

Taxes, Bans, & Burgers: Global Food Policy and Obesity Prevention
2302 McGavran-Greenberg Hall
Spring 2016

NUTR 696-006, 1-credit

W 12:20 PM – 1:10 PM

Instructor: Lindsey Smith Taillie, PhD, MPH

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Hours: by appointment

Description:

More countries across the globe are implementing policies to combat poor diet, obesity, and co-morbidities. This seminar will explore an array of regulatory options available to prevent obesity, including front-of-package labeling, taxation, marketing bans, portion size bans, SSB bans, and others. We will examine the social, political, and ethical context of how individuals make decisions about what to eat; how this context shapes the implementation of food policy; and how these policies in turn shape individual behavior and health, by employing a comparative framework over three countries (China, Mexico, and the US). We will also examine how and why food policies diffuse and interact across countries and regions.

For each country, we will first explore the underlying epidemiology of the health problem (obesity, diabetes, cardio-metabolic disease) and the dietary patterns contributing to this problem. We will then explore the underlying social structures, historical events, and ethical and public health frameworks that have shaped the country's food environment and policy climate, as well as how individuals make decisions about food within those environments. We will also address the types of evidence required to implement food policy as well as measurement techniques for measuring the effects of food policy on food purchasing and intake.

This interdisciplinary class will draw upon readings from epidemiology, health policy, ethics, economics, anthropology, and sociology to address key elements of obesity preventive food policies in the US and across the globe.

Learning objectives: The course is designed for students to:

- Gain familiarity with the nutrition transition and global epidemiology of obesity and cardio-metabolic disease.
- Become acquainted with emerging global food policies and their potential effects on obesity and chronic disease
- Understand ethical frameworks for food policies, as well as the implications of these frameworks for policy implementation and effect on diet and disease
- Identify research strategies required to evaluate the diet and health impacts of these policies

- Develop independent thinking, practice critical evaluation and synthesize evidence across disciplines
- Understand the interaction of individual, society and state with regards to food policy, dietary behavior and health

What students can expect from instructor:

- Response to emails within 48 h (M-5); usually less
- Easy accessibility for individual appointments and correspondence

Expectations of students:

- Attend all classes. Attendance has an impact on your class participation grade. If you cannot attend, email me at least 24h in advance (preferably more) and we will discuss how to make up an absence.
- Be active participants in preparing for and engaging in class lecture and discussions.
- Follow the UNC-CH Honor Code at all times.

Honor Code:

The instructors are committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. The definition of “academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and more. Other forms of misconduct are also specifically addressed in the Honor Code (e.g., classroom disruption, resume fraud, and violation of campus technology policies). *If you have questions, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor about the Code’s application.*

Course Deliverables:

1. **Readings and response.** Students will be expected to complete all required readings prior to each seminar. By 9am the day of class, **for each required reading**, please send a brief email to the instructor with NUTR 696 in the subject line, addressing the following questions:
 - a. What is a key insight, hypothesis, or conclusion this paper puts forth?
 - b. What evidence supports this insight? What level of quality is the evidence?
 - c. One question or critique. What did you find most interesting?
2. **Policy brief.** The final project will be a short “policy brief” (suggested 4-5 pages, no required minimum or maximum) on a policy that could be implemented in a specific country or region. The brief will describe the epidemiology of the health problem the policy is intended to address, describe the policy, map out a conceptual/biological framework for how this policy would address that health problem, briefly review existing evidence for the policy and its strength, discuss societal norms and ethical implications, and describe what types of measurements would be required to monitor policy effectiveness.

Readings and response will contribute 80% to your final grade; the policy brief will contribute 20%. Your final letter grade will be based on the total points you earn during the semester:

Graduate Student Letter Grades: H= > 93%; P= >70-93%; L= 70-60%; F= < 60%

Undergraduate Student Letter Grades: A= > 93%; B= >80-93%; C= 70-80%; D=>60-70%; F= < 60%

To get full points for class participation you must for each class: a) attend class (1pt); b) send instructor an email answering discussion questions as stipulated above (2pts); c) contribute thoughtful comments/questions during class (2pts) (80 pts total for all classes combined).

Required Books:

Jing, J. E. (2000). Feeding China's little emperors: Food, children, and social change. Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press.

Syllabus changes:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including assignment due dates, when unforeseen circumstances occur that affect scheduling. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules.

Dates and readings

Jan 13 Introduction & Overview: Framing Global Food Policies

1. Hawkes, C., et al., Smart food policies for obesity prevention. *The Lancet*, 2015.

Recommended:

2. Gortmaker, S. L., B. Swinburn, D. Levy, R. Carter, P. L. Mabry, D. Finegood, T. Huang, T. Marsh and M. Moodie (2011). "Changing the Future of Obesity: Science, Policy and Action." *Lancet* **378**(9793): 838-847.

Jan 20—Introduction & Overview part 2: Framing Global Food Policies

***Guest speaker/moderator: Jeff Sebo, PhD, Department of Philosophy**

1. Barnhill, A., K. F. King, N. Kass and R. Faden (2014). "The value of unhealthy eating and the ethics of healthy eating policies." *Kennedy Inst Ethics J* **24**(3): 187-217

Jan 27 Nutrition Transition & Global Policy Options

***Guest speaker/moderator: Barry Popkin, PhD, Department of Nutrition**

1. Popkin, B.M., Hawkes, Corinna, *The sweetening of the global diet, particularly beverages: patterns, trends and implications for diabetes prevention*. *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol*, 2015.
2. Popkin, B.M., *Synthesis and implications: China's nutrition transition in the context of changes across other low- and middle-income countries*. *Obes Rev*, 2014. **15 Suppl 1**: p. 60-7.

Recommended:

3. Zhai, F. Y., S. F. Du, Z. H. Wang, J. G. Zhang, W. W. Du and B. M. Popkin (2014). "Dynamics of the Chinese diet and the role of urbanicity, 1991-2011." Obes Rev **15 Suppl 1**: 16-26.

Feb 3. The One Child Policy: interaction of policy, family, and individual diet/disease

1. Jingxiong, J., U. Rosenqvist, W. Huishan, T. Greiner, L. Guangli and A. Sarkadi (2007). "Influence of grandparents on eating behaviors of young children in Chinese three-generation families." Appetite **48**(3): 377-383.
2. Feeding Little Emperors, Introduction, Chapters 1,2, and 6 (do one reading reaction for all 4 chapters)

Feb 10 China: the intersection of individual, policy and state—an example from tobacco

***Guest lecturer: Kurt Ribisl, Health Behavior**

Readings TBA

Feb 17 China- Consumerism, Communism, & the Spread of tran-national corporations

1. Zhao, B. (1997). "Consumerism, Confucianism, communism: Making sense of China today." New Left Review: 43-59.
2. Feeding Little Emperors Ch 5. Globalized Childhood? Kentucky Fried Chicken in Beijing

Feb 24 Latin America: Exporting Obesity

1. Rivera, J. A., S. Barquera, T. González-Cossío, G. Olaiz and J. Sepulveda (2004). "Nutrition transition in Mexico and in other Latin American countries." Nutrition Reviews **62**: S149-S157.
2. Clark, S. E., C. Hawkes, S. M. Murphy, K. A. Hansen-Kuhn and D. Wallinga (2012). "Exporting obesity: US farm and trade policy and the transformation of the Mexican consumer food environment." International journal of occupational and environmental health **18**(1): 53-64.

March 2 Latin America: Mexico's SSB & Junk Food Tax

1. Brownell, K. D., T. Farley, W. C. Willett, B. M. Popkin, F. J. Chaloupka, J. W. Thompson and D. S. Ludwig (2009). "The public health and economic benefits of taxing sugar-sweetened beverages." New England journal of medicine **361**(16): 1599-1605.
2. Donaldson E. Advocating for Sugar-sweetened beverage taxation: a case study of Mexico. [http://www.jhsph.edu/departments/health-behavior-and-society/pdf/Advocating For Sugar Sweetened Beverage Taxation.pdf](http://www.jhsph.edu/departments/health-behavior-and-society/pdf/Advocating%20For%20Sugar%20Sweetened%20Beverage%20Taxation.pdf)

Recommended (please skim):

3. Colchero, M., J. Salgado, M. Unar, M. Hernández-Ávila and J. Rivera-Dommarco (2015). "Price elasticity of the demand for sugar sweetened beverages and soft drinks in Mexico." Economics & Human Biology.

March 9 Evaluating Food Policy using Natural Experiments

***Guest moderator: Shu Wen Ng, PhD**

1. Mytton, O.T., D. Clarke, and M. Rayner, *Taxing unhealthy food and drinks to improve health*. BMJ, 2012. **344**.
2. Colchero, A., Popkin, Barry M., Rivera, Juan A., Ng, Shu Wen, *Beverage purchases from stores since the start of the Mexican Sugar-Sweetened Beverage excise tax: A year out* BMJ, 2015. **In press**.

March 16th (?)—No Class, spring break

March 23 Food marketing- the case in Mexico, Chile, & China, part 1

1. Chandon, P. and B. Wansink (2012). "Does food marketing need to make us fat? A review and solutions." *Nutrition Reviews* 70(10): 571-593.
2. Witkowski, T. H. (2007). "Food marketing and obesity in developing countries: analysis, ethics, and public policy." *Journal of Macromarketing* 27(2): 126-137.

Recommended (good resource/reference):

3. Cairns, G., K. Angus, G. Hastings and M. Caraher (2013). "Systematic reviews of the evidence on the nature, extent and effects of food marketing to children. A retrospective summary." *Appetite* 62: 209-215.

March 30 Marketing Food Marketing Policy options—the case in Mexico, Chile, & China, part 2

1. World Cancer Research Fund International. (2015). "Restrict food marketing." from <http://www.wcrf.org/int/policy/nourishing-framework/restrict-food-marketing>.
2. Hawkes, C., Agro-food industry growth and obesity in China: what role for regulating food advertising and promotion and nutrition labelling? *Obesity Rev*, 2008. 9(s1): p. 151-161.
3. Uribe, R. and A. Fuentes-García (2013). "Food Marketing, Children, and Obesity in Chile: Evidence and Challenges for Regulation." *Communication Research Trends* 32(2): 14.

DUE: ½ page on suggested topic for policy brief

April 6 US Public health/ethical frameworks for obesity policies in the US

1. Barnhill, A and King, Katherine F. Ethical Agreement and Disagreement about Obesity Prevention Policy in the United States. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management* 2013:1(2),117-120.
2. Buchanan, D. (2013). "Ethical Standards to Guide the Development of Obesity Policies and Programs Comment on "Ethical Agreement and Disagreement about Obesity Prevention Policy in the United States"." *International journal of health policy and management* 1(4): 313.
3. King, K. F. and A. Barnhill (2014). "Fairness and respect in obesity prevention policies: a response to David Buchanan." *International journal of health policy and management* 2(1): 49.

April 13 SES and SSBs: do vulnerable subpopulations require different policies?

1. Brownell, K. D. and D. S. Ludwig (2011). "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, soda, and USDA policy: who benefits?" *Jama* **306**(12): 1370-1371.
2. Basu, S., H. K. Seligman, C. Gardner and J. Bhattacharya (2014). "Ending SNAP subsidies for sugar-sweetened beverages could reduce obesity and type 2 diabetes." *Health Affairs* 33(6): 1032-1039.
3. Pomeranz, J. L. and J. F. Chiqui (2015). "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Analysis of Program Administration and Food Law Definitions." *Am J Prev Med*.

April 20 Food Labeling

1. Roberto, C. A., P. D. Larsen, H. Agnew, J. Baik and K. D. Brownell (2010). "Evaluating the impact of menu labeling on food choices and intake." *American Journal of Public Health* 100(2): 312.
2. 2nd reading TBA

Recommended (both quite short)

3. Nestle, M. (2010). "Health care reform in action—calorie labeling goes national." *New England Journal of Medicine* 362(25): 2343-2345
4. Nestle, M. and D. S. Ludwig (2010). "Front-of-package food labels: public health or propaganda?" *JAMA* 303(8): 771-772.

April 27 NYC's Portion size ban

1. Rolls, B. J. (2003). "The supersizing of America: portion size and the obesity epidemic." *Nutrition Today* 38(2): 42-53.
2. New York Times. (2014). "New York's Ban on Big Sodas is Rejected by Final Court." from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/27/nyregion/city-loses-final-appeal-on-limiting-sales-of-large-sodas.html?_r=0.
3. Roberto, Christina A, and Jennifer L Pomeranz. 2015. 'Public Health and Legal Arguments in Favor of a Policy to Cap the Portion Sizes of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages', *American Journal of Public Health*, 105: 2183-90.

Recommended:

1. Zlatevska, N., C. Dubelaar and S. S. Holden (2014). "Sizing up the effect of portion size on consumption: A meta-analytic review." *Journal of Marketing* **78**(3): 140-154
2. Dobson, P. W. and E. Gerstner (2010). "For a few cents more: Why supersize unhealthy food?" *Marketing Science* 29(4): 770-778.

Wednesday May 4th—reading day

Final Paper Due—Date TBA