

Writing Food Culture

HONORS 326-01, Fall 2023

Course Syllabus



Instructor: Julie Jenner

Meeting Time: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 12:00-12:50 pm

Meeting Place: Doti Hall 105

Instructor's e-mail: jenner@chapman.edu

Zoom Office Hours: email to set up an appointment

Using the focused theme of food with its many facets from farm to table as well as its many cultural and societal dimensions, this writing seminar aims to develop the critical and creative thinking needed to read, write, and dialogue effectively across various contexts, media, and genres. Students engage in creative, analytical, argumentative, researched, and reflective genres of writing throughout the semester. Food writing in its numerous forms and expressions presents students with the opportunity to respond to and interpret texts from diverse disciplinary, historical, and cultural settings, considering issues such as style, cultural bias, and rhetorical impact. 3 credits. *Offered Fall semester. Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor and Honors Director.*



Learning Outcomes

Honors Program

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

- a. obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- b. sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- c. understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- d. developed effective communication skills.

Written Inquiry (WI):

Student establishes active, genuine, and responsible authorial engagement; communicates a purpose—an argument or other intentional point/goal; invokes a specific audience, develops the argument/content with an internal logic-organization; integrates references, citations, and sources materially logically and dialogically, indicating how such forms of evidence relate to each other and the author's position; and composes the text with: a style or styles appropriate to the purpose and intended audience, consistent use of the diction appropriate to the author's topic and purpose, the ability to establish and vary authorial voice(s) and tone(s), a choice of form(s) and genre(s) appropriate to purpose and audience (forms may be digital and/or multimodal), and rhetorically effective use of document design.

Social Inquiry (SI): Students identify, frame, and analyze social and/or historical structures and institutions in the world today.

Course Specific Learning Objectives

Students will:

- hone competence in observation, description, analysis, and narrative.
- develop and discern rhetorical and stylistic strategies that best suit particular arguments, situations, and audiences.
- carry out individualized field observation and research.
- generate story ideas through critical reading and personal experience.
- communicate effectively through writing and multimedia storytelling.
- develop an ability to critique others' writing constructively and to use the same to effectively work collaboratively through frequent group exercises (workshops) and conferences.
- articulate how food itself (and various food media texts) represent and co-produce arrangements of power and categories of identity (such as race, gender, sexuality, and class), including ethical implications.
- critically evaluate connections and disjuncture between our food media history and its present manifestations.
- identify, frame, and analyze social and/or historical structures and institutions related to worldwide food production, processing, and distribution.
- clearly articulate their perspectives regarding the tastes and flavors of foodstuffs, consumption habits, and global food system issues.



Course Components

Meeting Format:

We will meet in Doti Hall 105 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12 am to 12:50 am, unless directed otherwise. Exceptions might include field trips, fieldwork, or individual conferences. Check the updated course schedule on Canvas for special meeting places.

Course Topics:

Food & Culture:

Investigates the role food plays in rituals and traditions specific to various cultures, religions, and ethnicities locally and around the world. We will also consider the cookbook as a cultural artifact and examine more intimately our personal relationship to food.

Food & History:

We will tap into the City of Orange's History Center's archive of food and food industry-related ephemera to understand how a food crop influenced a diverse community and region.

Food & Texts:

Presents a brief history of food writing in the US, surveys the many forms of food writing across media and some of the most common writing techniques and practices used in this extensive genre. Considers connections between contemporary food media and historical examples. We'll examine a number of forms: literary fiction, scientific writing, memoir, personal essay as well as more popular genres such as dietary advice, advertising, food criticism, blogs, food porn, TV, and film.

Food & Social Issues:

Explores the socioecological, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical aspects of what we eat. Some key topics include farming and agricultural practices; food industry (preservation, processing, distribution, selling), urban food growing and selling spaces; organic, vegetarian, and vegan discourse; health and wellbeing; poverty and hunger; US school food system, fast and slow food movements; and cannibalism.

NOTE: A detailed weekly course schedule with in-class activities, field trips, field research, discussion posts, reading/viewing/writing assignments is available on Canvas under the modules for each week. I don't recommend printing out the schedule, as readings, viewings, and assignment due dates are subject to change. Always consult Canvas Modules for the most recent version of the schedule.

Required Course Texts

Please acquire the following texts for the course. Digital versions are fine.

- *The Rhetoric of Food: Discourse, Materiality, and Power*, edited by Joshua Frye (ISBN: 978-041572-756-3)

- *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* by Donna R. Gabaccia (ISBN 0-674-00190-7)
- *Books That Cook: The Making of a Literary Meal*, edited by Jennifer Cognard-Black and Melissa A. Goldthwaite (ISBN 978-1-4798-3021-3)

Other required readings and viewings for the course will be provided on Canvas Modules.

Technology

You will need to bring a laptop or comparable device to each class to engage in Canvas discussions or for other in-class exercises. This course employs features of Canvas. It is your responsibility to learn to use all the web functions that are relevant to the course.

Grade Assessment

- 15% // Preparation+ Participation + Engagement
- 5% // International Food Fair Article/Blog
- 5% // Orange History Archive Research
- 5% // Farmer’s Market Experience
- 5% // Farm/Grocery Story
- 5% // Restaurant Review
- 5% // Food Photo Challenge
- 15% // Food Lit/Media Analytical Essay
- 15% // Food Culture Memoir
- 25% // Cumulative Final Project

100% Total

A-100-94; A- 93-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-84; B- 83-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-74; C- 73-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-64; D- 63-60; F 59-0

Participation+Preparation+Engagement: Your presence is crucial to your success in this class. Because we do a lot of group work, your peers depend on you being present and attentive. You show respect to the writing community by being informed and fulfilling your responsibilities to your classmates. Participation will be evaluated based on your performance in a combination of activities including overall attendance, collaborations, discussions, and Canvas discussion posts throughout the semester.

Attendance

The University recommends as a minimal policy that students who are absent 20 percent of the course should be failed. For this course, you are allowed 3 unexcused absences. I allow for three unexcused absences because I understand how life has a way of sometimes interfering with our regular schedules, so use these absences wisely. For each unexcused absence over the 3 allowed, your participation grade will be lowered 5 grade points. Though I appreciate the heads up immensely, simply telling me in advance that you are going to absent from class does not excuse the absence; it merely explains it. For an absence to be considered excused, official documentation will need to be provided. Some examples of official documentation include a note from the campus health center or a doctor in case of sickness, a copy of the notice in case of jury duty or some other court hearing, or a note from an instructor regarding an absence due to performance or sport. Let me know immediately if you need clarification about the nature of the absence or its documentation. I take attendance at the beginning of class each day.

Tardiness

Tardiness is disruptive to the class and is noted on the attendance roster. I understand having to be late due to unavoidable circumstances; however, if I notice your tardiness becoming excessive or habitual, I will be lowering your participation grade, 3 tardy arrivals being equivalent to one unexcused absence. It is your responsibility to do all assigned reading and work for any missed class sessions, and to contact me via email for class details. All assignments, due dates, handouts, and readings will be posted on Canvas in advance of the class.

Collaborations, Discussions, and Posts

We are a community of writers and learners in this course. You will engage with peers for group discussions, workshops as well as group activities and Canvas Discussion posts assigned throughout the semester. Giving and receiving feedback on works in progress is invaluable to growing as a writer and understanding writing as a social process. There will be times when we will be utilizing the *Discussion* board feature on Canvas to post your responses to peer work and other activities. Content of these posts will range from creative exercises to responses to readings and viewings. This is a community space, so keep in mind that peers will have access as well to the material you post.

You will receive all participation points when you attend class regularly

(not having more than three unexcused absences), are on time, are engaged learners, bring readings and necessary materials to class (this includes laptops and any required texts), avoid distractive use of technology (using phones in class for personal communication), contribute regularly and in an informed manner to the class discussions, successfully collaborate with others, participate in any class activities such as assigned discussion posts and presentations, manifest professional behavior (also in email exchanges), and help others to do all of the above. Your participation grade will count 15% of your grade for the course.

Shorter Composition Assignments: You will be asked to complete 6 short composition assignments that evolve around the social and experiential aspects of the course. Genres include blog entries, articles, reports, archival research, reviews, and photo essays. Each short counts 5% of your grade.

Longer Composition Assignments: You will be asked to complete 2 longer composition assignments, including a Food Lit/Food Media Analytical Essay and a Food Culture Memoir (essay or chapter). Both will count 15% of your grade and will be peer-reviewed before being assessed for a grade.

Cumulative Final Project: This project will take the place of a final exam and is due on the scheduled exam date for the course. You will be asked to *synthesize course materials, experiences, and additional research into a multimedia composition around course-related themes such as health, history, travel, ecology, economics, animal welfare, social change, nutrition, and home cooking*. You will present your project during the last week of classes. This project counts 25% of your grade.

Late Work Policy

As mentioned above, late assignments will not be accepted without an excused absence and an approved extension. You must turn in all assignments on time to receive credit. Writing Project drafts, if late, receive a one-time 10-point penalty that will be applied to graded revision phase of the project. Please note that 10 points will be automatically deducted for any graded assignment not posted at the beginning of class on the due date.

You are required to turn in assignments in their designated areas on Canvas. Don't wait until the last minute to submit work; give yourself extra time in case any problems arise. If by chance you are having any difficulties posting on Canvas that day, send me a copy of your assignment by email, using your student email.

Peer Groups and Workshops

We are a community of writers and learners in this course. You will engage with peers for group discussions, workshop, and collaborative activities. Giving and receiving feedback on works in progress is invaluable to growing as a writer and understanding writing as a social process. I will be providing general guidelines on how to respond to your peers' work during peer review sessions.

Field Work and Trips and Archival Research

There might be days when the class will be conducted outside the usual classroom space and time. For instance, we might meet at The Orange Homegrown Education Farm or in various spaces around campus and Orange's Plaza Circle such as the Orange Library History Center. Locations and times will be announced in advance and posted on the course schedule.

Guest Speakers and Special Events

As needed, I will make space in our course schedule for guest speakers and special campus events that inform the content of the course. Locations and times will be announced in advance and posted on the course schedule.

Individual Conferences

Individual conferences will take place around mid-term. You are required to sign up for a time slot during this week. We will not hold class meetings during these conferencing days, but you are required to complete any readings or assignments as directed in the course schedule. Conferences are an opportunity to discuss any concerns or challenges you are having with the class or with writing in general, or to discuss ideas for projects and revisions. This is the only required conference meeting during the semester; however, please feel free to schedule additional meeting times with me as needed. Your success in this course is important to me.



Additional University Policy

Chapman University's Academic Integrity Policy. "Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx."

Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy. "In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course."

Chapman University's Equity and Diversity Policy. "Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.