

Communications Studies (COMS) 401.03 L01

Special Topics in Communications Studies: Food Culture

Winter 2012

Monday: 13:00-15:50

Instructors: Dr. Dawn Johnston and Ms. Lisa Stowe

Office Location: SS 234 and SS 206

Office Phone: 220-3199 and 220-4840

E-Mail: debjohns@ucalgary.ca and lstowe@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Either instructor by appointment

or

Lisa Stowe (Wednesday 4:00pm-5:00pm)

Dawn Johnston (Wednesday 11:00am-12:00pm)

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.

Course Description

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.

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 a restaurant
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

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)

The Bourdain, Reichl, and Pollan texts may be purchased either new or secondhand, and are available at the University Bookstore as well as other commercial bookstores. 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 required readings will be posted as PDF's or 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

Midterm Exam: 20%

Due Date: February 27

Objectives: The midterm examination will cover material from the readings, lectures, and class discussions in the first 6 weeks of the semester. The examination will consist of a combination of short-answer and fill in the blank questions.

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: 15%

Due Date: March 5

Objectives: Students must submit a 250-word proposal and annotated bibliography (minimum 5 scholarly sources, each with a 3-4 sentence annotation) describing the topic they wish to explore in their research essay. The proposal should include a solid and realistic research question and the annotations should indicate how each source is significant and relevant to the student's argument.

Field Trip Reflection Essay: 15%

Due Date: March 19

Objectives: The field trip reflection essay is a 500-word reflection essay on the experience of our class field trip. 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.

Research Essay: 30%

Due Date: April 9

Objectives: The term paper is research-based, on a topic of the student's choosing, and should be 2000-2500 words in length. Detailed paper guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

Group Presentation: 20%

Due Date: Ongoing

Objectives: In groups of six, 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 January 9, and students who do not sign themselves up will be assigned a presentation group. Detailed presentation guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

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: No

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: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

(Revised, effective September 2008)

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 (www.efwr.ucalgary.ca) 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.