

Lecture: Italian 2061
Tu/Th 12:45 – 2:05 PM, Mendenhall Lab 131
Spring 2020

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Office Hours: Tu/We 2:30-3:30 and by appointment

Mediterranean Food Culture
GE Cultures and Ideas, GE Diversity-Global Studies

The “Mediterranean Diet” is regularly the subject of breathless speculation in the press. Can olive oil really make you live longer? Is red wine actually good for you? This course uses the popular image of the “Mediterranean Diet” and the associated Mediterranean lifestyle as the jumping off point for an inquiry into the role of food in Mediterranean culture. We will investigate the role of the culinary in Mediterranean identities and pay close attention to how residents of different Mediterranean countries approach the foods of their neighbors. Does a Greek find Turkish food familiar or alien? What does a Tunisian eat in France? How does what we eat matter? What about when, where, and with whom? We will approach these questions through close readings of fiction, cookbooks, and films about Mediterranean food, which we will supplement with selections from sources on Mediterranean food culture. We will explore culinary metaphors and the relationships between cuisine and language, while discovering what kinds of tools we need to study food as a cultural product.

Books to Purchase (Available at Barnes & Noble OSU)

For Bread Alone, Mohamed Choukri (1846590108)
A Book of Mediterranean Food, Elizabeth David (1590170032)
Garlic, Mint, and Sweet Basil, Jean-Claude Izzo (1609451158)
Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator at Piazza Vittorio, Amara Lakhous (1933372613)
Jerusalem: A Cookbook, Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi (1607743949)

Ebook available through OSU library

Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or, Food and the Nation, Massimo Montanari (0231535082)

Films (on reserve or shown in class)

A Touch of Spice, dir. Tasos Boulmetis (streaming via tubitv, ad supported)
Couscous/The Secret of the Grain, dir. Abdellatif Kechiche (rent through Amazon, YouTube, or Google Play)
Salatah Baladi/Salade Maison, dir. Nadia Kamel (in class viewing)

Readings on Carmen

New York Times articles on the Mediterranean Diet
“Transmissions Interrupted: Reconfiguring Food, Memory, and Gender in the Cookbook-Memoirs of Middle Eastern Exiles,” Carol Bardenstein
Mythologies, selections, “Rhetoric of the Image,” “Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption,” Roland Barthes
Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, And Islamic Law, David Freidenreich, excerpts. (Full text also available through OSU library online.)
How to Eat Well and Stay Well the Mediterranean Way, Ancel and Margaret Keys, excerpts

GE Cultures and Ideas

Goals

Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment, and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.

2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

Satisfying ELOs

Food is a primary driver of identity and culture. Through films and readings drawn from around the Mediterranean, students will learn how identity is expressed through food. They will consider the reciprocal influences between two major modes of thought and cultural expression: food and literature. Students will examine how expectations around food shift and evolve in unfamiliar contexts. Students will formulate responses to these issues in discussion and in long-form writing.

GE Diversity-Global Studies

Goals

Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

Satisfying ELOs

Course materials are drawn from Italy, Morocco, Tunisia, France, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Palestine, and Egypt. Food will be treated as a lens through which it is possible to gain familiarity with another culture. Students will evaluate the differences and similarities between their personal food practices and Mediterranean food culture in oral presentations.

Grading

- 20 points - Participation
- 25 points - Midterm exam
- 25 points - Noncumulative final exam
- 20 points - Group presentation
- 10 points - Close reading exercises

Grading Scale

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|----|--------|----|-------|----|-------|---|-------|
| A | 93-100 | B | 83-87 | C | 73-77 | D | 65-67 |
| A- | 90-92 | B- | 80-82 | C- | 70-72 | E | 0-64 |
| B+ | 88-89 | C+ | 78-79 | D+ | 68-69 | | |

Participation

Participation is evaluated on the basis of your preparedness for class and your participation in discussion. This is not a question of the quantity of your contributions, but their quality. You should come to class each day prepared to speak about that day's reading(s): What was interesting to you? What was problematic? What else did it make you think about? More than responding to the instructor's questions, students should be prepared to react to one another, participating in a conversation with their classmates about the course materials. Students who do not feel comfortable speaking in class may, with instructor permission, submit weekly written responses. See instructor in office hours for details.

Exams

The midterm and noncumulative final exams will share a format. The first part of the exams will ask students to identify passages and explain their importance. The second part will ask students to write a short essay in response to a prompt. Both exams are open-book and open-note. The midterm will be a take home exam; the final will be administered in class during our designated final exam period.

Close reading exercises

Students will be responsible for completing two close reading exercises during the term (one page each). These assignments will introduce students to close reading as a foundational skill for literary analysis. Templates and rubrics will be provided.

Group presentation

After cooking and eating a meal together, each group will deliver a fifteen-minute presentation on group members' own food traditions. In these presentations, students will explicitly link their own practices to those discussed in course materials, interrogating their assumptions and expectations about the role of food in culture. A sign-up sheet will be distributed in the second week of class.

Absences

After the first unexcused absence, each absence will lower your final grade by one third (i.e. from B+ to B, etc.). Absences for religious observance, illness, family emergencies, etc., are excused with proper documentation.

Technology Policy

Turn it off, or don't bring it. Print out pdf readings.

University Policies

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Disability Services

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you

may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614- 292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273- TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Sexual Misconduct/Relationship Violence

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu.

Diversity

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Schedule

N.B.: Readings/viewings should be completed for class on the day they appear on the syllabus

Week 1: Introductions

Jan 7 - Introductions

Jan 9 - *New York Times* articles on the Mediterranean Diet (Carmen)

Week 2: Making the Mediterranean Diet

Jan 14 - *How to Eat Well and Stay Well the Mediterranean Way*, Ancel and Margaret Keys, excerpts (Keys day 1, Carmen)

Jan 16 - Cont'd (Keys day 2, Carmen)

Week 3: The Mediterranean Diet, cont'd

Jan 21 - *A Book of Mediterranean Food*, Elizabeth David (thru p. 27)

Jan 23 - Cont'd (remainder, read narrative but skim recipes); first close reading exercise

Week 4: Jerusalem: A Case Study

Jan 28 - *Jerusalem: A Cookbook*, Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi (thru p. 29 and 318-end)

Jan 30 - Cont'd (remainder, read narrative but skim recipes)

Week 5: Food Theory, Part 1

Feb 4 - *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or, Food and the Nation*, Massimo Montanari (pp. 1-46)

Feb 6 - Cont'd (pp. 46-96)

Week 6: Greek food, Turkish Food, Greco-Turkish food

Feb 11 - *A Touch of Spice*, dir. Tasos Boulmetis

(https://tubitv.com/movies/314066/a_touch_of_spice)

Feb 13 – Cont'd

Week 7: Food and Personal Identity

Feb 18 - *Garlic, Mint, and Sweet Basil*, Jean-Claude Izzo (Part I: The Mediterranean and its Noir)

Feb 20 – Cont'd (Part II: Marseilles); second close reading exercise

Week 8: Memoir

Feb 25 - *For Bread Alone*, Mohamed Choukri (pp. 5-68)

Feb 27 – Cont'd (pp. 69-107, 177-188)

Week 9: Culinary Heritage

March 3 - Midterm due; *Salatah Baladi/Salade Maison*, dir. Nadia Kamel (watch in class)

March 5 – Cont'd

Spring Break: March 9-13

Week 10: Food Theory, Part 2

March 17 - *Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, And Islamic Law*, David Freidenreich (c.s 1 and 2, Carmen)

March 19 – Cont'd (c.s 8 and 9, Carmen)

Week 11: Migration

March 24 - *Couscous/The Secret of the Grain*, dir. Abdellatif Kechiche (rent through Amazon, YouTube, or Google Play)

March 26 – Cont'd

Week 12: Food in the Novel

March 31 - *Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator at Piazza Vittorio*, Amara Lakhous (pp. 1-45)

April 2 – Cont'd (pp. 65-71, 99-129)

Week 13: Food Theory, Part 3

April 7 - *Mythologies*, selections, "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption," Roland Barthes (Carmen)

April 9 – "Rhetoric of the Image," Roland Barthes (Carmen)

Week 14: Conclusions

April 14 - "Transmissions Interrupted: Reconfiguring Food, Memory, and Gender in the Cookbook-Memoirs of Middle Eastern Exiles," Carol Bardenstein (Carmen)

April 16 - Conclusions

Final exam Thursday, April 23, at 2:00 PM.