporal/p/book/9781138369221

**Academic Conduct:** Each student is responsible for upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, as specified in the Friedman School’s Policies and Procedures Handbook and Tufts University policies (http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy). It is the responsibility of each student to understand and comply with these standards, as violations will be sanctioned by penalties ranging from failure on an assignment and the course to dismissal from the school.
**Classroom Conduct:** Mutual respect and participation are key values to uphold in this class. In practice, this means remaining open to listening and engaging with a diversity of viewpoints and stepping up and/or stepping back to encourage active participation by everyone in class. In a synchronous online environment, having your video on is not mandatory but it is encouraged to foster a sense of community and active engagement.

**Accommodation of Disabilities:** Tufts University is committed to providing equal access and support to all students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may access their curricula and achieve their personal and academic potential. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations please contact the Friedman School Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at 617-636-6719 to make arrangements for determination of appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

**Diversity Statement:** We believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in this course. We consider it part of our responsibility as instructors to address the learning needs of all of the students in this course. We will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, citizenship, language, or national origin among other personal characteristics.

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**Assessment and Grading:**

**Reading Response/Critical Analysis x 10 (30%)**

The objective of this assignment is to promote accountability and comprehension of course readings, and to prepare for in-class discussions. Each week *(with the exception of weeks #1, 6, 7, 11 and 15)*, you will submit on Canvas a 250-300 word response to the readings that includes the following components:

1. Synthesis of articles/readings that describe the authors’ main contributions and arguments
2. Two key passages from one or both texts that illustrate key points, and/or raise key questions
3. Analysis of passages that provide substantive basis for in-class discussion

*Each response will be due by 11:55 pm via Canvas on the Sunday before class.*

Grading will be on a 3-point scale:

3 = Excellent response that successfully identifies and synthesizes key arguments of all readings, includes passages, and includes original analyses that support in-class discussion.

2 = Adequate response that identifies key arguments but may lack some components of one or both readings, includes passages, and analysis lacks substance.

1 = Inadequate response that fails to address key arguments, may or may not include select passages, and analysis provides little or no basis for substantive discussion.

**Case Study Presentations (15%)**

The objective of this assignment is to showcase agroecology in practice as a way of grounding the theoretical frameworks for political agroecology. For this assignment, you will select an academic journal article that features a case study of agroecology in practice. The article could feature an initiative, and/or organization that describes how agroecology is being deployed to advance food systems transformation. This is a curated bibliography from which you may want to select your article: [Bibliography on Agroecology Transitions and Transformation](#).

Using your selected article as a frame of reference, your case study will entail creating an ArcGIS StoryMap to showcase the physical location of your case, along with images, text, and relevant data that illustrates how this initiative/organization conceptualizes and practices agroecology. Your case study presentation should pay particular attention to the political landscape and demonstrate how agroecology is, or could be, used as a political framework for advancing food systems transformation.
Additional information on how to create an ArcGIS StoryMap will be presented during class well in advance of the due date. Sign in to ArcGIS StoryMaps here: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/ using your Tufts Login information ("Tuftsgis" is the organization’s URL). Find additional information on signing in here: https://sites.tufts.edu/gis/arcgis-online/

You will be assigned one of two weeks in which to present your case study StoryMap to the class. Presentations will take place during class on 11/1 or 11/8.

Your case study presentation is worth 15% of your overall grade will be scored out of 100 points. A scoring rubric will be provided in advance of the assignment due date.

Survey of Agroecological Education Programs

The objectives of this assignment are to 1) conduct a survey of agroecological education and training programs across the U.S. and 2) to then evaluate the extent and potential for political engagement and transformation across these programs. Two primary types of agroecological programs will be surveyed and evaluated:

1. College and university-based training and education programs
2. Non-profit/civil society training and education programs

Working in pairs or small groups, you will be tasked with conducting preliminary research on organizations or programs that incorporate agroecology to address these questions:

- How many programs exist in the U.S. that offer formal educational or training opportunities in agroecology and what is their geographic distribution?
- What types of educational or training offerings are provided, i.e., hands-on training, curriculum for course credit, workshops, online or in-person?
- What are the predominant content themes of these programs, and to what extent, if any, do they engage with the political dimensions of agroecology?

Due dates and products:

An initial list of agroecology-related programs will be due in advance of the final product via Canvas on by 11:55 p.m. on Sunday 11/28. This list can be compiled through internet searches and by using references in assigned texts.

The final paper will consist of a 2000-2500 word written collaboratively with your partner or small group. This preliminary survey research will present findings to each of the questions above, will include a short introduction and literature review, and will make recommendations for the field of agroecological learning in U.S. The paper is due via Canvas during finals week on Monday 12/20 by 11:55 p.m. This paper is worth 20% of your overall grade and will be scored as a group out of 100. A scoring rubric will be provided in advance of the assignment due date.

Essays for Modules # 2 and # 3

The primary objective of these essay assignments is to synthesize readings while contributing original analyses as to the political possibilities and limitations of agroecology and food sovereignty. At the conclusion of modules # 2 and 3 you will write a 1000-1250 word essay that will be submitted via Canvas by the date and time listed below. Each essay should include all the assigned readings in that module, have an original thesis supported by evidence from the readings, and address one or more of the following themes:

- Theoretical foundations and contributions
- Changing structure of agri-food systems
- Agents and movements geared towards social and political change
- Policies and collective actions oriented towards food system transformation
- Tensions, contradictions, and challenges associated with agroecology and/or food sovereignty
- Cross-cultural learning, organizing, and activism for food system transformation

* Essay on Module # 2: Political Agroecology: Theory and Practice (Due Friday 10/22 by 11:55 pm)
* Essay on Module # 3: Food Sovereignty: U.S. and International Perspectives (Due Friday 11/19 by 11:55 p.m.)

Each essay is worth 15% of your overall grade will be scored out of 100 points. A scoring rubric will be provided in advance of the assignment due date.

Participation (5%)

Participation will be measured based on attendance, in-class participation, and engagement with peers. Actively speaking up during class is not the only measure of participation, but it is a significant component. By asking questions, providing commentary and analysis, you contribute to a more engaging and productive learning environment that benefits the entire class.

Grading Range:

Grading for the course will be based on the distribution below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two essays (15% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case study presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading responses (x10)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agroecological Ed. Survey</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</table>

A passing grade in the course is B- or better. Course grades will be based on the below (subject to revision during the course):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt; 93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - &lt;93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - &lt;90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 - &lt;87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - &lt;84%</td>
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</table>

Late Assignments: Assignments received after the deadline will receive a 5-percentage point deduction, and a 2.5 percentage point deduction will be applied for every additional 24 hours until the assignment is successfully submitted. Students who are unable to complete an assignment on time for any reason should notify me by email prior to the deadline, with a brief explanation for why the extension is being requested. It is at my discretion to grant extensions on assignments.

Course Topics and Assignment Schedule at a Glance: *(Schedule is subject to modification at the instructor’s discretion)*

Module 1: Introduction to Agroecology (Wk 1)
Module 2: Political Agroecology: Theory and Practice (Wks. 2-5)
Module 3: Food Sovereignty: U.S. and International Perspectives (Wks. 6-9)
Module 4: Agroecology in Action: Participatory Research and Critical Education (Wks. 10-13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9/13/2021</td>
<td>Introduction to agroecology</td>
<td>Reading Response # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/20/2021</td>
<td>Political (agro)ecology, theory, and practice</td>
<td>Reading Response # 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/27/2021</td>
<td>Changing structure of global agri-food systems</td>
<td>Reading Response # 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10/4/2021</td>
<td>Scaling up and scaling out agroecology</td>
<td>Reading Response # 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10/11/2021</td>
<td>NO CLASS—Indigenous Peoples’ Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10/18/2021</td>
<td>Agrarian movements and political engagement</td>
<td>Essay # 1 (by 10/22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/25/2021</td>
<td>Discursive framework of practical politics of food sovereignty</td>
<td>Reading Response # 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>11/1/2021</td>
<td>Food sovereignty and alternative food movements in the U.S.</td>
<td>Reading Response # 6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Case study—group 1</td>
<td>Case study—group 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11/8/2021</td>
<td>Political and geographic dimensions of U.S. food sovereignty</td>
<td>Reading Response # 7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Case study—group 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11/15/2021</td>
<td>Food sovereignty and agroecology in practice</td>
<td>Essay # 2 (by 11/19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11/22/2021</td>
<td>Scholar-activism and critical education in political agroecology</td>
<td>Reading Response # 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11/29/2021</td>
<td>Academic scholars/researchers advancing food sovereignty</td>
<td>Reading response # 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>12/6/2021</td>
<td>Critical pedagogy and agroecological learning</td>
<td>Reading response # 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12/13/2021</td>
<td>Educational strategies to promote food systems transformation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12/20/2021</td>
<td>FINALS WEEK</td>
<td>Final Project Due 12/20</td>
</tr>
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# Detailed Description of Course Topics, Assignment Schedule, and the Learning Goals for Each Class Session:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>To Do</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>9/8 (Wed)</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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</table>

## Module 1: Introduction to Agroecology

### 1 9/13 Lectures/Topics
- Introduction to agroecology as a multiscalar and transdisciplinary approach to food system transformation
- Agroecology enters mainstream development discourse through UN FAO

### Learning Objectives
- Identify competing interpretations of agroecology
- Describe how different actors interpret agroecology in practice
- Define the multiple dimensions of agroecology
- Compare disciplinary interpretations of agroecology

### Readings

### Assignments
- Reading response # 1

## Module 2: Political Agroecology: Theory and Practice

### 2 9/20 Lectures/Topics
- Introduction to political (agro)ecology and theoretical foundations
- Why theory? Why politics? Addressing the need to “politicize” agroecology

### Learning Objectives
- Explain the theoretical foundations of political agroecology and the relationship to political ecology
- Interpret key concepts of social metabolism and entropy as they related to agroecology

### Readings
- *Political Agroecology*, Introduction & Ch. 1: Theoretical Foundations of Political Agroecology

### Assignments
- Reading response # 2

### 3 9/27 Lectures/Topics
- The changing structure of global agri-food systems
- Introducing the metabolic rift
| Learning Objectives | - Demonstrate an understanding of the metabolic rift with your own examples from the food system  
- Summarize changes in the global agri-food system and the social, environmental, and economic implications  

| Readings | - *Political Agroecology*, Ch. 2: The Industrialization of Agriculture... & Ch. 3: A Regime on the Road to Collapse  

| Assignments | Reading response # 3  

| Lectures/Topics | 4 10/4  
- Scaling up and scaling out agroecology  
- Enabling and disabling conditions for food systems transformation  

| Learning Objectives | - Explain the difference between scaling up and scaling out agroecology  
- Outline the enabling and disabling conditions of each domain of agroecological transformation  

| Readings | - *Political Agroecology*, Ch. 4: Cognitive Frameworks...(skim) & Ch. 5: Scaling Agroecology  

| Assignments | Reading response # 4  

| Lectures/Topics | 10/11 NO CLASS  

| Assignments |  

| Lectures/Topics | 5 10/18  
- Agrarian movements, re-peasantization and political engagement  
- Public policies for progressive agrarian change  

| Learning Objectives | - Apply theoretical frameworks of political agroecology to examples of agrarian social movements  
- Propose public policies to advance political agroecology and food systems transformation  

| Readings | - *Political Agroecology*, Ch. 6: The Agency of Agroecological Transition  
- *Political Agroecology*, Ch. 7: The Role of the State and Public Policies  

| Assignments | Essay # 1 (Due Friday 10/22 by 11:55 pm)  


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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10/25</th>
<th>Lectures/Topics</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6 |       | - Introduction to discursive framework and practical politics of food sovereignty | - Define food sovereignty in both discourse and practice  
- Compare the theoretical framework of political agroecology with food sovereignty | - *We Want Land to Live*, Introduction (pgs. 1-16)  
| 7 | 11/1  | - Food sovereignty and alternative food movements in the U.S.                      | - Describe the various manifestation of food sovereignty in the U.S. and the range of actors and organizations advocating for food sovereignty  
- Explain how issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are made explicit, or not, in various interpretations of food sovereignty and in alternative food movements in the U.S | - *We Want Land to Live*, Part I (pgs. 17-48)  
Case study presentations—Group 1|
| 8 | 11/8  | - Political and geographic dimensions of U.S. food sovereignty  
- Urban agroecology                                                                 | - Compare applications and interpretations of food sovereignty in U.S. across political and geographic divides  
- Describe how agroecology is being applied in urban environments | - *We Want Land to Live*, Part II (pgs. 49-84)  
| Assignments | Reading response # 7  
              | Case study presentations—Group 2 |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| **9 11/15** | Lectures/Topics                 |
| **Lectures/Topics** | - Food sovereignty and agroecology in practice: reflexive learning from across borders, cultures, and geographies |
| **Learning Objectives** | - Synthesize food sovereignty and agroecology principles and practices as evidenced from cases and actors in across international contexts.  
  - Suggest opportunities for cross-cultural and reflexive learning to advance food systems transformation |
| **Readings** | - *We Want Land to Live*, Part III & Conclusion (pgs. 85-130)  
| **Assignments** | Essay # 2 (Due Friday 11/19 by 11:55 p.m.) |
| **Module 4: Agroecology in Action: Participatory Research and Critical Education** |
| **10 11/22** | Lectures/Topics                 |
| **Lectures/Topics** | - Introduction to scholar-activism and critical education in political agroecology  
  - Agroecology research and education as a from of praxis: putting theory in action |
| **Learning Objectives** | - Describe key principles of agroecological learning and provide examples of theory being put into practice  
  - Reflect on the role of academics and scholars in advancing agroecological goals through research and public engagement |
| **Assignments** | Reading response # 8 |
| **11 11/29** | Lectures/Topics                 |
| **Lectures/Topics** | - Exploring the role of academic scholars/researchers in advancing food sovereignty |
| **Learning Objectives** | - Suggest ways in which academic research can contribute to advancing goals of agroecological and food sovereignty  
  - Compare the approach and extent of community engagement among academic institutions in different countries |
| Assignments | Reading response # 9  
|             | List of agroecology programs |
| Lecture/Topics | Educational strategies to promote food systems transformation  
|             | Critical pedagogy and agroecological learning  
| Learning Objectives | Propose how U.S. organizations and actors could incorporate agroecological learning principles to advance political change  
|             | Critique agroecology and food sovereignty in theory and practice  
| Assignments | Reading response # 10 |
| Lecture/Topics | Concluding thoughts on teaching and education to support food systems transformation  
| Learning Objectives | Evaluate the transformative potential of agroecological pedagogies  
|             | Apply theoretical frameworks for political transformation to fields of research and education  
| Assignments | None  
| Final Exam Week |  
| Due Monday 12/20 by 11:55 p.m. | Preliminary Survey Research: Agroecological Education and Training Programs |