



University of
New Haven

Food Systems in a Globalized World

Section I: Course Overview

Course Code: ANT345

Subject Area(s): Anthropology

Prerequisites: None

Language of Instruction: English

Total Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

Course Description

This course explores the various and articulated connections between food systems and globalization. It analyzes the global food scene from an historical, political, economic and cultural perspective with a focus on Mediterranean diet, public health, migration, food production, distribution and sustainability, as well as Italy's role in the global food economy. Furthermore, it explores the global threats of industrial food production from a public health perspective, compares the major health problems in Italy with global health trends, and focuses on public health initiatives to tackle obesity, overweight, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer – all of which have become major public health issues in a globalized world. Special focus is given to the recent epidemic of Covid-19, its relationship with industrial food production and its impact on the global food systems.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:

- Explain the concept of globalization and its role in the development of Italian gastronomy within a globalized world
- Identify the global threats of industrial food production
- Critically analyze the relationship between food and health within different cultural and social systems

- Evaluate the sustainability of food items via information regarding the origin, production method and the labeling of different foods.

Section II: Instructor & Course Details

Instructor Details

Name: TBC

Contact Information: TBC

Term: TBC

Course Day and Time: TBC

Office Hours: TBC

Grading & Assessment

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

Engagement - 20%

Mid-Term - 25%

Assignments - 20%

Final Exam - 25%

Final Project - 10%

Assessment Overview

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Forms of assessment may be slightly modified in the term syllabus.

Engagement (20%): Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the CEA CAPA Engagement Policy, and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement is graded.

Mid-Term (25%) and Final Exam (25%). The two exams consist of:

- Questions with multiple choice answers related to all the content covered in class discussion.
- Essay writing on the content covered in class, including field visits, and readings.

Assignments (2x 10%=20%):

Assignment 1 Reaction paper (individual) – 10%

Students will submit a reaction paper of 500 words about a video screened in class and will include references to the content and readings of the course.

Assignment 2: Visit to a food business (in groups) - 10%

Students will visit a sustainable business (the selected business can be a farm, store, restaurant, cafeteria, or factory) and will analyze it through the sustainability reference criteria that was previously presented in class. A PowerPoint file must be uploaded individually on Canvas by the specified due date and will present their findings to the class.

Final Project (in groups) - 10%

In groups, students will choose a food item and will analyze its life cycle by evaluating its social, economic, and environmental sustainability. They will also examine its supply chain from farm to processing, to distribution, retailing, consumption and disposal.

Students will prepare a PowerPoint presentation that includes at least 10 slides with text content and images (videos are optional – if included, they should not exceed 3 minutes per presentation). Additionally, at least 5 scholarly sources (i.e. books, chapters, and articles in peer-reviewed journals) should be cited.

Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Visiting sustainable food businesses
- Visiting local food shops
- Discovering unconventional and off the beaten path food enterprises
- Product specific master classes

Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

Required

Counihan C., *Around the Tuscan Table. Food, Family and Gender in the 20th Century Florence*, Routledge, 2004

Dernini S. and Berry E., *Mediterranean Diet: from a Healthy Diet to a Sustainable Dietary Pattern*, *Front. Nutr.*, 07 May 2015, *Sec. Nutrition and Sustainable Diets Volume 2 - 2015*

Food and culture in Italy, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2004.

Food Policy Coalition, Food Environments & EU Food Policy: Discovering the role of Food Environments for Sustainable Food Systems, 2021 https://foodpolicycoalition.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Food-Environments-for-SFS_EU-FPC.pdf

Food Policy Coalition, Policy recommendations: Using Procurement for a Systemic Food Transformation, 2022, <https://foodpolicycoalition.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Public-procurement-Policy-recommendations-DEC-2021-final.pdf>

Food, The MIT Press Essential Knowledge series, 2019.

Harvard School of Public Health, Healthy Food Environments: How eating well becomes the easy choice <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-prevention/food-environment/healthy-food-environment-recommendations-for-obesity-prevention-complete-list/>

HLPE. 2020. Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030, <https://www.fao.org/3/ca9731en/ca9731en.pdf>

Hoffman R., and Gerber M., The Mediterranean Diet, Br J Nutr. 2015,

IPES Food, From uniformity to diversity, Outcomes of specialized industrial farming, 2016

Leitch A., “Slow food and the politics of virtuous globalization” in Food and culture: A reader by C. Counihan and P. Van Esterik, New York, Routledge, 2012

Marani, P. “Gluten: Public Enemy?” 2021

Nestle M., What to eat, Macmillan Publishers, 2010,

Parasecoli F., Al dente: A history of food in Italy, Reaktion Books, 2014.

Pollan M., In defense of food, an eater’s manifesto, Penguin books, 2009.

Slow Food, European Quality Schemes, Between Identity-Shaping Values and the Market, brief https://www.slowfood.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ENG_IGcuredmeatstudy2021.pdf

Slow Food, If biodiversity is alive so is the planet, position paper summary, 2021 https://www.slowfood.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Short_Version_EN_Biodiversity_Paper.pdf

Sobal J., Food in Global History. Food System Globalization, Eating Transformations, and Nutrition Transitions, Routledge 2000, pp.171-187.

Sonnino R, The cultural dynamics of urban food governance, City, Culture and Society Volume 16, March 2019, Pages 12-17

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Milan-Urban-Food-Policy-Pact-EN.pdf>

The omnivore's dilemma: a natural history of four meals, Penguin books, 2007

Wilson B., The Way We Eat Now, Ney York, Basic Books, 2019

Course Calendar

Session 1	
Topics	Food: an introduction

Activity	General introduction Explanation of the syllabus, the structure, and goals of the course. Sociological and anthropological approaches to food. Discussion: How do we choose the food we eat? Which factors influence our food choices?
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sobal, pp.171-187. • Pollan, The omnivore's dilemma, ch. 16, pp. 287-303.

Session 2	
Topics	The industrial food system
Activity	Definition of a food system: the holistic vision. The industrialization of food production. Screening of the documentary “Food Inc” by Robert Kenner.
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPES Food, pp 15-27 • Pollan, In defense of food, ch. 3, pp. 101-136. • 500 words reaction paper to the documentary (option to choose one of the two screenings): deadline week 4

Session 3	
Topics	Sustainability, food safety and food security
Activity	The concepts of sustainability, food safety and food security. How to measure the environmental, social and health impact of the food industry? Joint development of sustainability reference criteria. Screening of the documentary “Gluten: Public Enemy?” by Patrizia Marani.
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parasecoli, Food, ch. 2, pp 27-59. and ch. 4, pp 85-110. • HLPE report, pp 4-16. • 500 words reaction paper to the documentary (option to choose one of the two screenings): deadline week 4.

Session 4	
Topics	Food traditions, globalization and preservation
Activity	The European Union as a case study: the construction and development of the concept of gastronomic heritage, and its preservation through common legislation. History and evolution of Italian gastronomy within a globalized world. Food and wine regulations as a defense of European food identity. Out of Class activity: Visit to Italian food shop with tasting of regional specialty products.
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parasecoli, Al dente, ch. 7, pp 223-250. • Slow Food, European Quality Schemes. • DEADLINE: Reaction paper to documentary Food Inc/Gluten the public enemy.

Session 5	
Topics	Food systems governance: from global to local
Activity	How are food systems regulated. The many levels and layers of food systems and food policies. The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, the EU’s Farm to Fork Strategy, the FAO, Sustainable Development Goals.

	Out of class activity: visiting a local food shop with a focus on sustainability and local food.
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonnino, pp 12-17. • The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

Session 6	
Topics	Fast and slow foods, international goods
Activity	<p>The Slow Food movement</p> <p>The relevance of agri-food biodiversity and its preservation</p> <p>Global value chains (cocoa, coffee, bananas), fairtrade</p> <p>Guest lecture on the coffee supply chain: the conventional and the alternative</p>
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leitch, pp. 409-425 • Slow Food, if biodiversity is alive

Session 7	
Mid-term Exam	

Session 8	
Topics	Food environments and nutrition transition
Activity	<p>Defining food environments and how they influence the food we consume.</p> <p>Consequences of the industrialization of food production on population's health.</p> <p>Screening: Ted Talk by Mark Bittman "What is wrong with what we eat"</p> <p>In class discussion about food environments</p>
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvard school of public health, Healthy Food Environments article • Food Policy Coalition, Food Environments & EU Food Policy

Session 9	
Topics	Public food procurement
Activity	<p>Food public procurement as a driver for change.</p> <p>School canteens menu: analysis and discussion.</p>
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson, ch. 1, 17-22 • Food Policy Coalition, Policy recommendations • Deadline assignment 2, food business • In class presentation of assignment

Session 10	
Topics	Food and nutrition in Italian schools
Activity	<p>An overview of the Italian food pyramid, nutritional guidelines, overweight, obesity and cardiovascular diseases data.</p> <p>Public health initiatives in Tuscany and Italy to tackle obesity, overweight and non-communicable diseases.</p> <p>Out of class activity: visit to Italian school canteen.</p>
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parasecoli, Food and Culture in Italy, ch.7, Diet and Health, pp 181-204 • Counihan, chapter 8, pp 55-75

Session 11	
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Topics	Thinking about nutrition and dietary recommendations
Activity	Reflection on eating habits Supermarkets: How global and local food systems coexist in an Italian supermarket. Regional, local and global foods presence in supermarkets. In class discussion on Italian supermarkets. Out of class activity: visit to an Italian supermarket.
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nestle, Introduction,3-16 • Nestle, chapter. 1, 17-24

Session 12	
Topics	Mediterranean diet: a global concept with a local origin
Activity	Definitions and interpretations of Mediterranean diet. Historical evolution of MD and changes over the last 60 years in eating patterns and behaviors of the Mediterranean countries. Class discussion to try answering the following questions: is it more than a dietary regimen? Can we define it as an approach, a relationship and an attitude towards food? Can we apply it globally? Does it make sense to implement it in societies where it didn't develop naturally?
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoffman and Gerber, Ch. I, pp S4-10. • Dernini and Berry, pp 1-6 • Upcoming deadline for final project, due next week.

Session 13
Presentation of the final project and review for the exam (part 1)

Session 13
Presentation of the final project and review for the exam (part 2)

Session 14
Final exam

Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

Student Learning & Development Objectives

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration. These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.