



CIEE Global Institute – Berlin

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| Course name: | Food, Nutrition, and Culture |
| Course number: | FSCI 3001 BRGE |
| Programs offering course: | Berlin Open Campus (Global and Community Health Track) |
| Language of instruction: | English |
| U.S. semester credits: | 3 |
| Contact hours: | 45 |
| Term: | Fall 2018 |

Course Description

People eat in order to survive. Eating patterns also tell a story of personal preferences, socio-economic status, and cultural or ethnic background. In this class, students will gain insight into the historical background of several culinary traditions in Germany, their role in modern-day multi-ethnic German society, and contemporary issues related to food consumption and sustainability in food supply. Topics such as obesity, eating disorders, food allergies, food regulation, and the rise of the “gluten-free” trend place the themes in a public health framework.

Learning Objectives

By participating in this course, students will:

- Gain insight into the historical roots of contemporary German cuisine and the influence of nutrition on historical events.
- Describe current German and European eating habits and public health concerns including diet-related diseases and food security solutions in comparison to those in the US.
- Describe various aspects of food law and the importance of regulation and inspection in ensuring a consistent and safe food supply.



- Know the basics of food production, distribution, and marketing in modern society and be able to analyze their effects in European and US society and culture.
- Gain a basic understanding of German and US food safety systems and standards as well as new food technology.
- Discuss the claims allowed on product packaging (e.g. “organic”, “GMO-free”, “free range”, or “low-fat”) and debate consumer interests regarding nutrition, ingredients, and allergy labelling standards.
- Understand the interrelation of key players in the food industry, including regulatory authorities, corporations, lobbyists, consumer information, and consumer preferences.
- Consider the effects of domestic food policies in the US and Europe on global food production, sustainability, and security.
- Understand current debates over food-related issues and international trade agreements such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

This course is taught through lecture, guest lecture, discussions and small group or individual assignments. Audiovisual material and site visits in Berlin will be used to augment the learning experience. The student seek additional guidance during office hours (TBD) or by scheduling an appointment with the instructor via Canvas.

Assessment and Final Grade

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| Class Participation | 15% |
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| Food Journal | 20% |
| Short Assignments and worksheets | 30% |
| Final Exam | 35% |

Course Requirements

Participation

As part of your work in this course, students should demonstrate learning beyond the submission of written assignments or presentations. As such, all students receive grades based upon participation.

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students receive grades based upon their contributions both in the classroom and in the Canvas course.

Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed by the Instructor, in advance of each class session. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials where directed.

This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Each student is required to attend all sessions of the course and to participate actively in class discussions and during excursions. Active participation includes careful preparation of all assigned materials, thoughtful contributions to discussions in class, on excursions, on Canvas, and punctual attendance. (See the section on attendance below.) There might be a few in-class quizzes based on the readings. In addition to not attending class, you might lose points for being late, unprepared, distracted, etc. No texting or social media use in class, please.

Homework Assignments

For each class, there will be short readings and (usually brief) written reactions to be submitted through Canvas and shared with the class. The readings and assignments are the foundation for each class session and it is crucial for the



success of the class and everyone's learning to prepare for each session and submit the assignments on time and before class. Please take thorough notes when reading the texts so that you can refer to them during discussions. (You might want to print out the texts.) Assignments must be submitted on Canvas by 1 pm on the day of class (unless otherwise noted). They will be graded according to thoughtfulness of analysis and argument, engagement with the texts, as well as grammar, spelling, and style. Late assignments will not receive credit.

Mid-term Exam

In-class, written exam. Mix of short-answer and essay responses. The midterm exam will consist of material covered during the first three weeks of class, including the readings assigned for those weeks and the in-class discussions.

Presentation

The final will be a project, conducted in teams assigned by the instructor. Your group will analyze a current food trend represented by a specific site in Berlin (eg Coffee Barn in the Café Kranzler; vegetarian butchery in Bergmannstr.) and address nutritional, historical, sociological, cultural aspects. You will present your results in class in sessions 14 and 15. Detailed instructions and ideas for topics will be handed out in the second week of class.

Incompletes

All incomplete work will receive no credit and cannot be made up. Students with verified medical or other excused absences may have opportunities to make up missing work according to CIEE policies.

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course sessions will also result in a lower final grade.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and



count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

An absence in a CIEE course will only be considered excused if:

- a doctor's note is provided
- a CIEE staff member verifies that the student was too ill to attend class
- satisfactory evidence is provided of a family emergency

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

| <i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i> | <i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i> | <i>Minimum Penalty</i> |
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| Up to 10% | 1 | No academic penalty |
| 10 – 20% | 2 | Reduction of final grade |
| More than 20% | 3 content classes, or 4 language classes | Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion |

Weekly Schedule



NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

Session 1: Orientation

Introductions

Syllabus discussion and course overview

Tips for success: evaluating resources and multimedia, policy-related study and writing habits

Overview of major food studies topics:

- Food security: Who eats? 7 billion consumers and the right to food
- Agriculture, food production, and processing: How is food made today?
- Food safety: Could the food I eat make me sick?
- Environmental considerations and sustainability
- Public health policy and nutrition guidelines

Overview of the “farm to fork” food production supply chain

Assignment for next class:

- 1) Read Ursula Heinzelmänn, *Beyond Bratwurst*, excerpt on Canvas.
- 2) Eat three typically German food items and write down what they were, where you ate them, and your knowledge or impression of the cooking style. (One meal in a restaurant could have all three.)

PART I: Food history and sociocultural significance

Session 2: German food traditions and their origins

Guest speaker TBA

German and European consumer preferences and purchasing habits

Assignment:

Read Ursula Heinzelmänn, *Beyond Bratwurst*, excerpt on Canvas.

Session 3: Excursion to Marheineke Markthalle

Shopping for food abroad

“Food Marketing and Culture” Worksheet (in class)

Assignment:

Read Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*, excerpt on Canvas



Session 4: American cuisine from frontier chili to frozen pizza

Cooked episode screening and discussion

American consumer preferences and purchasing habits

Assignment:

- 1) Read Michael Moss *Salt, Sugar, Fat*, excerpt on Canvas
- 2) Begin “Food Tracking Worksheet” on Canvas, for which you record everything you eat or drink until session 7. Calculate how many calories, how much salt, fat, and protein you are currently consuming daily, using USDA Food Tracker (<https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodtracker.aspx>). This information will not be shared with the class (unless the student volunteers it).

Session 5: Excursion to Markthalle Neun

“Fusion”-cuisines and the intermingling of culinary culture

Recipe research and brainstorming for next food journal entry

Assignment:

Read Parke Wilde, *Food Policy in the U.S.*, Ch. 8, “Dietary guidance and health,” pp. 133-138 and 147-148.

PART II: Government regulation of food consumption and production

Session 6: Nutrition Basics

USDA Dietary Guidance

Chronic nutrition-related illnesses (such as diabetes and coronary heart disease)

Online health resources; USDA MyPlate & Supertracker

Assignment: Read from Michael Pollan, *In Defense of Food*, “The Age of Nutritionism”, pp. 19-32

Session 7: Food security and support in the western world

Federal entitlement programs and school lunch programs

Guest lecturer from *Die Tafel* (German charitable food distribution organisation)

Assignment:

- 1) Begin 4-day SNAP Challenge (complete any time, due via Canvas before Final Exam Review session)
- 2) Read Parke Wilde, *Food Policy in the U.S.*, Ch. 7 “Food safety,” pp. 114-132 by Session 9



Session 8: Excursion to dairy farm *Die Gläserne Molkerei*

(Spreewald, just south of Berlin)

Session 9: Food Safety and Standards

PBS documentary “The Trouble With Chicken” (1 hour)

The European Food Safety Authority and inspection system

Certifications and licensing agreements

Assignment: Complete “Trouble With Chicken Quiz” on Canvas (20 questions)

Read Parke Wilde, *Food Policy in the U.S.*, Ch. 6 “Food Retailing and restaurants”,

pp. 95-98 and 105-108

PART III: Eating well for personal health, community, and planet

Session 10: Buying food products from around the world

How to read food labels

U.S. and EU health claims — can POM say a product “cheats death”?

Assignment: Read Parke Wilde, *Food Policy in the U.S.*, Ch. 3 “Food production and the environment,” pp. 35-48

Session 11: Sustainable food production and voting with your wallet

Genetically engineered crops vs. the EU Precautionary Principle

Pesticide, hormone, and antibiotic use

Food, Inc. excerpt screening and discussion

Assignment: Read Parke Wilde, *Food Policy in the U.S.*, Ch. 4 “Food and agricultural trade”, pp. 56-65 and 69-72

Session 12: International trade in food and agricultural products

Guest speaker from U.S. Embassy

Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership — what are Germans so upset about and why?

Pros and cons of “eating local”

Session 13: Final Exam Review



4-day SNAP Challenge due

Session 14: Final Exam (2-3 hours, multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions)

Readings

- Aschemann-Witzel, Jessica et al. "Effects of Nutrition Label Format and Product Assortment on the Healthfulness of Food Choice." *Appetite* 71 (2013) 63-74.
- Biesalski, Hans Konrad. *Hidden Hunger in the Developed World*. Berlin: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2013.
- Heinzelmann, Ursula. *Beyond Bratwurst*. Reaktion Books (2014).
- Milio, Nancy, and Helsing, Elisabet, eds. *European food and nutrition policies in action*. WHO Regional Publications, European Series, No. 73 (1998).
- Nestle, Marion. *Food Politics: How the food industry influences nutrition and health*. University of California Press (2013).
- Noah, Lars. "Genetic Modification and Food Irradiation: Are those strictly on a need-to-know basis?" *118 Penn St. L. Rev.* 759 (Spring 2014).
- Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food*. New York: Penguin (2008).
- Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (2006).
- Weinreb, Alice. "The Tastes of Home: Cooking the Lost Heimat in West Germany in the 1950s and 1960s." *German Studies Review*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (May 2011), pp. 345-364.
- Wilde, Parke. *Food Policy in the United States: An Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Routledge (2013).