
THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF FOOD in Fall 2019 (AN3060)

Course Code	AN3060	Professor(s)	Christy Shields
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-304
Class Schedule	W: 10:35-13:30 in G-102	Office Hours	M/TH 12-1:45, or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	cshields@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	824

Course Description

In this course, students examine food and the senses from an anthropological perspective. Students gain familiarity with key theoretical and ethnographic texts as well as key research methods (participant observation, in-depth interviewing). A series of short writing assignments (fieldnotes, analyses, research proposals, interview guides, etc.) ask students to link fieldwork experiences with analytical concepts and perspectives, thus undertaking a hands-on approach to ethnographic research.

A focus on food and the senses allows us to explore the construction and maintenance of social boundaries between inside and outside, private and public, individual and collective. The topic also offers an excellent window into questions of power, and the expression and maintenance of social hierarchies and inequalities. At the same time, food is a key component in ritual, which involves the heightening of sensory experience, and can act as symbol of self and other. In such contexts, food is central to instilling social values and creating a sense of individual and shared identity. Taste, cuisine and commensality are also privileged forms of inter-cultural communication. Finally, food is at the heart of many of current debates and transformations. As such, studying food and the senses allows us to examine the processes association with modernization and globalization.

Course Learning Outcomes

Identify and apply anthropological concepts and approaches to the study of culture, power, identity, food and sensory perception.

Demonstrate a critical understanding of French food culture. (In other words, an understanding of French food culture that goes beyond well-worn stereotypes.).

Define and implement key ethnographic methodologies, especially participant observation and interviewing.

Develop critical reading, writing and research skills, especially for the social sciences.

Mobilise intercultural competencies in relationships with others (and thus in class discussions and research assignments as well). These include: a critical awareness of one's own social and cultural positions and identities; recognition of multiple perspectives; and, empathy and openness towards others and their points of view.

General Education

Course Outline

CLASS OUTLINE:

NOTE: This outline may still be slightly revised during the course of the semester (in accordance with class interests, speed, etc.).

Part One: Foundations

Sep 4 – Introduction to Theory and Method

Brief Introduction to Discipline:

-Crowther, Introduction from *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*

Method:

-Spradley, Making an Ethnographic Record (excerpt from *Participant Observation*)

-Emerson et al, Creating Scenes, p 79-89 (excerpt from *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*)

-Pink, “ Reflexivity in Sensory Ethnography” and “From Sensory Bias to Sensory Subjectivity” in *Sensory Ethnography* (p 49-53)

*Homework: Food Journal Assignment Given (Due Sept 14)

Sep 11 - Food as Code and Communication

Foundations:

- Barthes, Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption
- Douglas, Deciphering a Meal (p 61-70, end of first paragraph)
- Levi-Strauss, The Culinary Triangle

Current Ethnography:

- Clark, The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisin

*Homework: Keep working on your Food Journal Assignment (Due Sept 14th)

Sep 18 - Food, Taste and Power

Foundations:

- Mintz, Sweetness and Meaning
- Bourdieu, Taste of Necessity, Taste of Luxur

Consumption (fast food/slow food):

- Fantasia, Everything and Nothing: The Meaning of Fast-Food (...) in France
- Terrio, Tasting Grand Cru Chocolate in France

At the table:

- Allison, Japanese Mothers and Obentos: The Lunch-Box as Ideological State Apparatus
- Wilks, Power at the Table: Food Fights and Happy Meals

Sep 25 - Food, the Senses and Identity

Interdisciplinary conversations:

- Rozin and Rozin, Culinary Themes and Variations
- Fischler, Food, Self and Identity

-Pollan, Our National Eating Disorder

Ritual and Symbol:

Buitelaar, Living Ramadan: Fasting and Feasting in Morocco

Reed-Danahay, Champagne and Chocolate: Taste and Inversion in a French Wedding Ritual

Anthropology of the Senses:

-Classen, Howes and Synott, Artificial Flavors

-Stoller and Okles, Thick Sauce: Remarks on the Social Relations of the Songhay

*Homework: Food Journal Analysis assigned (Due Oct 8)

Oct 2: The "I" in Food and Sensory Ethnography

Ethnographic Texts and Autoethnographies:

-Popendoe, Ideal

-Shields-Argelès, Eating with Strangers

-Sutton, The Vegetarian Anthropologist

-Williams-Fonson, Other Women Cooked for My Husband: Negotiating Gender, Food and Identities in an African American/Ghanaian Household

Methodology:

-Emerson et al, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, excerpts

*Homework: Food Journal Analyses due by Oct 8th

Field note assignment given for next part of the course

Part Two: In the Field

Oct 9: Taste Education

The field site: French Taste Educator Nathalie Politzer will be coming to our classroom in order

to introduce us to tasting in the tradition of French taste educators.

Context:

Readings TBA

Ethnographies:

-Counihan, *Italian Food Activism in Urban Sardinia*, excerpts

-Hojlund, Listen! We Made These Potatoes Crispy! Danish Adolescents Sharing Taste in a School Class

-St. Maurice, Making the Multi-Dimensional Taste of Japanese Cuisine Public

Methods:

Emerson et al, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, excerpts

Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, excerpts

*Homework: Fieldnotes (with analytical memos)

Oct 16: TBA

A second fieldwork site is being finalized, readings will be announced once it is chosen.

Oct 23: *Terroir*: The Taste of Place

Note: There will not be a fieldsite with this class though we will have an in-class tasting. We will take advantage of the second half of the class to discuss your fieldnotes and your research proposals

Ethnographies:

-Trubek, *The Taste of Place*, excerpts

-Paxson, Locating Value in Artisan Cheese: Reverse Engineering *Terroir* for New World Landscapes

-Shields-Argeles, Tasting Comté Cheese, Returning to the Whole: The Jury Terroir as Ritual Practice.

-Optional: Rogers, J., Enseigner le Terroir: La difficile appropriation d'une ideologie par des producteurs de lait dans deux syndicats AOC

Methodology Readings:

Readings TBA (How to write a research proposal)

*Homework: Research Proposal due Nov 12

Oct 30: No Class (Fall Break)

Nov 6: Eating Others' Foods

The fieldsite: A "chocolate walk" with tour guide Iris Grossman (from 10:30 to 12:30)

-Heldke, But is it Authentic? Culinary travel and the search of the "genuine article"

-Pink, An Urban Tour: The sensory sociality of ethnographic place-making

-Shields-Argelès, Imagining the Self and the Other: Food and identity in France and the United States

-Other readings TBA

Part Three: Cuisine, Commensality and Memory

Nov 13: The Senses, Memory and Change

Literary text, auto-ethnography and ethnography:

Proust, *The Madeline*

Seremetakis, *The Senses Still*, excerpts

Sutton, *Synesthesia, Memory and the Taste of Home*

Interviewing:

Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, excerpts (p 25-41)

-Perez, Interviewing Epistemologies: From Life History to Kitchen Table Ethnography

-Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, excerpts

-Example Consent form

*Homework: Find interviewee, obtain a consent form, fix interview date(s) and write up an interview guide (due Nov 20th in class)

Nov 20: Food Voice and Interviewing

Ethnographies:

-Abarca, Charlas Culinarias: Mexican Women Speak from their Public Kitchens

-Counihan, Mexicanas' Food Voice and Differential Consciousness in the San Luis Valley of Colorado

-Deutsch, "Eat Me Up": Spoken Voice and Food Voice in an Urban Firehouse

Methodology:

We will also watch the three films produced by the "Food without Borders" project (a collaborative project involving AUP and a junior high school in Paris' 20th arrondissement).

Nov 27: Cooking and Commensality

Commensality:

-Fischler, Commensality, society and culture

-Bloch, Commensality and Poisoning

-Sutton, Revivifying Commensality

Additional readings TBA

Cooking:

-Sutton, Cooking Skills, Senses and Memory

-DeCerteau and Giard, The Nourishing Arts

Additional readings TBA

*Homework: Carry out interview, type of transcript, write up short text with recipe (Final due date: Dec 12th)

Dec 4: Conclusions

Here I am aiming for a visit to the “I eat therefore I am” exhibit at the Musée de l’Homme. Tickets do not go on sale until October.

We will also discuss final portfolios in this class (Portfolios will be due on Dec 18th)

Final Exam Period: Informal student presentations

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case

of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an “F” for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

GRADING:

Grade Breakdown:

- 15% Attendance and Informed Participation
- 25% Auto-Ethnography Project (Field Notes 10%, Analysis 15%)
- 25% Field Project (Field Notes 10%, Research Proposal 15%)
- 25% Interview Project (Interview Preparation 15%, Write-Up 10%)
- 10% Final Portfolio

Assignment Details:

Attendance and Informed Participation:

Active participation and regular attendance is required for this class. This grade will therefore be based on your attendance record as well as the professor's subjective appreciation of your class participation. You should be prepared for, and engaged in, class discussion. This means paying attention to what is said (by professor and other students), responding thoughtfully (in an

manner that is informed by class readings) and respectfully. Students should refrain from text messaging (or using cell phones in any way), surfing the internet, arriving to class late or leaving early (you get the idea....)

In terms of attendance, I begin deducting from your grade once you miss more than three classes. If you know you are going to miss a class, please let me know ahead of time. If you do miss a class, doing the readings, obtaining notes and catching up on assignments is entirely the student's responsibility. See "Attendance Policy" below for additional information.

Auto-ethnography Project:

First, in the early weeks of the semester you will be asked to take detailed field notes of your daily interactions and experiences involving food. (Note: this is not at all a nutritional journal – it is not about "what" you eat and whether this is healthy, etc. – it is about keeping track of social relations around food in some of your daily interactions). The assignment is about practicing field note writing. It is a lengthy assignment that you write over the course of several days.

Second, I will ask you to return to your notes and apply concepts that we learned in the first section of the semester in order to write an anthropological analysis using your notes. I ask that your analysis be 6-7 pages in length

Additional details will be given in class, and detailed assignments sheets will be handed out.

Research Proposal Project

We will visit three field sites together as a class. Students will take field notes during these visits (integrating the practice of "analytical memos" in particular). At the end of our visits, students will elaborate a research proposal for an in-depth research project on one particular site. Students will not actually carry out this research in the frame of the class (we do not have the time to do so unfortunately), but they will practice the art of asking critical questions, defining a field, etc.

Interview Project:

Students will choose and then carry out a food-centered interview with a person who has crossed borders in their lifetime. Students will need to turn in a consent form, an interview guide, a transcription of the interview and a short 2 to 3 page summary of their interview (introducing their interviewee to an outside public) and accompanying the document with pictures and a recipe.

Additional details will be given in class, and detailed assignments sheets will be handed out.

Final Portfolio:

At the end of the semester, students will need to gather all their work from the semester into a "portfolio". They will write an introduction and conclusion (details to be discussed in class).

They will present a portion of this summary in a brief and informal in-class presentation (during the final exam period).

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Quantitative	Qualitative
A	94-100	Superior (uniformly excellent in creativity, thoughtfulness and preparation)
A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	Very Good (exceeds the expected level of competence/preparation)
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	Satisfactory (fulfills requirements at an average level)
C+	77-79	
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	Needs improvement (falls short of average level of competence and preparation)
D	60-69	
F	Below 60	Fails/Unsatisfactory (fails to engage with components of the assignment/course)

Other

EMAIL ETIQUETTE:

A few basic emailing rules apply to this class:

- Please know that I generally do not respond to emails during the weekend or on weekdays after 5. (In other words, writing to me at 10pm on a Sunday evening to ask a question about an assignment due in-class on the following day is unacceptable and does NOT excuse you from completing that assignment on time).
- Please look at the syllabus BEFORE you send me an email. (In other words, do NOT send me an email to ask what the readings are for the next class, this information is available on the syllabus and I reserve the right to NOT respond to the email).
- We see each other twice a week. So for routine questions, please ask me before or after class. (For example, you want to make an appointment to see me? Great. Let's schedule a meeting together after class).
- Also there are confidential questions that I will not answer over email (e.g. What is my current grade in your class?) If you have such questions, please schedule an appointment.
- If you do send an email, please make sure it is respectful (and that is a rule that should really hold for all your classes). I reserve the right to not answer emails that are disrespectful in any way. For a respectful email:

- Always start with a greeting (ex. Dear Professor Shields; Hello; Good

Afternoon);

- Do not write in CAPITALS (as this indicates shouting) and beware of repetitive use of “!” and “?”;
- Keep emails short, professional and to the point. If you have a question or comment which I cannot answer in 3 to 5 sentences, I will advise you to come see me after class or during office hours;
- End your email with an appropriate salutation (e.g. Thank you; Best; Sincerely)