

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**Communications Studies COMS 477 – L01 and L02**  
**Food Culture and Communication**

**Fall 2015**

**Thursday September 10 – Thursday December 3 (inclusive) No Class on Thursday  
November 12 (Reading Days)  
Thursdays 14:00-16:45**

**Instructor:** Dr. Dawn Johnston and Prof. Lisa Stowe  
**Office:** SS 234 and SS206  
**Office Phone:** 403-220-3199 and 403-220-4840  
**E-Mail:** [debjohns@ucalgary.ca](mailto:debjohns@ucalgary.ca) and [lstowe@ucalgary.ca](mailto:lstowe@ucalgary.ca)  
**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal (delete or edit as needed)  
**Office Hours:** Both instructors by appointment, or Lisa Stowe (Thursdays and Fridays 11-12) and Dawn Johnston (Tuesdays 10-12)

### **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 of \$45 has been used to pay for this field trip in advance. If you are unable to attend the class in which the field trip has been scheduled, 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, students will:

- Understand the complexities of contemporary dialogues and debates about food politics
- Engage in critical analysis of representations of food in various media
- Participate in experiential learning activities highlighting food culture
- Work collaboratively with classmates to analyze contemporary and historical food issues and lead class discussion
- Reflect on their own roles as producers and consumers in the food system

## **Textbooks and Readings**

- Bourdain, Anthony. *Kitchen Confidential*. 2000. (required)
- Koç, Mustafa, Sumner, Jennifer, and Winson, Anthony. *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*. 2012. (required)
- Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food*. 2007. (required)

The Bourdain and Pollan texts are available at the University Bookstore as well as other commercial bookstores and online. You may use any edition of the books, but the ones listed above are the editions we'll be using – you will be responsible for determining any differentiation in pagination. The Koç, Sumner, and Winson text is likely most easily purchased through the University Bookstore. All books should be available secondhand.

Other occasional required or recommended readings will be posted as links or PDFs on D2L. Dates for discussion of all required readings are listed on the Schedule of Topics and Readings, which will be posted on D2L in the first week of classes.

## **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Laptops are permitted for note-taking only. You will be asked to close your laptop if your screen is a distraction to those around you. iPods, phones, and gaming devices should be turned off and put away during class. Please do not text during class time. Please be respectful your fellow students, guest speakers, and teachers by not using electronic devices in a distracting manner.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

### **Online Discussion Forum: 5% Due Date: October 5-9**

Students will be responsible for viewing a selected video and participating in an online discussion forum during the week of October 5-9. The forum will offer several discussion prompts; students are responsible for contributing at least ONE original post (minimum 150 words) and at least ONE reply (minimum 75 words) to a classmate's post. Detailed guidelines regarding forum contributions will be posted on D2L. The

forum will be open from Monday at 9am through Friday at 5pm. No submissions will be accepted once the forum has closed.

**Field Trip Reflection Essay: 20% Due Date: October 29 (Section 01) November 5 (Section 02)**

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 22, your essay is due on October 29, and if you are in Section 02 and attend on October 29, your essay is due on November 5.

**Media Analysis: 25% Due Date: December 3**

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: 20% Due Date: Ongoing**

In groups of six or seven, students will prepare a 15-20 minute presentation (time limit will be strictly enforced) on an assigned topic relating to a weekly lecture subject. The presentation options and dates will be circulated in class September 10, 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. Notes not submitted on the day of the presentation will be considered late, and may impact your presentation grade). Please remember that guidelines around plagiarism apply to oral presentations exactly as they do to written work.

It is not imperative that every group member present, but the workload of preparation/presentation should be equally split amongst the group members. Groups are strongly encouraged to work together in preparing the presentation rather than simply dividing up the workload and preparing independently – collaboratively prepared presentations are consistently more successful than those in which independent sections have simply been cobbled together. 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: 30% Registrar Scheduled**

Objectives: The final exam is cumulative, and will be comprised of both multiple choice questions and shorter style essay questions. Students will be responsible for all assigned reading and the content of lectures, presentations, and class discussions. Students who miss class will be responsible for obtaining notes from a classmate – instructors will not circulate lecture notes

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** Yes

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Submission of Assignments:** 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.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

**Note:** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

**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.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

**Writing Skills Statement**

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in 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 & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Final grades are reported as letter grades. However, assignments, exams, and other work in this course will be graded using a combination of letter and percentage grades.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	0%

## 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. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight

word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

### Academic Misconduct

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

### Research 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 <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>.

If students wish to apply for research ethics clearance to conduct interviews, surveys, or observations for their group presentations, the instructors will support them in doing so, but such a process must begin very early in the semester.

### Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)</b>	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca">artsads@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 <b>Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>220-5333</b> ). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>

<p><b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/">https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a></p>
<p><b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<p><b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a></p> <p><b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a></p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

To be posted on D2L in the first week of classes.