Course Description
One of the best ways to learn about the Italian people is to examine the history of the country’s gastronomy and its gastronomic traditions. By looking at its individual products and different time periods throughout history together we will gain a greater understanding of Italian history and culture. During our semester together, we will use the food and wine of Italy as a way to discover the history of the country and the dramatic changes from Ancient Rome to modern times. We will gain a greater understanding of how Italian food has been shaped by the history of the country and Food is a key for understanding the past and Italy is especially interesting in this respect since modern Italian identity is based, in large part, on food. Many Italian products have been used by chefs and nonnas alike to compose dishes which are now famous world-wide. By learning about these individual products and how they are made we can gain insight into Italian culture and history. In a number of tasting experiences, power-point based lectures, discussions, films and one field study we will look at Italian food in antiquity, the Renaissance, and more recent times: while also giving a strong grounding in contemporary Italian food culture.

Together we will also study the regional cuisines of the country and more specifically the micro cuisines that exist throughout Italy and the connections they share, examining even further the local food culture of the city of Rome and its historical and cultural significance. The semester will also be punctuated by our study of several raw agricultural products - grapes, wheat, olives, milk - and how and why they are transformed into essential components in the Italian diet: wine, bread, olive oil and cheese. Students will have the opportunity to participate directly in the transformation of these products.

By the end of the course the students will have acquired a more sophisticated understanding of food history as an interdisciplinary approach to studying Italian culture and society and as a frame for analyzing important aspects of Italian history.

Learning Outcomes
On completion of the course students should be able to:

- Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view regarding culinary history
- Gather and interpret information from first-hand sources and scholarly material
- Work with non-traditional historical texts
- Develop a more sophisticated understanding of Italian history through the country’s gastronomy
- Identify how food and drink has shaped Italy today

Required Text / Materials
There are no required texts for this course; all required readings will be on Sakai.

Attendance Policy
In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

*This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.*

**Friday Field Study: Wine and Winemaking L’Orto di Alberico**
This year on **Friday, March 25**, students will travel to L’Orto di Alberico, an organic farm and winery, located on the edge of Rome to learn about winemaking. We will spend the day learning the steps from grape to bottle from the winemaker himself and tasting the wines they produce at the winery, run by Alessia Antinori, whose family has been making wine for more than 500 years. Students will participate in a short cooking class and a light lunch will be served (Via del Fioranello, 34).
*Failure to attend this activity will count as an absence.*

**Cheese Making Demonstration with La Porta dei Parchi**
In this class students will learn first hand how to make cheese. A staff member from La Porta dei Parchi, a dairy farm in Abruzzo which makes mostly sheep’s milk cheese, will show students the surprisingly simple process of turning milk into curds and whey. Students will take part directly in the process and be able to taste the fresh cheese they have made.
*Failure to attend this will count as an absence.*

**Assessment Components**

- Participation 15%
- Regional Presentation 20%
- Roman Neighborhood Essay 20%
- Field Study Essay 20%
- Final Exam 25%

*Class Participation (15%)*
For spirited discussion, we will need your active attention and participation. Class participation grades are not automatic. They are based on oral contributions to the collective learning experience of the class. Participation means active engagement in the course: being consistently prepared for class (having carefully read that day’s assignments), asking questions, responding to questions, offering your own insights and opinions, and attentive listening to others. **Laptops and phones are not allowed in class.** Students who are by nature more reluctant to offer their input will not be penalized; however they are encouraged to participate fully in other aspects of the class.

*Regional Identities in Italian Cuisine Presentation (20%)*
Students will be divided into groups of one or two and will be assigned one of two presentation days (**October 24th and 26th**). Students will be assigned a region of Italy and are asked to present a quick snapshot of your region in terms of its terroir, land, food and wine. Please examine the region’s terroir by discussing how the region’s geography, natural resources and climate have influenced its traditions. Be sure to include at least three of the region’s specialities and their origins.

a. Presentations should last from **8-10 minutes**. A timer will ring at the 10 minute mark and students will be asked to conclude immediately at that point.
b. Students will also be required to hand-in a bibliography of at least 5 sources (at least two scholarly) they used to research their presentation.

c. Grades will be given for the entire group and will be based on preparedness, organization of presentation, did the group demonstrate an understanding of the material, critical thinking skills, did they present coherent/cohesive presentation, taking information from different sources to make something new and did they deliver a clear and concise 8-10 min. presentation.

**Roman Neighborhood Essay (20%)**

Students are assigned to write an essay on one of the neighborhoods throughout the Eternal City (the Jewish Ghetto, Testaccio, or Esquilino). These essays will account for 20% of the final grade. More details to follow. Essays are due **Friday, November 25 at 9 am**.

Students are expected to use correct grammar and spelling in their writing. Failure to do so will result in a max 10% grade reduction.

**Field Study Essay (20%)**

Drawing on their experience at the winery, students are asked to write and research an essay on a topic of their choosing related to their experience at Fattoria del Fiorano. Potential topics may include: wine making, the process of fermentation in wine, organic/sustainable farming, family businesses in Italy, the importance of knowing where our food comes from, etc. These essays will account for 20% of the final grade. More details to follow. Essays are due **Monday, October 3rd at 9 am**.

**Final Exam (25%)**

The final exam is the final step in the sequential learning process the course involves. In this exam you will bring together the various concepts/topics we have studied. The exam will take approximately 120 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed note. It will constitute 25% of the final grade. This is the only time the exam will be given. No alternative exam dates will be offered.

**Grading**

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<thead>
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<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100:</td>
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<td>90-93:</td>
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<td>87-89:</td>
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<td>59 or lower:</td>
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**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml). You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

**Late or Missed Assignments**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. After authorization, late work will incur a 3% percent deduction for every day work is late.
Accessibility Accommodations
Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

Review Session: We will review for the final exam. Students will be divided into groups and give a short five minute review of one of the topics to be covered in the exam. Your performance in these reviews will count in your participation grade. Students are expected to provide a summary/synopsis of what we discussed in class and not read their notes verbatim.

Office Hours: I will be available both before and after class. Alternative times can be arranged but it is always best to make an appointment. We can also be in touch via email if you have difficulties or queries.

Course Schedule

Friday Class Days:
Friday, September 23 - Field Study Day (two regular class days are canceled to compensate for the field study)
Friday, October 21 – Monday schedule

WEEK 1

Monday, September 5: Introduction to the Study of Food
Wednesday, September 7: Modern Italian Food Culture
Required Readings: Dickie: 1-10, Parasecoli 257-276

WEEK 2

Monday, September 12: The Food in Ancient Rome
Required readings: Corbier 128-140; Steel 16-17

Wednesday, September 14: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Whites
Required Reading: D’Agata 279-282

WEEK 3

Monday, September 19: Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Reds
Required Reading: D’Agata 353-358, Parasecoli 258-259

Wednesday, September 21: Field Study prep day
Required readings: Johnson 26-29

Friday, September 23: FIELD STUDY- Visit to L’Orto di Alberico (Via del Fioranello, 34 Rome)
WEEK 4

Monday, September 26: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine - Pairing
Required Reading: D’Agata 111-113

Wednesday, September 28: From the Middle Ages to the Columbian Exchange
Required short film: “1492- Globalization and Fusion Cuisines” located on Kanopy from LUC Library site

WEEK 5

Monday, October 3: Food Practicum: Bread
Required Readings: Franklin 235-241
Field study essay due at 9 am

Wednesday, October 5: The European Food Revolution + Chocolate Practicum

WEEK 6

Monday, October 10: Visit to Trionfale Market
Required viewing: TED talk by Carolyn Steel “How food shapes our cities”

Wednesday, October 12: NO CLASS

WEEK 7

Monday, October 17: Fall Break

Wednesday, October 19: NO CLASS

Friday, October 21: Olive Harvest

WEEK 8

Monday, October 24: Regional Identities in Italian Cuisine Presentation
Wednesday, October 26: Regional Identities in Italian Cuisine Presentation

WEEK 9

Monday, October 31: Olive oil
Required readings: Mueller

Wednesday, November 2: The Risorgimento and Food: Unity Through a Cookbook
Required Readings: Dickie 211-232

WEEK 10
Monday, November 7: Slow Food Film

Wednesday, November 9: Slow Food Discussion
Required Readings: Laudan 134-144

**WEEK 11**

Monday, November 14: The Food of Rome and Lazio & Essay idea discussion
Required Reading: Zanini De Vita 5-18, 57-59

Wednesday, November 16: Cheese-making Demonstration
Required readings: Firebaugh 359-364

**WEEK 12**

Monday, November 21: Cheese practicum: Regional cheese specialties

Wednesday, November 23: The Invention of Italian-American Cuisine
Required Readings: Levenstein 75-90

**WEEK 13**

Monday, November 28: Italian-American food in Big Night (FILM)

Wednesday, November 30: Final Review + bring your laptops to class to fill out course evaluation

**WEEK 14: FINAL EXAM**

Course Bibliography


D’Agata, I. “Native Wine Grapes of Italy”, University of California Press, 2014


