ANTH/SOC/FSST 375 - Anthropology of Food and Eating
Course Syllabus
Fall Semester 2022

Instructor: Clelia Viecelli, PhD
Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 45
Prerequisites: none
Class Meeting Days & Time: 
Office Hours:
Email:
Course Type: Standard Course
Course Fee:

Course Description
This course will address food-related issues from an anthropological perspective. It will examine the role that food plays in shaping: group and personal identities; ethnic affiliations in a global world; religious boundaries through rituals, taboos, and avoidances; and revitalization of local and global communities. Through reading assignments, and ethnographic research in the city of Perugia, students will explore how food traditions and local food are maintained and transformed over time and space, and how culinary knowledge is used to mark cultural belonging and differences. The course will focus on food as cultural heritage through an analysis of culinary tourism, the culture of restaurants, and processes of patrimonialization. Furthermore, it will apply gendered perspectives on the body and analyze power dynamics in Italian families through food consumption and preparation. Students will study food as a site of cultural transmission but also of dissent and resistance. The course incorporates a short ethnographic project on restaurants and cultural heritage. Through these exercises in qualitative research, students will become engaged in original research in and out the classroom.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures
Below are the course's learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students’ achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

● identify the connections between contemporary Umbrian, Italian, and global food cultures through the examination of the food practices of individuals and communities (Weekly Quiz, Field Notes Journal; Final Ethnographic Essay);
● recognize the environmental, sociocultural, and economic factors that affect food supplies, food security, and health (Weekly Quiz);
● design an appropriate, ethical ethnographic project and—working directly with local partners who are actively involved in various aspects of the food system (production, distribution, consumption)—collect data on how individual food behaviors are shaped by their society’s foodways (Field notes Journal, Presentation on “Food and Identity: A Personal Heritage”);
● carry out that project while approaching cultural differences with an unbiased framework (Final Ethnographic Essay);
● communicate their research about various aspects of contemporary food systems using twenty-first century
tools while practicing systematic, ethical, and public-facing scholarship (Recipe Presentation on “Food and Identity: A Personal Heritage”).

**Course Materials**

**Readings**
A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course’s Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

**Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biweekly Moodle Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes journal 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes journal 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes journal 3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipe Presentation and Tasting</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Ethnographic Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**Grading**
Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute’s default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Score Equivalent</th>
<th>Student Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93% - 100%</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90% - 92%</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87% - 89%</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83% - 86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80% - 82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77% - 79%</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73% - 76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70% - 72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67% - 69%</td>
<td>Low Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63% - 66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60% - 62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% or less</td>
<td>Fail (no credit)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Course Requirements**
Grades are based on the following criteria:

**Attendance (8%)**
Attendance is an important part of this course. You have two “sick days,” per Institute policy. As long as you are at all the other meetings, you will receive the full 100% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.
Office Hours (2%)
Getting to know your professor makes you more comfortable with that person and therefore more likely to ask for help. It also might help for you to ask questions about the various assignments or discuss a paper idea. In this course, you get 2% of your grade for coming at least one time to office hours by Week 11.

Quizzes (15%)
Students will be assigned two short quizzes every week, each of which will be due before class time and will not be reopened. The quiz will be on Moodle and it is not timed. Students can take the quiz as many times as they like, with the recorded grade being the average grade they receive. There will be a combination of technical, methodological, and content questions. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the readings. The methodological questions will test on skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author’s argument and research methods used. The technical questions will help students learn the class’ policies and administrative procedures.

Field Note Journal (10% each)
Field notes journal entries refer to the written account derived from data collected during observations and interviews. Each entry should be typed with full sentences and sent to cviecelli@umbra.org. They must be divided into two sections:

On the left (usually longer, descriptive and with many details): artifacts, décor, and elaboration of food service, food, people’s behavior, what the staff/owners tell us.

On the right (usually shorter, condensed and more analytical): MUST CONTAIN 1) some level of interpretation or a hypothesis about what you saw in the observations 2) at least one reference to the readings you have done. Students will find on Moodle a full prompt.

“Food and Identity: A Personal Heritage” Recipe Presentation and Tasting (15%)
Interview a family member and ask them for a recipe that is important for them and/or for your family. Alternatively, find a recipe that’s important for you. Tell the class the story of this recipe, reflecting on the meaning that it has for you or your family, and how this relates to your cultural background. Cook the recipe at home and bring a small sample to taste. Students will find on Moodle a full prompt.

Final Ethnographic Essay (30%)
The final ethnographic essay, which is due on Week 13, must include the readings you have done for this class and original data from your own ethnographic fieldwork. Bibliography - At least five references from the reader and a minimum of two from other scholarly sources (only peer-reviewed scientific articles/books in the social sciences) that you find independently. In the essay you should be able to answer the following questions:

● Why are restaurants more than just places where food is exchanged for money?
● What meanings are given to local foods in the restaurants that we visited?
● What is the relationship with the past and the vision for the future proposed by restaurants and food joints?

Students will find on Moodle a full prompt.

Extension & Submitting Late Work
If students submit work after the deadline, they will incur a 10% grade deduction for each day the assignment is late. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance & Lateness Policy
Class attendance (in person) is mandatory. Students are allowed two “sick days,” which do not need to be justified. However, it is considered common courtesy to inform the instructor of your absence when possible. It is the students’ responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class). Each additional absence—even for another illness—will lower the students’ grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B). Missing a co-curricular field trip also lowers a student’s final grade by half a letter grade. It is the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.
If a student misses a class, it is ultimately their responsibility to find out what has been missed. Ideally, they should find out what they missed from a classmate. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies with a doctor’s certificate and approved by the Director, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Consistent lateness (or leaving class early) is a sign of disorganization and lack of respect both for your instructor and for your fellow students. Umbra instructors are empowered to count three late arrivals as the equivalent of an absence.

Academic Integrity
All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Classroom Policy
Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions for anything other than note-taking, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.
Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Food: An Anthropological Perspective
Meeting 1: Introduction to anthropology of food
Meeting 2: Bio-Cultural perspective on nutrition

Readings for the week:


WEEK 2

Social and Religious Functions of Food
Meeting 1: Social functions of food
Meeting 2: Food, religion, and taboos

Readings for the week:

WEEK 3

Food as “Invented Tradition”
Meeting 1: Food between tradition and innovation
Meeting 2: The invention of national cuisines

Readings for the week:

WEEK 4

Ethnographic Research Methods
Meeting 1: **Qualitative research methods and ethnographic research**

Meeting 2: **Restaurant Ethnographic Fieldwork, Activity 1 (Ristorante Dal Mi Cocco)**

**Readings for the week:**


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**WEEK 5**

**Food Globalization and Processes of Heritagization**

Meeting 1: **Food and globalization**

Meeting 2: **Food as cultural heritage**

**Readings for the week:**


**Assignments:**
Hand in Field Notes Journal 1 (Dal Mi Cocco). This assignment is meant as a trial and will receive a Pass/Fail grade if it is handed in on time following the directions. From next time onwards, journal entries will be graded according to the guidelines provided on Moodle.

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**WEEK 6**

**The Anthropology of Restaurants and Street Food**

Meeting 1: **“Ethnographies of Where We Eat”: The anthropology of restaurants**

Meeting 2: **Food Artisans Ethnographic Fieldwork, Activity 2 (Chiosco Antica Salumeria Granieri)**

**Readings for the week:**
Semester Break

WEEK 7

Alternative Food Movements and Food Activism

Meeting 1: Industrial food production and alternative food movements: an anthropological perspective

Meeting 2: Slow Food and the politics of “virtuous globalization”

Readings for the week:


Assignments:

Hand in Field Notes Journal 2 (Chiosco Antica Salumeria Granieri).

WEEK 8

Food and Gender

Meeting 1: Food, Gender, and Family Life

Meeting 2: Restaurant Ethnographic Fieldwork, Activity 3 (Osteria A Priori)

Readings for the week:


WEEK 9
Anthropology of the Body and Medical Anthropology

Meeting 1: Cooking food as an embodied practice
Meeting 2: Medical anthropology

Readings for the week:

Assignments:
Hand in Field Notes Journal 3 (Osteria A Priori).

WEEK 10

In-class Presentations of “Food and Identity: A Personal Heritage”

Meeting 1: In-class Presentations (A-L)
Meeting 2: In-class Presentations (M-Z)

WEEK 11

Food, Migration, and Tourism

Meeting 1: Food, Migration, and Ethnic Identity
Meeting 2: Food, Tourism and Cultural Change

Readings for the week:

WEEK 12

Anthropology of Drinking and Writing Workshop

Meeting 1: Writing workshop
Meeting 2: The anthropology of drinking: The case of Italian natural wines

Readings for the week:

**WEEK 13**

**Final Exams and Special Academic Events Week**

TBA

**Assignments:**
Submission of the final ethnographic essay. See the full prompt in Moodle.