ANTH 5365 Food and Culture
Spring 2017

Lecture: Tuesday 9:30 – 11:15AM Venue: NAH 213
MA Tutorial: Tuesday 11:30-12:15PM Venue: NAH 213

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Course Outline
Everyday we eat, and eating is not just natural, it is very cultural. What, how, where and when, and with whom we eat, all convey meanings, and are relevant to social identification. Readings are organized around critical discussion of what makes "good" food good (e.g., tasty, healthy, authentic, ethical, etc.). A primary goal of the course is to provide students with theoretical and empirical tools to understand and evaluate food systems at local and global levels.

Each class is keyed to a set of readings, and it is crucial that students keep up with the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Some lectures will directly engage our readings while others will provide contextualizing historical and theoretical information.

Course objectives
Students having finished the course will:
1. have greater insight into the sources and diffusion of food;
2. obtain a fuller understanding of the relationship between food and many aspects of social life;
3. be able to think analytically about the politics of food;
4. better understand the nature of their own food culture and choices of food.

Course Requirements
1. Class and Tutorial Participation (10%)
2. Tutorial Facilitation (10%)
3. In-class thought papers (10%)
4. Two Assignments (40%)
5. A 8-minute Food documentary or Individual Paper or Group Project (30%)
1. **Class and Tutorial Participation (10%)**

As social and cultural issues about food are omnipresence and anthropology principles are applicable to our everyday life, I hope that you will keep your eyes and ears open and shared your related experiences and views with the class. In order to have a lively and informed class discussion, especially during tutorial sessions, you are required to read the text assigned for each class, prior to attending the class. Your grade for class and tutorial participation depends on how well you raise and respond to questions. I would appreciate you bring in related news and share with us your thought orally or verbally in lectures and tutorials.

2. **Tutorial Facilitation (10%)**

Nine tutorials will be open to class facilitation by a group of students. Sign up for the topic you are interested in in the 2nd Lecture (Week of January 17).

Your cardinal job is to raise critical questions and lead the class to discuss particular issues that your group finds important. Do not summarize the readings. Bring in materials, e.g. a piece of advertisement, news, film clips, songs, cartoons, and feel free to use different formats – role play, debate, games, etc – to facilitate learning. As facilitators, it is important for you to think through these exercises carefully before coming to the class. You have 20-45 minutes for class facilitation, depending on the number of facilitators on that topic.

3. **In-class Thought-Papers (10%)**

You will be asked to write a half-page thought paper at the end of some of the classes, to be graded in a pass/fail style. No right or wrong answers, but opportunity to show your thoughtful engagement with course topics. You can write down some challenging questions or identify a critical element deserving further discussion or research. You can apply your own experience to an issue. Or, you may like to compare and contrast with theories from other disciplines. This is just a simple way to show off your food anthropology chops. Brief and crisp writing style will be appreciated.

4. **Two Assignments (40%)**

*Assignment 1: Food and Power (15%. Due date: Feb. 7)*

Take a photo of a kind of cooked or uncooked food. Write a 1-2-page explanation on how this food can be a response to readings on the topic of “Food, Labor and Power” (e.g. readings on Chicken, vegetables and milk).
Assignment 2: Food and Memory (25%)

a. Writing (20%) 
Choose a portable food item of significance to you in your memory. Write a 3-6 pages description of a food memory, preferably from your childhood. This could be a memory of tasting for the first time, liking/disliking a particular food, or it could be a memory focused on a particular eating event, collective or individual. Pay attention to as many senses as you can invoke to evoke this memory. Interpret its significance to you personally, as well as for what it might reveal about your enculturation into particular food cultures.

b. Presentation (5%) 
Bring this food to class for tasting (around 5-person’s bit-size) and presentation on February 28. Be prepared to speak briefly about your offering for our feast. For ecological reason, bring your own set of utensils.

5. Individual Paper, documentary video or Group Project (30%, due on April 18 9:30am) 
You will need to decide which of the following options you would like to take on or before March 21 (9:30am), when you submit your one to two-page hard-copy proposals.

Option 1: Individual paper (8-12 pages).
Using the analytical tools you acquire and the anthropological distance you have gained throughout the course from your own ideas of food and culture. Write a short paper on a topic we have covered in this course. You are expected to use the analytical tools and critically apply the concepts you learn in the course in your writing. Submit a hard-copy to our general office.

Option 2: Individual 8-minute Documentary micro-film with a film summary
Choose a socio-cultural phenomenon on food related to a theme you have learnt in this course (e.g. food and beauty). Using the analytical tools you acquire and the anthropological distance you have gained throughout the course to explain this food culture. You are expected to use the analytical tools and critically apply the concepts you learn in the course in your 8-minute documentary. Also, explain them clearly in the 5 to 8-page film summary. Submit a CD/USB and hard-copy to our general office.

Option 3: Group project.
You can form groups of 3 to 5 to formulate a research project on a subject of your choice related to any topic we have covered in this course. You are expected to use analytical tools and concepts you learn in the course when conducting this project. Submit a written proposal (3 pages) on or before March 21. The proposal should include the following sections: Objective, research questions, methodology, references, and an interview outline. Presentation of your research takes place on the last class April 18 (TBC). Submit a summary of your research findings (15-page) to our general office before 9:30am on April 18.

Plagiarism
Students are required by university policy to submit all papers to VeriGuide (the Chinese
Topics and Readings

APERITIF

Jan. 10 (L1) Introduction to food and culture: what's the relationship? (No tutorial)


Jan 17 (L2) Food paradoxes and dilemmas (No tutorial)


Jan 24 (L3) Food, Labor and Power


Tutorial readings:


Jan 31 No Class (Happy Chinese New Year!)

THE MEAL: WHAT MAKES GOOD FOOD GOOD?
Feb. 7 (L4)  Good food is culturally authentic

*(Submit first assignment at 9:30am before class starts)*


*Tutorial Readings:*


Feb. 14 (L 5) Good food reminds you of your mother (or homeland or childhood or lover… or somewhere you’ve never been)


*Tutorial Readings:*


Feb 21 (Lect. 6)  Good food tastes good


Peynaud, Emile. "Tasting Problems and Errors of Perception." In *The Taste Culture Reader:*


Tutorial Readings:


Feb. 28 Grand Feast - Assignment Two (Hard copy) due at 9:30am + Presentation (No Tutorial)

Mar. 7 (Lect. 7) Good food makes you look Good


Tutorial Readings:


Wang, Jeanette. 2015. Why people who consume 'fitness foods' often end up eating more. SCMP. July 21.

Mar. 14 (Lect. 8) Good food produces and maintains relationships


494–511.

Tutorial Readings:


Mar. 21 (Lect. 9) Good food is good for your Health
(Subit your proposal at 9:30am before class starts)


Nestle, Marion. 2007. “Afterword: Food Politics: Five years and beyond”. In *Food Politics: How the food industry influences nutrition and health*. Berkeley: University of California Press.


Tutorial Readings:


Mar. 28 (Lect. 10) Good food is natural, pure and sustainably produced


Tutorial Readings:


**April 4 Ching Ming Festival (No Class)**

**DIGESTIVE**

**April 11 (Lect. 11)** Any food is good food if you're hungry and rethinking food "choice"


*Tutorial Readings*


**April 18: Presentation**

*Individual Paper, documentary video or Group Project Due at 9:30am. Submit a hard-copy to General Office.*