

Instructor	Rebecca Russell
Contact	630.917.4472 rebeccar23@gmail.com
Location	Naperville
Dates/Times	Tuesdays, March 31 – June 2 6:30 – 9:30 pm
Credit hours	4

Course Description

Food holds powerful emotional meaning for people and it is a central part of individual, ethnic, social and regional identity. In this course, students reflect on and research their personal food histories from multiple perspectives. Students explore the connection to family and the impact of ethnicity, nationality, race and socioeconomic status on food selection, preparation and consumption; the connection of foods to socialization, holidays and gender roles; and the connection between food trends – such as shifting definitions of “healthy eating” and the influence of corporate agriculture – with the choices individuals make to cultivate tradition or redefine their food legacy.

Faculty

Rebecca Russell holds an MS in Communication from Northwestern University and a BA in English Literature with a minor in Journalism from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She has worked as a writer, editor and director of communications, and now teaches college communications and yoga, and is a freelance writer. She also enjoys eating, baking and learning about food and how it benefits people – nutritionally, emotionally and the role it plays in bringing people together.

Competencies

A-3-X: Reflection and Meaning

Can interpret experience in relationship to the perspective of a food tradition.

Students prove competence by focusing on a food tradition of a specific ethnicity, region or social group, then reflect on and analyze how that tradition was maintained (or deviated from) in the student's experiences.

Outcomes: Students are able to articulate how their experiences fit within the context of a food tradition.

H-1-E: Communities and Societies

Can explain the concept, function and expression of culture and illustrate the explanation with one or more cultures.

Students prove competence by demonstrating the ability to:

- define culture as a concept through which to see and interpret the world
- choose a theoretical model for analyzing cultures
- describe two or more dimensions present in one or more cultures using this mode.

Outcomes: Students are able to work with appropriate models or theories (traditions, rituals, religious beliefs, laws, arts) to reflect on and understand the relevance to one's own experience.

H-3-B: Individual Development

Can explain how two or more of the factors of race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, gender, sexual orientation or religion interact to shape oneself or others.

Students prove competence by demonstrating the ability to:

- discuss two or more of these factors
- choose a context in which they interact
- explain how the chosen factors interact with each other
- articulate the impact of these factors and their interactions on oneself or others

Outcomes: Students are able to articulate how their experiences have been shaped by and fit within the context of a specific factor.

Learning Experiences

The course is taught in a facilitative style, enabling students to reinforce their learning through active involvement. Specific experiences include assigned readings, material presented by the instructor, a field trip, journaling, discussion, presentation and a research project on a topic of the student's choosing.

Readings

School for New Learning

DePaul University

Course Syllabus: AI 228 Food & Identity

Spring 2009

Gabaccia, Donna R.: *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*; Harvard University Press, 2000.

Additional readings for the course will be accessed through electronic reserve; students need Internet access.

Evidence the Student Will Submit

Detail about each assignment will be provided.

Attendance and Participation

250 points / 25%

- Students are expected to attend *all* classes, in their entirety.
- Plan to participate in class discussions by contributing a good question, a relevant answer, a useful reaction to what someone else says.

Journal

250 points / 25%

- Students are assigned topics for focused reflection based on the reading assignments.
- Typed journal entries are submitted regularly throughout the course term.

Topic Exploration

250 points / 25 %

- One student delivers a presentation about a topic that is linked to the topic of focus for that week's class.
- Each student gives one presentation during the quarter.

Research Project

250 points / 25%

This project gives students the opportunity to document one aspect of their food history and conduct research that positions it in a personal, cultural and/or historical context.

- Students relate their analysis to their competence(s).
- Topics for this project will be discussed and may include: one aspect of the student's food identity such as a holiday or religious celebration; the evolution of a favorite family recipe; an establishment of significance to the student's food history.
- The final deliverable can be a paper, a movie, an audio recording, a detailed scrapbook or another form. Research projects are shared with the class.

Attendance and Participation

For all competencies, class attendance and active participation are required.

If a class must be missed, please let the instructor know as far in advance as possible.

Missing more than one class of the 10-week course makes it difficult to keep up with requirements and the student will not have met the requirements for a passing grade.

Students should rely on each other to obtain information from a missed class.

Criteria for Assessment

Grades for all competencies are dependent on attendance, participation and completing all assignments. Work is evaluated according to the thoughtfulness and seriousness with

School for New Learning

DePaul University

Course Syllabus: AI 228 Food & Identity

Spring 2009

which the assignment is approached, the quality of analysis and the clarity with which work is communicated.

Grading is the tool for assessing progress in the course. Please remember that grading is based on evidence the student presents in class and in assignments; it is the student's responsibility to demonstrate an understanding of the skills and knowledge gained.

- A – Work of high quality; reflects thorough understanding of issues
- B – Work of good quality; reflects organized and comprehensive understanding of issues
- C – Work minimally meets requirements; develops arguments superficially or simplistically; may only address part of an assignment or is otherwise incomplete
- D – Work is of poor quality; does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment; treatment of topic is superficial; ideas not communicated clearly

Guidelines

- All assignments must be completed.
- Assignments are due on the date specified.
- Assignments are not accepted late unless approved in advance.
- In-class assignments and activities cannot be made up.

Pass/Fail

Students who prefer to take the course for Pass/Fail must inform the instructor within the first two weeks of the term. If this change is made, the student cannot switch back to earning a letter grade for the course.

Incomplete Grade

The course follows the University's current policy on a grade of Incomplete (IN). Unfinished work or work requiring revision will be given an IN grade. To qualify for the IN, students must have regularly attended class and must have completed three-fourths of assignments. To have an IN grade granted in this course, there must be a significant extenuating circumstance evidenced by the student (medical and/or significant personal issues). The student will need to initiate and file an SNL Incomplete grade contract before the final session of the course. Students are strongly advised to review the university deadlines for withdrawal without tuition refund and the implications for financial aid and grades.

Academic Integrity

The course follows the University's policy on plagiarism, which is detailed in the DePaul Student Handbook: <http://studentaffairs.depauledu/homehandbook.html>.

Class Schedule – (DRAFT)

**School for New Learning
DePaul University
Course Syllabus: AI 228 Food & Identity**

Spring 2009

Class session	Focus
1 March 31	Overview
2 April 7	Historical perspective
3 April 14	Food traditions, customs, rituals, taboos
4 April 21	Gender roles
5 April 28	Hunger
6 May 5	Foods of change: corn, sugar
7 May 12	Fast food
8 May 19	Diet and well-being
9 June 26	Eating from the global table
10 June 2	Gathering in community