

ANT 267: Food and Culture

Spring 2008 Tu,Th 10:00 — 11:15 am, Chambers 1006 (modified 11 March 2008)

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Office Hours: M, W 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
T, Th 11:15 am – 12:30 pm or by appointment
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This course introduces how food practices shape societies and cultures throughout the world. Foodways will be examined from an anthropological perspective for its social and cultural implications; this is not a survey of nutritional or dietetic sciences. Topics to be covered include: **the use of food in social contexts**(food exchanges and the social construction of groups; food as a marker of social boundaries;); **the symbolism of food** (folk conceptions of food; body image; food taboos and other religious restrictions; vegetarianism and alternative consumption regimes;); and **the political economy of food** (globalization and global food industries; changes in dietary patterns; famine and food emergencies; the invention and commodification of new foods).

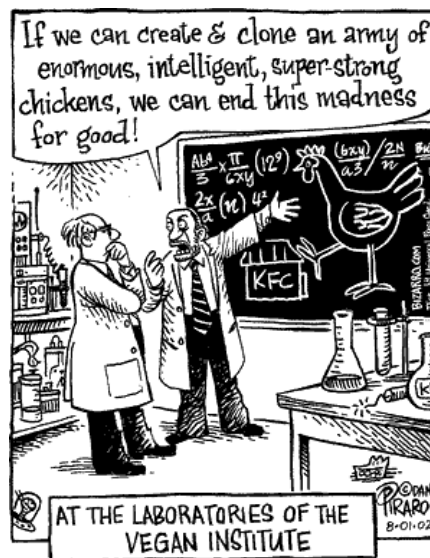
The anthropological perspective is largely a “bottom-up,” comparative examination of particular social processes, and is presented in the form of ethnographic monographs and articles that describe everyday life in detail. The main question that we will be addressing throughout this course is how food and foodways is both a *reflection of* and *reflection on* social structures and cultural practices.

This course is structured along the lines of **community-based learning**. This means that students will apply the lessons learned from the classroom to issues that affect our local community. In groups, we will work with community leaders to develop and execute various projects. Such experiential learning reinforces the understanding of theoretical and methodological issues, while also benefitting the community.

Course Readings

- Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, 2007. *Food and Culture: A Reader, 2nd Edition*. Routledge. ISBN: 978-0-415-97777-7
- Melissa L. Caldwell 2004. *Not by Bread Alone: Social Support in the New Russia*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 0520238761.
- Katherine A. Dettwyler 1993. *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa*. Waveland Press. ISBN: 088133748X.

Additional articles will be available on Blackboard.



Course Requirements

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each seminar meeting; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. Your engagement with the material is vital for the success of this learning experience.

Class Participation: 10%

Active participation requires that each student come to class prepared, having read the assigned material before class. This includes your leading two seminar meetings (we will schedule this on the first day of class).

Discussion Board: 10%

Each week, students will write a brief reaction towards an idea prompted by the reading, class discussion, or group project; you should feel free to write about whatever you feel is relevant. They are due every Monday night, before midnight. I expect you to have also reviewed your peers have written – you may respond to what they have written, but I expect all exchanges to be as civil as if they were said in person during class. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Review Essay: 15%

This assignment is designed to help you overview the foundational literature on food and culture. This will be a take-home essay, due prior to class on **26 February 2008**. No outside reading is expected or desired for this assignment. I will have a handout with a list of suggested topics.

Community Project (total 65%: group project, 25%; individual literature review, 10%; journal 10%; class presentation 10%; project summary group write-up 10%):

Successful completion of the community project is the central focus of this class. Students will be divided into various groups that will work with community leaders on a particular project. I will have more handouts during the semester on various aspects of the project, and will only summarize the nature of each aspect of the project. Once students have been assigned to a project, students will individually examine the academic and professional literature that will help them understand the wider context of the project, possible approaches/solutions to the problem, and other relevant issues. This is worth 10% of the grade. During the course of the project, students will also individually journal their work – this is also worth 10% of the grade, and will be submitted twice – once in the middle of the term for my ungraded review, and once in the end. Performing the project itself is worth 25% of the grade, and will be based on the assessment conducted by the community leader. Groups will also present their project, as a report in class (10%) and as a group write-up (10%). Once groups have been formed, students will need to be able to work cooperatively with each other – this is vital to the successful completion of the group project.

Submission of Writing Assignments: All assignments must be submitted to me electronically. You can do this in two ways: as an email attachment; or through the digital drop box in

Blackboard. If you are not using Microsoft Word, please save the file as in “rich text format.” If you have any questions about how to submit assignments, please see me individually.

Grading System:

Grades will follow the college system using the 4.0 scale (i.e., A=4.0, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, etc. – see the college catalog) and weighted for each assignment as described above.

While students working with each other outside of class is highly encouraged, all graded, individual written work must be your own and pledged accordingly. All work is subject to the Davidson College Honor Code as stated in the student handbook. If there are individual accommodations for special needs, please let me know and authorize the Dean of Students to contact me so that we can work something out.

Class Schedule (modified 11 March 2008)

Tuesday, 15 Jan	Introduction to Class
Thursday, 17 Jan	Foundational Approaches Reading: Counihan reader, Mead article Counihan reader, Barthes article Counihan reader, Mintz article
Tuesday, 22 Jan	Food and Culture in the Field Reading: Dettwyler, <i>Dancing Skeletons</i> , p. 1-58 Public Lecture: Sally and Sara Kate Kneidel, “Food Activism: Eating for Environmental Change”; 7:00 pm, Tyler/Tallman Hall
Thursday, 24 Jan	Reading: Dettwyler, <i>Dancing Skeletons</i> , p. 59-99
Tuesday, 29 Jan	Reading: Dettwyler, <i>Dancing Skeletons</i> , p. 101-161
Thursday, 31 Jan	Food and Social Service: Case Study, Russia Reading: Caldwell, <i>Not by Bread Alone</i> , p. 1-31
Tuesday, 5 Feb	Reading: Caldwell, <i>Not by Bread Alone</i> , p. 32-99
Thursday, 7 Feb	Reading: Caldwell, <i>Not by Bread Alone</i> , p. 100-155 Public Lecture: Prof. Melissa Caldwell, U.California-Santa Cruz, 7:30 pm, Sprinkle Room: "Organically Russian: Gardens, Healthy Eating, and Natural Foods"
Tuesday, 12 Feb	Reading: Caldwell, <i>Not by Bread Alone</i> , p. 156-208
Thursday, 14 Feb	Political Economy of Food Reading: Counihan reader, Schlosser article; Counihan reader, Barndt article

Tuesday, 19 Feb	Reading: Counihan reader, Van Esterik article Reading on Reflection and Service-Learning (available on Blackboard)
Thursday, 21 Feb	Reading: Counihan reader, Clapp article Counihan reader, Poppendieck article
Tuesday, 26 Feb	No Lecture – Review Essay due by 11:30 am
Thursday, 28 Feb	Reading: Counihan reader, Appadurai article Counihan reader, Allison article
3-7 March	Spring Break: Have a good vacation!
Tuesday, 11 Mar	Food, Gender, and Identity Reading: Counihan reader, Bynum article Counihan reader, Brumberg article Counihan reader, DeVault article
Thursday, 13 Mar	Group project flex time Assignment: Project Log due
Tuesday, 18 Mar	Reading: Counihan reader, Bordo article
Thursday, 20 Mar	Group project flex time Assignment: Literature Review Due
Tuesday, 25 Mar	Easter Break!
Thursday, 27 Mar	Group project flex time
Tuesday, 1 Apr	Reading: Counihan reader, Williams-Forson article Counihan reader, Nabhan article
Thursday, 3 Apr	Group project flex time
Tuesday, 8 Apr	Reading: Counihan reader, Leitch article Counihan reader, Wilk article
Thursday, 10 Apr	Group project flex time
Tuesday, 15 Apr	Film: Tampopo (pt. 1)
Thursday, 17 Apr	Film: Tampopo (pt. 2)
Tuesday, 22 Apr	Group project flex time
Thursday, 24 Apr	Assignment: Research Presentations
Tuesday, 29 Apr	Assignment: Research Presentations
Thursday, 1 May	Last Day of Class Course Overview