The importance of food is obvious: we eat food to stay alive and thrive. Sustenance is far from the only reason we eat, however, as the lessons in this course—food writing, food in the media, food branding and marketing, food and place, to food and rituals—show. In Food, Media, & Culture, we explore the purpose of food in our lives. Class readings mix media and cultural studies research with journalism, linguistics, history, literary analysis, gender studies, psychology, and folklore to help us see that foods like meatloaf, fried chicken, and apple pie, are part of who we are.

Lectures, discussions, and pieces in a range of forms—magazine articles, academic arguments, book excerpts, videos, podcasts, and images—offer points of discussion and reflection. Not only do the pieces offer a variety of perspectives on food, they also offer a range of models for journalism and communication studies students.

This course develops students’ writing skills for a career in food and media. Students practice writing in a variety of food writing genres, including a cookbook analysis, restaurant review, interview, magazine pitch, food film analysis, and food memoir. Connecting food texts, identity, and writing will lead to the development of each student’s writing voice and sense of self-expression as defined by food.

OUTCOME/GOALS

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the origins, evolution, and issues of writing about food.
- Recognize and evaluate the social and cultural construction of food in the media, particularly as it relates to food production, representation, and consumption.
- Evaluate the cultural function of popular culture—including food labels, magazines, videos, and images—in daily life.
- Present ideas and information appropriately for various audiences, resulting in the creation of polished written pieces.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings and multimedia texts are available as PDFs or links on Canvas.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>Food Magazine Pitch</td>
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<td>Cookbook Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food and Brand Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restaurant Review</td>
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<td>Interview Profile</td>
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<td>Food in Film Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rituals, Food, and Holidays Essay</td>
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Discussion Posts

Participation is an integral part of success in this class. You are expected to ask questions, offer thoughtful comments, and contribute positive energy to the discussion.

Discussion Posts: Informal writing will be conducted throughout the course based on readings, podcasts, and video viewings. Posts should be 50 to 150 words and respond in full to the discussion prompt. Post your original Discussion post by the 3rd day of the week, Wednesday by 11:59 pm, EST.

Response Posts: Return to the Discussion throughout the week to engage in dialogue with your classmates. While you may respond to as many classmates as you’d like, one response post is required by the end of the week, Sunday by 11:59 pm, EST. Remember that discussion posts should be substantive and contribute to the topic at hand.

Mode of Submission

All papers will be submitted online as MS Word (.doc) documents. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Romans font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Late Policy

Assignments are due by 11:59 pm EST on the last day (Sunday) of the module, unless otherwise noted. Assignments turned in late will be subject to a 10-point deduction per day. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days. After 7 days, the assignment will receive a 0.

If documented illness or injury prevents a student from turning in an assignment on time, the student should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation.

Student Honor Code

"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code."

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.
CLASS SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

**Week 1 (Aug 21-27): Course and Syllabus Overview**

*Why should we study food? How and in what ways do food, media, and culture intersect? How is food part of and a display of identity?*


**Discussion Post: Introductions**

**Discussion Post 1: Ted Talk Video and Summary**

**PART I: FOOD TEXTS**

**Week 2 (Aug 28-Sept 3): Food Writing**

*What is food writing? Read a selection of classic and contemporary works by American food writers. Develop your own food writing through creative and visual metaphors and similes.*

- Food writing examples:

**Discussion Post 2: Food Writing Metaphors**

**Week 3 (Sept 4-10): Food Magazines and Freelance Writing**

*Enter the food media world via food magazines. Learn how to read food magazines critically with questions such as: what messages are being conveyed in the text and the images about what we eat? And who eats what? And why?*

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• Resources about starting a career as a food magazine writer
• Podcast- Food Blogger Pro, interview with Kate Kordsmeier
• Popular food magazines: Bon Appetit, Food & Wine, Cooking Light, Cook’s Illustrated, Saveur, Lucky Peach, Food Network Magazine, Eating Well Magazine, Taste of Home

Discussion Post 3: Food Magazine Analysis

***Food Magazine Pitch***

Week 4 (Sept 11-17): Cookbooks, part I
Cookbooks are an important primary text for studying food and society. How did they develop in American history? What do they communicate about each generation? What gender norms are relayed in cookbooks?


Discussion Post 4: Cookbook Analysis Preview

Week 5 (Sept 18-24): Cookbooks, part II
Recipes tell more than just what to cook for dinner—recipes reflect our language, history, family, food and community. The unique tone and style of recipes offer a glimpse into a world that may not be our own. In community cookbooks, for example, the presentation of recipes may have insider references, illustrations of muffins, and topics of local interest. In our analysis of the language of recipes, we will look at the way language used in recipes shapes our interpretation of the cookbook, not only concerning things culinary, but also how we view a particular community and its values. We will also look at best practices when writing recipes, and how to express your voice in a recipe.

• Wilson, B. (July 2, 2013). The Pleasures of Reading Recipes. The New Yorker.

Refer to these handbooks about the art of recipe writing. These are excellent guides that go in-depth on the mechanics and details needed in writing contemporary recipes.

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Discussion Post 5: Write a Recipe

***Cookbook Analysis***

PART II: FOOD ADVERTISING

Week 6 (Sept 25 – Oct 1): Food Branding & Marketing

*How does branding and marketing shape our consumption and relationship with food? What role do supermarkets have in our food purchases and eating habits? What is the psychology of food?*


Encouraged:


Discussion Post 6: Retail Revolution- Online grocery shopping

Week 7 (Oct 2-8): Food Products

*What values are communicated in food labels and food advertising? How does language change depending on the targeted audience in regards to class and gender?*


Encouraged:


**Discussion Post 7: Food Labels and Chocolate**

***Food and Brand Essay***

**PART III: FOOD AND PLACE**

**Week 8 (Oct 9-15): Eating Out: Restaurants, Reviews, and Street Food**

How does place effect your dining experience? Consider the location (inside vs outside), décor, service, and dining experience. How does the menu reflect the chef’s style and food? And the area? Consider the language, design, and type of food.


Reliable restaurant criticism requires a trained eye, a good palette, and strong opinions, yours. There is a structure to what makes the kind of restaurant review your audience will trust. We will examine the conventions of this genre, such as providing a balanced approach, including details, and describing the scene. Then we will write a restaurant review.


**Discussion Post 8: Restaurant Menus**

***Restaurant Review***

**Week 9 (Oct 16-22): Eating In: Cooking and Eating at Home**

We continue exploring why people cook by considering how media shape women's and men's relationship to food. Then we read and analyze both primary sources of interviews and secondary sources about the genre of interviews. We finish with an assignment where you conduct an interview of a person of your choosing about his/her reasons for cooking (or not).


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• Shapiro, L. (2004, April 19). Something from the Oven: The rise of packaged-food cuisine in 1950s America. Interview by Melissa Block. All Things Considered on NPR


*We will develop our interview writing skills by noting the use of direct quotes, paraphrasing, and the writer’s own prose. For example, note how direct quotes serve as evidence to support the writer’s claims.*


• Julia Moskin (Oct. 20, 2015). “Not Enough Cooks in the Restaurant Kitchen.” The New York Times. This essay is a profile on several chefs, but pay attention to how the author uses quotes throughout as evidence to support her claims.


Discussion Post 9: Interview Planning

Week 10 (Oct 23-29): Traveling to Eat

*We eat when we travel. But we can also travel to eat. "Culinary tourism" is about individuals exploring foods new to them as well as using food to explore new cultures and ways of being (Long, 2010). Food is a powerful medium through which to enter another culture. Through food, we can communicate identity, relationships, ideologies and emotions, as well as fulfill basic physical needs. As a destination and vehicle for tourism, food expands our understanding of both food and tourism.*


Encouraged:


Discussion Post 10: Culinary Tourism

***Interview Profile***

PART IV: FOOD ON SCREEN

Week 11 (Oct 30- Nov 5): Food TV

A major component of food media is food television. We trace the development of contemporary American food television from Julia Child to the Food Network. We also consider the influence of celebrity chefs in American food culture and the gendered portrayal of home cooking.


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Discussion Post 11: Food TV Comparison

Discussion Post 12: Gender and Food in the Media

Week 12 (Nov 6–12): Food and Film

We'll approach food and film in two ways: 1) the representations of food in films, and 2) food-eating and film-viewing. We learn what 'food porn' means and the vocabulary to describe film scenes. Watching movies such as Tampopo and Like Water for Chocolate, in which food preparation and relationships are central themes, help us understand and appreciate how popular culture texts give us insight into the world around us, or our place in that world. Also, we will recognize how food-eating contributes to the cinematic experience.


Encouraged:


Discussion Post 13: Food-eating and Film-viewing

PART V: FOOD, MEDIA, and RITUAL

Weeks 13-14 (Nov 12-26): Food, Ritual, and Thanksgiving

Examining food at the symbolic level gives us many ways in which to investigate a food's meaning and how it reflects traditions and social expectations of its time. We will see that visual media influences our understanding of Thanksgiving by conducting an ethnographic study.


Discussion Post 14: Rituals in Your Everyday Life

**Food and Film Analysis due Nov 19**
PART VI: YOUR FUTURE IN FOOD

Week 15 (Nov 27 – Dec 3: Studying and Working in Food & Media

We explore opportunities to continue developing your expertise and interest in food, media, and culture. Food studies programs and food and drink careers are on the rise nationally and internationally.

- Institute of Culinary Education (ICE). Careers outside the kitchen.
- Feder, J. (May 13, 2016). 19 insanely cool food jobs that'll make you incredibly jealous. From Thrillist.

Discussion Post 15: Food Job Search

Week 16 (Dec 4- Dec 8): Bringing it All Together

***Food, Media, and Culture: Food and You Essay due Dec 10***