FST 1000H: Comparative Research Methods in Food Studies

Instructors: Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann
Date: Thursdays, 10:00-12:00pm
Location: Room 240, 725 Spadina Avenue (with 2 meetings scheduled at UTSC kitchen)
Term: Fall 2019

This course introduces key multidisciplinary methods in the study of food, its production, distribution, and consumption. It uses approaches in the humanities and social sciences to understand the dynamics of the global food system, as well as the ways that food shapes personal and collective identities of race, class, gender, and nation. This is a core course for the Collaborative Specialization in Food Studies.

Readings:
The readings for this course have been identified by Culinaria faculty; it is a co-designed syllabus. Each week, we have chosen 3 articles and additional recommended readings (with a couple of weeks set aside for visitors and one for in-class presentations of your research). We have identified articles that allow for a discussion of contrasts and comparison across disciplines and the articles are grouped by both ‘keywords’ and ‘key methods’. In addition, they raise the important question of ‘whether there is by now or should be ever a distinct food studies methodology’. Is this, instead, an interdisciplinary area of enquiry that deploys different disciplinary approaches to similar questions and similar kinds of data and evidence?

The goal of this course is also to highlight ‘food studies’ as it is practiced at the University of Toronto (is there a University of Toronto ‘school’ of food studies?). In introducing the vast sweep of methods and questions in the study of food, we have focused especially on the work of Culinaria faculty, postdocs, grad students, and alumni.

All readings are available on Quercus.

Assignments:
This is an intensive reading, writing, and discussion course. All students are expected to complete the required reading each week and should expect to participate in each and every classroom discussion.

We will take turns helping to facilitate discussion by coming prepared to share a list of discussion questions. For the week that students help lead discussion, and will do a very short (e.g., 5 minute maximum) opening presentation (with or without power point slides). They will prepare a literature review essay on the assigned essays for the week as well as the recommended readings. The essay should be 6-8 pages and is due after the class (please submit by midnight).
On the “taste and tell” week, students (and instructors) will bring in a food (or food visual / photograph / power point show) to share with the class. The objective here is to connect a personal food experiences with its sensorial dimensions and relevant scholarly concepts/ideas.

Students will have a choice for the main writing assignment. You may write a classic research paper that explores an empirical food-related theme in relation material encountered in the course readings. We also welcome book reviews, research proposals, and literature reviews as final course papers. Some may choose a more creative approach and prepare a project of equivalent depth and breadth (e.g., podcasts, exhibits, review essays, white papers, etc.). Students’ assignments should specifically raise a question directly related to their own research interests. Part of the challenge of this main writing assignment is to ask new and original questions that might reshape the way scholars conceptualize food studies. We are open to other final assignment ideas; plan on meeting with us early on in the semester to customize your project.

Breakdown of assessments:
Discussion Facilitation = 5%
Literature Review essay = 20%
Participation = 20%
Taste & Tell presentation = 5%
Research Prospectus or Research Paper = 50%

Evaluation and Late submissions
For both undergraduate and graduate courses, instructors are not obliged to accept late work, except where there are legitimate, documented reasons beyond a student’s control. In grad classes, a late penalty is normally not appropriate. If there is a medical reason for a late or missed submission, medical documentation is required.

Weekly Breakdown

Week 1 September 12th: INTRODUCTION
Class meets to decide on schedule for upcoming discussion facilitations.

Required:

Week 2 September 19th: Food and Nation
Keywords: (National) identity, community, cuisine, gender, cookbooks, recipes
Key methods: Archival research; material culture; textual and visual analysis
Required:


Recommended:


Week 3 September 26th Food and Place

*Keywords*: Mobility; temporality; diet; tourism; taste; edibility

*Key Methods*: Sensory studies; textual analysis; social survey

Required:


Recommended:


**Week 4. October 3rd. Eating Animals**

*Meeting place: UTSC Kitchen*

**Keywords:** meat, disgust, responsibility, ethics, masculinity, meat paradox  
**Key methods:** (auto)ethnography, interviews, quantitative analysis, psychological experiments


**Recommended:**


**Week 5. October 10th: Local Food in a Global Era**

**Keywords:** Identity, temporality, spatiality, mobility, qualification, distinction, tradition, cultural institutions, alternative food movements, authenticity, sustainability, community  
**Key Methods:** Participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, textual analysis

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 6. October 17th: Eating Green: Food & Sustainability**

Attend food-related sessions at the UTM Conference on Sustainability. Details TBD. [https://sttpaconference.com/](https://sttpaconference.com/)

**Week 7. October 24th: Food, Class and Status**

**Keywords:** Distinction, authenticity, consumption, health, identity, class  
**Key methods:** Discourse analysis, survey data, interview data

**Required:**  


**Recommended:**  


**Week 8. October 31st: Food, Empire, and Post-Coloniality**

**Keywords:** Empire and commodities; labour, gender, & mobilities; food security & justice; kitchens, cookbooks & gardens; raced, 'ethnic' & vernacular foodways; street food provisioning & legislation

**Key Methods:** Archival research, textual and visual analysis, oral histories, food and digital media, reading recipes and images, collecting cookbooks

**Required:**

Sharma, Jayeeta. “‘British Science, Chinese Skill, and Assam Tea: Making Empire’s Garden,’ Indian Economic and Social History Review, 43 (4, 2006): 429-455


**Recommended:**


**Week 9. November 7th: Taste & Tell Week**

This week, course participants and instructors will bring in a food (or photograph / power point show) to share with the class and to connect to a food-related research theme. Coffee and tea will be provided.

**Week 10. November 14th: Food, health and bodies**

**Keywords:** Health foods, science, expertise, nutrition, boundaries, power, gender, body

**Key methods:** Archival research, material culture, history of science, medicine and technology, Science and Technology Studies
Required:


Recommended:


Week 11. November 21st: Food on the Move

**Keywords:** Mobility, culinary infrastructure, migration, markets

**Key Methods:** Archival research, spatial analysis, social and cultural history

Required:


Recommended:


**Week 12. November 28th: Cooking Food**  
*Location: UTSC kitchen space*


**Other Important Information**  
**Academic Integrity**

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean’s office for adjudication. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Students are expected to cite sources in all written work and presentations. See this link for tips for how to use sources well: (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize).

According to Section B.I.1.(e) of the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* it is an offence “*to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.*"

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university’s rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/code/the-code-of-behaviour-on-academic-matters) and *Code of Student Conduct* (http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Students may be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.
Accessibility Services
It is the University of Toronto's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council “Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities” at http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppnov012004.pdf.

Equity and Diversity Statement
The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

Additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto is available at http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca.