

Communications Studies (COMS) 477 – Lecture 01 and 02
Food Culture and Communication
Fall 2012
Tuesday: 12:30-15:20

Instructors: Dr. Dawn Johnston and Ms. Lisa Stowe

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Office Hours: Either instructor by appointment or Lisa Stowe (Tuesday 11am-12pm and Wednesday 4p-5pm)

Dawn Johnston (Tuesday 10am-12pm)

Course Description

This course provides a theoretical and experiential introduction to local and global food cultures as processes and products of communication. Students will examine how food is constructed and represented through text, film, television, art, and tourism. Political and economic constructions of food culture, security, and sustainability will also be explored.

Like film, television, music, art, and other cultural products and processes, the culture and traditions of food are ideal sites for cultural and communicative analysis. The past decade and a half has seen the development of exclusive Food Network television, the growing cult of the celebrity chef, and the explosion of high-end restaurants in both urban and rural areas. As a culture, our interest in food is nothing new -- certainly, the traditions of sharing meals have long been key communicative processes in societies worldwide. But our fascination with the rhetoric of food, the glamour of restaurant life, and the fame of cooking gurus and lifestyle 'experts' is timely and significant. Food, cooking, and eating are distinct in their relationships to ethnicity, class, education, gender, and sexuality -- all of the key identifiers and appetites that define contemporary cultural studies.

Additional Information

This course involves one off-campus field trip during class time. Your extra course fee has been used to pay for this field trip in advance. If you are unable to attend the class in which the field trip takes place, your course fee cannot be refunded. You are responsible for your own transportation to the field trip location, but it is reasonably accessible by public transit.

Objectives of the Course

Through lectures, field trips, examples from popular culture, and class discussions, this course will offer students analysis of and insight into the following:

1. The rhetoric of food writing and food television
2. The marketing of particular niche restaurants

3. The organizational communication processes in the hierarchy of restaurants
4. The creation of the celebrity chef as popular culture icon
5. The growing trend of culinary tourism
6. The cultural traditions of breaking bread and sharing meals
7. Food across popular cultural genres -- television, film, etc.
8. Food in the context of political and social activism
9. Food trends and taboos
10. Food and identity

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are permitted for note taking only. iPods, cellphones and gaming devices should be turned off during class. Please respect the teachers, guest speakers, and your fellow students.

Textbooks and Readings (required):

Bourdain, Anthony. *Kitchen Confidential*. 2000. (required)

Reichl, Ruth. *Garlic and Sapphires*. 2006. (required)

Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food*. 2007. (required)

Collins, Kathleen. *Watching What We Eat*. 2010. (required)

The Bourdain, Reichl, Pollan, and Collins texts may be purchased either new or secondhand, and are available at the University Bookstore as well as other commercial bookstores and online. You may use any edition of the three books, but the ones listed above are the editions we'll be using - you will be responsible for determining any differentiation in pagination.

Other occasional required or recommended readings will be posted as links on Blackboard. Dates for discussion of all required readings are listed on the Schedule of Topics and Readings, which will be posted on Blackboard in the first week of classes.

Assignments and Evaluation

Field Trip Reflection Essay: 25%

Due Date: October 30 (Section 01)

November 6 (Section 02)

Objectives: The field trip reflection essay is a 1000-word reflection essay synthesizing the experience of our class field trip with course readings. You will be provided with questions to guide and focus your reflection. More details of this assignment will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard. Please note that your reflection essay will be due one week after your group goes on the field trip – if you are in Section 01 and attend on October 23, your essay is due on October 30, and if you are in Section 02 and attend on October 30, your essay is due on November 6.

Media Analysis: 25%
Due Date: Tuesday, December 4

Objectives: The media analysis provides you with an opportunity to critically analyze one example of food media. You might choose a food blog, a cooking show, a restaurant review(er), a film in which food plays a major role, or a new media or social media site or application pertaining to food. While the bulk of the analysis should be based on your own critical observations, you will also be encouraged to incorporate appropriate scholarly sources to ground your analysis. Your media analysis should be 1000 words in length.

Group Presentation: 25%
Due Date: Ongoing

Objectives: In groups of seven, students will present for 15-20 minutes on an assigned topic relating to a weekly discussion topic. The presentation options and dates will be circulated in class Tuesday, September 11, and students who do not sign themselves up will be assigned a presentation group. While resources like Wikipedia and other non-scholarly sources may be useful in gathering some of your background information, your presentation should significantly elevate any such resource by demonstrating independent critical thought. The group must submit (by email or hard copy, on the day of your presentation) a copy of any slides or speaking notes that are used, as well as a complete bibliography of all sources consulted in your preparation. Please remember that guidelines around plagiarism apply to oral presentations exactly as they do to written work. Unless there is compelling evidence to indicate otherwise, all group members will receive the same grade on the assignment. Detailed presentation guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

Final Exam: 25% Registrar Scheduled

Objectives: The final exam is cumulative, and will be comprised of both multiple choice questions and shorter style essay questions.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/info. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:
(Revised, effective September 2008)

Grading Scale

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be

converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Department of Communication and Culture see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics> or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/compliance/ethics/info/undergrad/>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

To be posted on Blackboard in the first week of campus.