

## ANTHROPOLOGY 3326F-650

### Special Topics in Anthropology – Anthropology of Food

#### COURSE OUTLINE

Fall 2020

**Instructor:** Adriana Premat

**Email:** apremat@uwo.ca

**Credit value:** 0.5 credit

**Mode of delivery:** For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online. It is *asynchronous*, meaning that students will be provided with a variety of lesson materials and activities that can be done throughout the week, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

**Antirequisites:** None.

**Prerequisites:** Registration in third year in any program. *Please note: It is recommended that students have some knowledge of anthropology.*

*Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.*

#### **Course Syllabus:**

For humans, food and the act of eating involves a lot more than just merely meeting biological needs. Food is imbued with meaning, it shapes our bodies and our sense of who we are, as individuals and as members of distinctive communities. Moreover, the production, distribution, procurement, preparation, and consumption of food bind us to others, illuminating ties of solidarity and inequality at the level of the household, the nation, and the world. This course explores the sociocultural dimension of food, encouraging reflection on how it connects to our sense of self, the visible and invisible relations that structure our lives, and the actions taken by some to redress a dominant food system that is variously blamed for food scares, ill health, food insecurity, animal cruelty and environmental degradation.

The course is organized around a set of weekly themes developed through online lectures and required readings. In-lesson questions and guided assignments that include hands-on, multimedia and written components, will be used to encourage students to reflect on course content and arrive at joint insights. Online quizzes will aid in testing student's overall understanding of course materials. Weekly lessons, including assigned readings, audiovisual material, asynchronous group activities, and quizzes should be completed sequentially and following set deadlines.

*A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL site before the first day of class.*

## Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define key concepts associated with the study of food in anthropology.
- Illustrate, via concrete ethnographic examples, how food connects to one's sense of self and the creation and maintenance of social boundaries.
- Trace how our food consumption connects us to other places, environments and people.
- List the weaknesses and advantages of a globalized food system.
- Describe, via concrete examples, contemporary consumption practices and political struggles that aim to redefine our dominant food system.
- Critically assess the role of governments in ensuring or preventing the attainment of food security, food justice and food sovereignty.
- Apply key concepts associated with food studies to their own experiences.

## Course Materials:

Registered students will be able to access course readings through the course site in OWL before the first day of class.

## Evaluation:

Introductions	2%
Assignments I	15%
Assignment II	20%
Assignment III	20%
Quiz I and II	20% (10% each)
Quiz III	13%
Participation	10%

### *Introductions – 2%*

Exchanging ideas with peers is an extremely important component of learning and, for this reason, during the course students will be required to join in asynchronous online discussions and brainstorming sessions. In order for the professor to assign students to a discussion group, they must sign into VoiceThread prior to Friday September 11th. All they need to do is give their name and briefly tell the class what their favorite food or dish is and why they like it (taste, convenience, personal connections, cultural associations, fond memories, etc.). Students will be asked to take the time to listen to their classmates' introductions before they make their own entry and will be invited to engage with them by integrating some of their comments. Since students will be working closely with classmates over the duration of the course, this exercise provides a good opportunity to start building connections.

### *Quizzes I and II - 20% (10% each)*

Approximately every four weeks up to week 8, students will be required to write a non-cumulative online quiz that will be based on the readings and lecture material covered over the current and the previous three weeks. Each quiz should take approximately no more than an hour to complete (times will vary depending on the type of questions included). The quizzes may involve a mixture of true and false, fill-in-the blank, multiple choice and short answer questions. Each quiz will be worth 10% of the total course grade. Given the flexibility of these online quizzes (you have a about

a week to complete it) extensions will not be granted beyond the stipulated deadlines (October 4 and October 30).

#### *Final Quiz – 13%*

The final quiz will take place during the examination period scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Students will be required to write a cumulative online quiz that will be based primarily on the readings and lecture material covered over the current and the previous three weeks. This quiz should take approximately an hour to complete (time will vary depending on the type of questions included) and may involve a mixture of true and false, fill-in-the blank, multiple choice and short answer questions.

#### *Participation – 10%*

At five different points in the course, students will be required to submit comments or respond to one or two survey questions for which there is no wrong or right answer. The intention of these questions is to assess the knowledge base of the group and to encourage further reflection and debate on lesson topics. Your answers will count towards 0.5 of your total participation grade.

#### *Assignment I: The Pantry – 15%*

Anthropologists interested in food consumption often pay attention to mundane activities and objects most of us take for granted and which are an integral part of our daily routines. This assignment gets students to consider their personal food habits or dietary "traditions" paying attention, among other things, to material culture. The intention here is to get students to actively reflect on what they have learnt from course readings and lectures on the concepts of foodways, cuisine, and commensality. This assignment has three parts which include poster design, participation in a group discussion using Voicethread and the writing of a short (750 word) reflection paper. Students will begin working on part 1 of the assignment on Week 2 and will complete the full assignment by October 11 at 11:55 pm. More detailed guidelines on this assignment will be provided in the syllabus posted on OWL.

#### *Assignment II: Our Food in Broader Perspective - 20%*

Although many anthropologists today still work with clearly identifiable "local" communities, most ethnographic work pays attention to how the lives of research subjects are shaped by a broader context that involves distant places and actors. In this assignment, students are asked to reflect on the way in which, through their food consumption practices, they are connected to other people and other places and to the "invisible" market. The objective here is to get students to apply key concepts covered in this course (e.g. food system, food regimes, flexible labor markets, food sovereignty, ethical/moral consumption, consumer agency, etc.) to discuss their diet in a broader socioeconomic context, reflecting on the global connections that have been revealed by the recent pandemic. This assignment has four parts and involves online research on an ingredient used frequently by the student, the posting of a newspaper article on migrant farm workers in Canada, a related group discussion on Voicethread, and the writing of a 750 word reflection paper. Students will commence working on the assignment on Week 6 and will submit the final reflection paper on November 13 at 11:55 pm. More detailed instructions on this assignment will be provided in the syllabus posted on OWL.

#### *Assignment III: Shopping and Eating During the Pandemic - 20%*

Covid19 has changed our lives in myriad ways. In this exercise students will explore the extent to which their diet, as well as their food procurement, food preparation and food consumption experiences have changed during the pandemic. This exercise has four parts that include keeping a

food diary for an entire week, posting a newspaper article dealing with food shortages and food production challenges during the pandemic, participating in a related group discussion through Voicethread, and writing a reflection paper on shopping and eating during the pandemic. Students will begin working on this assignment on Week 10 and will submit their final reflection on the last day of classes (December 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:55 pm) More detailed instructions on this assignment will be provided in the syllabus posted on OWL.

Note that the above course assignments are broken up into component parts in order to help students prepare for their reflection papers through the guided completion of smaller, preliminary tasks, including the collection of additional material and insights derived from focused group debates.

### **Required Readings**

The number of pages you will be expected to read for this course will vary from week to week and will depend on the time taken up by other lesson material (e.g. audiovisuals, debates sessions, etc.). In general, you will read from 30-45 pages a week.

### **Audiovisual Material**

The lessons include a range of audiovisual materials, which are an integral part of the lesson. You will be tested on this material via the quizzes, debates, and written assignments.

### **Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course**

In order to pass this essay course, students must submit and receive a passing grade on the three written assignments required for the course.

### **Consultation with Instructor and Teaching Assistant**

*The instructor will hold regular office hours in the virtual class meeting room, which can be accessed through Collaborate in Owl. Once in the virtual room, you will be able to ask questions of the instructor. If you wish to ask your questions privately, let the professor know so she can put you into a separate virtual room.*

*If you need to ask a question outside of office hours, please, follow the piazza link given at the top of the course syllabus posted in OWL. Post your question there for everyone to read. The professor or teaching assistant will do their best to reply to your message within two working days.*

### **Statement on Seeking Academic Consideration:**

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

### **Academic Integrity - Statement on Plagiarism:**

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

All required papers for the above mentioned assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source

documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com).

### **Technology/Equipment**

This is an online course and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have the right computer equipment, internet connection, browser, skills, etc., to complete course lessons and assignments. The professor or teaching assistant will not answer questions related to technology. If you run into technical difficulties, please, contact Western Technology Services or OWL help.

### **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see: [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

[Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if

their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

### **Institutional Statements and Policies**

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in Western's academic policies by clicking on this link: [Western's academic policies](#)

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