

## CSP620 - FOOD AND FOODWAYS – SYLLABUS

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Course Title.....Food and Foodways  
Course Number.....620 001  
Semester.....Fall 2015

### Instructor

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Online Office Hours: Any time by appointment

### Welcome to our Course!

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Foodways are all around us, and while we recognize the importance of food, and generally enjoy eating, we seldom recognize how suffused with meaning food behavior is and how deeply embedded its symbols and practices are in our daily lives. Some of our strongest values and beliefs -- about the cosmos, the world, other people, our culture, and ourselves -- are expressed in the ways we use, think about, and talk about food. During this course, we will use a wide array of media to illuminate those phenomena in our personal lives as well as in those of others. We will explore the many ways that food systems are used, and misused, to shape our economies, societies, cultures, and even our bodies. The work of psychologists, sociologists, neurologists, folklorists, anthropologists, biologists, physicians, writers, and historians will help us to understand these issues and find ways to help sustain cultures and support strong communities.

### Main Course Topics

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1. The physiological and environmental bases for traditional foodways and food preferences
2. The implication of food and foodways in emotion, memory, and belief
3. The multiple ways that food symbolizes cultural values, roles, and positions that are expressed through symbol and metaphor
4. The power and malleability of foodways to express group and individual identity
5. The ways that political, economic, and legislative systems impact on food systems and practices
6. The models that have been used to sustain culture through foodways

### Key Learning Objectives

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At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the many ways that food is implicated in our personal lives, society, and communities
2. Explain how communities use food and foodways to construct, perform, maintain or change identity
3. Identify some of the physical and environmental factors that shape or undermine traditional foodways
4. Describe the impact of the forces of politics, socioeconomics, and conflict on traditional food systems and community sustainability
5. Demonstrate the acquisition of effective skills for the ethnographic study of foodways
6. Employ best practices for constructing cultural sustainability projects involving foodways. projects about foodways and cultural sustainability

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## Course Format

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- 1 student VoiceThread presentation
- 11 asynchronous discussions
- 7 WebEx meetings
- 14 blog entries
- 3 online presentations
- 1 interview-based short paper
- 1 final paper
- 23 assigned readings
- 7 films
- Online links and reading resources

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## Assignments

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### **BLOG, DISCUSSION BOARD, WIKI, AND ONLINE MEETINGS**

Collectively, 25% of final grade

▪ *Blog:*

The purpose of the Blog assignments is to encourage reflection on the topics and concepts of the course by examining your own experiences, opinions, and values. Such reflection will help you to internalize the concepts to be studied in the course and to develop a phenomenological perspective on your work. In a few cases, there will be an assigned length to your weekly blog, but in most cases you are free to write as much or little as you like about the assigned topic, as well as to address other topics that interest you, or simply make comments on your thoughts and experiences regarding food. You are encouraged to show your integration of the various topics and concepts through your blogging. The blog will not be considered a formal document. You can be creative with it, both in your writing and your inclusion of other AV elements.

You will be graded on the depth of reflection and analysis that your posts show, the completion of all assignments, evidence of the integration of course concepts into your reflection, and the creativity that you demonstrate.

▪ *Discussions:*

The purpose of the Discussion assignments is to encourage and facilitate interaction among the students, and between the students and instructor. Your posts should address the assignments but may also bring in ideas and applications that may not be addressed directly in the assignment. Your comments on your peers' work should be polite, substantive, and concise. Encouragement is collegial, but real thought is most helpful to your classmates.

You will be graded on the acuity and completeness of your posts, the appropriateness of your comments,

Online meetings:

The purpose of the WebEx sessions is to encourage face-to-face interaction, increase the awareness of our class as a learning community, and provide access to the knowledge of others. You are expected to attend all scheduled WebEx sessions. If you are unable to, you must notify me the day prior to the meeting, except in case of illness.

You will be graded on your level of participation and on the thoughtfulness and quality of critique of your comments.

**SITE VISITS**

20% of final grade

The purpose of the site visits is to give you practice in the ethnographic skills of interviewing, observation, description/reportage, and AV documentation of foodways topics prior to the work you will do for your final project.

You will be graded on the completeness of the assignments, the quality of your documentation and report writing, the demonstration of effective fieldwork skills, the integration of concepts about foodways learned earlier in the course, and the depth of your analysis. You will be expected to follow the guidelines on ethnography that we will discuss prior to the first site visit, including preparation for the visit (construction of interview plan and background research), conduct of the interview, on-site documentation, and follow-up writing and response.

- *September 27 Assignment:*

Interview the proprietor of a market that serves an ethnic community about the role of the market in sustaining the community. Ask about what he/she sells and why, who the patrons are, what they buy and why, where he/she gets the inventory, what cannot be gotten that the customers would want, what they use as substitute, and what cyclical variations are. During and/or immediately after the visit, write up fieldnotes in which you record the details of what you've seen and learned, as well as an evaluation of your success in achieving the goals of the interview. Based on these notes, write a two page paper describing the visit and drawing a conclusion about the role of the store in sustaining the community and its foodways. Put your paper in the Dropbox.

- *Oct 18 Assignment:*

Visit a soup kitchen and interview the director about his/her views on how the culture of the clients affects and is affected by the work of the site. Ask about the people who eat there, their situations, the food that's served, what the clients seem to prefer, how menus are decided upon, his/her views on whether food is a "human right," and his/her opinion on what systemic changes would be needed to address food access adequately in this country. Write two-paragraph summary of your findings on the Discussion Board and make thoughtful comments on your classmates' posts.

**PRESENTATIONS**

30% of final grade

*October 4 Assignment:*

Prior to the date, choose one of the following books to read and report on. Your presentation should be approximately seven minutes long. First provide a brief biography of the author, then summarize the book and explain, with examples, the role of food in the maintenance or change of identity and relationships with others.

1. Von Bremzen, Anya. *Mastering the Art of Soviet Cooking: A Memoir of Food and Longing*. New York: Broadway Books, 2013.
2. Ciezadlo, Annia. *Day of Honey: A Memoir of Food, Love, and War*. New York: Free Press, 2011.
3. Nguyen, Bich Minh. *Stealing Buddha's Dinner: A Memoir*. New York: Penguin Books, 2008.
4. Gopnik, Adam. *The Table Comes First: Family, France, and the Meaning of Food*. New York: Vintage Books, 2012.
5. Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*. New York: First Mariner Books, 2003.

6. Alexander, Elizabeth. *The Light of the World: A Memoir*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2015

- *Oct 25 Presentation:*

In seven minutes, outline a problem of consumption (obesity, bulimia, anorexia, starvation, malnutrition, hunger, food choice, etc.) Two weeks before, choose your topic and notify your classmates. The presentation should be well researched, carefully timed, and concise. Consider statistics on the problem, the causes and effects of the condition, and the possible remedies. Conjecture, based on your readings thus far, how culture can be implicated in these situations and the solutions. Be prepared for questions from your classmates. You can use AV materials, but are not required to.

OR

In seven minutes, summarize your research on any foodways topic of your choice. Provide background on the author and the topic, summarize the materials, describe the main points, and explain the topic and materials relevance and applicability to cultural sustainability.

- *Nov 8 Voicethread:*

Create a five-minute Voicethread in which you explain an issue of agriculture and environment in your geographical region. Describe the region, characteristics of the natural environment, the type of agricultural pursuits there, their importance to the economy, and the problems that they are causing to environmental resources or vice versa.

*Dec 9 Presentation:*

In seven minutes, present a description of the process and a summary of your final project. The presentation should cover your beginning assumptions and expectations, your resources and methods, the problems you encountered and your remedies for them, your relationship with the subject(s) of your study, a summary of your findings, and your conclusions. Your presentation should be accompanied by a PowerPoint that includes photographs of your site and subjects and an outline of your topics.

For both presentations, you will be graded on the clarity, completeness, organization, and conciseness of your presentation, the quality of your AV documentation, the integration of concepts learned in the course, the degree of research, and the depth of your analysis.

### **FINAL PROJECT**

25% of final grade

The purpose of the project is to demonstrate your mastery of the concepts and topics studied in the course; your ability to apply them constructively to practical situations; and your skills in research, documentation, and analysis. Your choices are:

A 15-page (not including bibliography), double-spaced paper on one of the following topics:

1. An ethnography-based study of the foodways of a community under stress, and a proposal for addressing their food needs. Include information on the community's background and how it contributed to their foodways practices, beliefs, and issues. (Could be a group that has gone through starvation or deprivation, that depends substantially on one or two foods, that uses food to maintain some aspect of identity under threat, that has relocated to another country, e.g.)
2. A project model that addresses an issue of cultural sustainability in a community and that focuses on remediation through foodways.

3. A project model that addresses a social problem involving food in a specific demographic sector, that takes into account cultural and community factors that exacerbate or cause the problem. It should include a thorough description of the community, the problem, and its causes; the structure of the model -- its goals, methods, participants, and resources -- and the rationale for the particular model.

You will be graded on the clarity, completeness, organization, and conciseness of your project, the quality of your AV documentation, the integration of concepts learned in the course, the degree of research, and the depth of your analysis.

### Required Readings

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#### TEXTBOOK/S:

- Anderson, E.N. *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*. New York: New York University Press, 2005. Available online as a pdf.
- Counihan, Carole, and Penny Van Esterik, Editors. *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Second Edition. New York: Routledge, 1997, 2008.
- Keller-Brown, Linda, and Kay Mussell, Editors. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992.
- Korsmeyer, Carolyn, Editor. *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. New York: Berg, 1984.
- Long, Lucy, Editor. *Culinary Tourism*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2004.
- Tester, Victoria. *Hunger Road, a Novella of the Irish Famine*. Charleston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.
- Watson, James, and Melissa Caldwell, Editors. *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating, A Reader*. Malden, MA, 2005.

#### ARTICLES:

- Anderson, E.N. "Introduction" and "Chapter One," *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*. New York: New York University Press, 2005.
- "'A Rat in My Soup,' Postcard from China." In *The New Yorker Magazine: Meals Worth the Trip Collection 2011*.
- Counihan, Carole, and Penny Van Esterik, Editors. "Foreword" and "Preface to the Second Edition." In *Food and Culture, A Reader*. 2nd edition. xi, 1-13. NY: Routledge, 2008.
- Diner, Hasia, "Black Bread, Hard Bread: Food, Class and Hunger in Italy," and "The Sounds of Silence: Irish Food in America." In *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*, 84-115. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Gordon, Rachel A., Robert Kaestner, Sanders Korenman, and Kristin Abner. "The Child and Adult Care Food Program: Who Is Served and Why?" *Social Service Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (September 2011), pp. 359-400
- Hadley, Craig, Ariel Zodhiates, and Daniel W. Sellen. "Acculturation, economics and food insecurity among refugees resettled in the USAA: a case study of West African refugees." Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Social Epidemiology and Population Health, 2006
- Harris, Marvin. "The Abominable Pig," in *Food and Culture, A Reader*, second edition. 54-66. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Heidke, "But is it Authentic? Culinary Travel and the Search for the 'Genuine Article' " in *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. New York: Berg, 1984.

- Ikerd, John. "Good News for Small Farms." Presented at Small Farm Conference and Trade Show, sponsored by Missouri Farm Publishing Inc., Clark, MO.
- Kumanyika, "Environmental Influences on Childhood Obesity: Ethnic and Cultural Influences in Context." Online pdf. <http://postcoq.ucd.ie/files/Kumani%202008.pdf>
- Long, Lucy M, "Meaning Centered Research in Food Studies," in *Research Methods in the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition*, John A. Brett and Janet Chrzan, Editors.
- Magliocco, Sabina. "Playing with Food: The Negotiation of Identity in the Ethnic Display Event by Italian Americans in Clinton, Indiana," in *The Taste of American Place*. Barbara G. Shortridge and James R. Shortridge, Editors. 145-162. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 1998.
- Martin, Chuck. "Hispanic Tastes Feed Businesses." *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, March 20, 2002. online [http://enquirer.com/editions/2002/03/20/loc\\_hispanic\\_tastes\\_feed.html](http://enquirer.com/editions/2002/03/20/loc_hispanic_tastes_feed.html)
- Moore, Willard B., "Metaphor and Changing Reality: The Foodways and Beliefs of the Russian Molokans in the United States." In *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*. Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell, Editors. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 1984.
- Nabhan, Gary Paul. Chapters Four and Five. In *Why Some Like It Hot. Food, Genes, and Cultural Diversity*. Washington: Island Press/Shearwater Books, 2004.
- "Part IV - Body and Soul." In *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*, Carolyn Korsmeyer, Editor. 145-192. New York: Berg, 2005.
- Parasecoli, Fabio. "Feeding Hard Bodies: Food and Masculinities in Men's Fitness Magazines," in *Food and Culture, A Reader*, 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Poppendieck, Janet; "Food Amid Plenty: From Hunger to Inequality," in *Food and Culture, A Reader*, 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2008
- Rikoon, J. Sanford, William D. Heffernan, and Judith Bortner Heffernan. "Cultural Conservation and the Family Farm Movement: Integrating Visions and Actions" in *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*, edited by Mary T. Hufford. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
- Rolls, Edmund T. "Neural Processing Underlying Food Selection." In *Food Preferences and Taste - Continuity and Change*. Helen Macbeth, Editor. Providence and Oxford: Berhahn Books, 1997.
- Rozin, Paul. "Food is Fundamental, Fun, Frightening, and Far-Reaching." Online pdf.
- Serematakis, C. Nadia. "The Breast of Aphrodite," in *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005.
- Sutton, David E., "Synesthesia, Memory, and the Taste of Home," in *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. Carolyn Korsmeyer, Editor. New York: Berg, 2005.
- Theophano, Janet S. "'I Gave Him Cake': An interpretation of Two Italian-American Weddings." In *Creative Ethnicity: Symbols and Strategies of Contemporary Ethnic Life*, Stephen Stern and John Allan Cicala, Editors. Logan: Utah University Press, 1991.

## Grading

Course Elements	Percent [or points]
Discussion and participation (WebEx sessions, lectures, blog posts, Wiki interaction, and discussion board)	30%
Site visit reports	20%
Presentations	20%
Final project	30%
TOTAL	100%

**Grade Scale:**

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A	93 or more points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
D	60 - 69 points
F	59 points and below

**Course Policies**

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**COMMUNICATION:**

- Faculty will be available at their Goucher email address and will respond to queries within 24-48 hours.
- Course participants are responsible for maintaining continuous involvement with faculty, fellow students and student groups. In particular, participation in all online discussions is required. Ongoing communication allows you to gain deeper insights into the content, activities and assignments in the course. Please give notice of any obstacle that prevents this.
- You are encouraged to ask questions whenever information needs clarifying.
- For questions pertaining to your assignments: send an email directly to the instructor (please do not post personal questions on the Discussion Board).
- For questions about assignments that may be interesting and helpful to other class members: please use the News Forum.
- For problems with technical aspects of the website: contact [helpdesk@goucher.edu](mailto:helpdesk@goucher.edu) (you may copy the instructor).

**MISSED WORK:**

You are responsible for material covered in the course. It is your sole responsibility to obtain any materials missed.

**Late Policy:**

For proper graduate student learning to occur, pacing of content mastery is critical. Therefore, assignments are to be completed on time. If extreme circumstances prevent an assignment to be completed in a timely fashion, please notify me before the assignment is due so a new date can be negotiated. Only follow-ups completed by the due date can be redone. Late assignments without such notification will be docked.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

All final work products are to be the independent work of each student and stored in the electronic portfolio. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be referred to the Academic Honor Board. For a full description of the code and what constitutes a violation of the code, refer to the Goucher Handbook or online at [www.goucher.edu/x1292.xml](http://www.goucher.edu/x1292.xml).