Loyola University Chicago
John Felice Rome Center

Litr 268R: Italian Cultural History: Food & Wine
Course Syllabus
Spring Semester 2017

Practicum/Site visits fee: $90

Course Description
What can you learn about Italian culture through an exploration of the history of food and wine in Italy? By examining the radical changes that have occurred in Italian food-ways, the pronounced differences in eating habits of different socio-economic classes, and the important role played by food in shaping Italian national and regional identities, we will uncover various trends in Italian history and society.

The purpose of this course is to use food and wine as a means for exploring the dramatic political, social, and economic changes that have taken place in Italy since Ancient Rome. 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 framework for analyzing important aspects of Italian history.

In the last twenty years historians have turned with ever more urgency to food as a key for understanding the past. Italy is particularly interesting in this respect. Modern Italian identity is based, in large part, on food. And many Italian 'staples' from pasta to olive oil, from ice-cream to wine, from pizza to risotto, have back-stories that give insights into Italian culture and Italian history. Through a series of class visits, tasting experiences and more conventional power-point based lectures we will look at Italian food in prehistory, antiquity, the Renaissance, and more recent times: while also giving a strong grounding in contemporary Italian food culture.

Course Objectives
This course will ask students to:
— Work with non-traditional historical texts;
— Expand their critical understanding of historical methodologies and engage in analysis by application of those methodologies to specific course topics;
— Integrate theory and practice as it applies to modern-day Italian foodways; and
— Develop a more sophisticated understanding of how historical events are shaped by a combination of economic, political, and social factors.

By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of Italian food culture; demonstrate a historical appreciation of the change in eating and drinking habits in modern Italy, and a knowledge of Italy’s move towards a more ethnic and global taste. Students will leave Italy with a good knowledge of Italian food and wine culture.

Assessment
15% Class Attendance and Participation
20% Blog
25% Mid-Term Exam
15% Presentations
25% Final Exam
Grading
Grading is done on a percentage basis: percentages are rounded up or down.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade Range</th>
<th>Numerical Score Equivalent</th>
<th>Student Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94% - 100%</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90% - 93%</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87% - 89%</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84% - 86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80% - 83%</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77% - 79%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74% - 76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70% - 73%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67% - 69%</td>
<td>Low Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% - 66%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% or less</td>
<td>Fail (no credit)</td>
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Course Requirements
Course grades are based on midterm and final exams, various written assignments (e.g. short essays, journal entries), one group presentation and attendance and class participation.

Class Attendance, Class Participation, Required Readings (15%)  
Attendance: Class Attendance is mandatory. For spirited discussion, we will need your active attention and participation. Attendance (together with class participation and possible quizzes) will count for 15% of the final grade. Missing more than one class (including the final dinner) will result in a 5% reduction of the student’s grade. In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:
- 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.
Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade.

Class 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 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 journal writing and other written assignments, outside of discussions.
**Required Readings:** Required readings are an integral part of this course and should not be considered supplemental. Reading assignments should be done for the class day they are assigned, and may be followed up by short written assignments. See below.

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**Blog (20%)**

All students are required to keep a blog for the duration of the course and may choose from a number of blogging sites (Wordpress, Blogger, Medium, etc.). The blog is intended to provide an opportunity for students to record information and observations (Be specific!) and integrate class readings, discussions, as well as their own personal food and wine experiences throughout the semester. Students are required to write one entry for every class meeting. Blog entries must include:

1. A reflection on a personal food/wine experience or the day’s activity. This can include cultural experiences and observations on Italian eating habits, customs, etc.
2. A one-paragraph response to the day’s reading, completed prior to its corresponding class session and/or answer any assigned questions.
3. Additional notes and thoughts on personal experiences on the topic.

More often not, students will not be assigned specific questions, instead they are required to reflect on the readings, class meetings and personal experiences, searching to weave together their food experiences inside and outside the classroom.

For an example of past blogs, see [https://carleebettleritalytrip.wordpress.com](https://carleebettleritalytrip.wordpress.com) or [http://atasteofitaly.tumblr.com/](http://atasteofitaly.tumblr.com/). Note these blogs were written during a summer course, so you will notice that the content is slightly different than our course.

Students are expected to use correct grammar and spelling in their entries. Failure to do so will result in a max 10% grade reduction. Students are encouraged to use photographs/videos in their entries.

*All work must be completed to pass this course. Any late work will result in a lower grade (3%).

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**Mid-Term Exam (25%)**

An exam covering all topics presented in the first half of the course. It will consist of identification, short answer, and essay questions. The exam will take approximately 75 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed note.

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**Presentations (15%)**

Students will be divided into groups of three or four and will be assigned one of two presentation days. Presentations may cover a variety of topics (not-covered throughout the course of the semester, such as any number of recipe writers, foods such as gelato, the aperitivo or digestivo). Presentations titles may include: Jewish food outside of Rome; the role of women in the culinary traditions of Rome; Lasagne according to a Roman, a Renaissance and a Modern Recipe; Spices from the Romans to the present; the History of beer-making in Italy and its popularity today.

a. Presentations should last from **10-15 minutes.** A timer will ring at the 15 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. Students are required to hand-in a presentation proposal including the title of the presentation and a short paragraph describing what you will discuss in your presentation (at least five sentences) via email by (TBA) but are encouraged to do so earlier.

The review session mini-presentations (see below) will be counted in this part of the grade.

Final Dinner
We will have final dinner at a local restaurant. This dinner –scheduled for (TBA) – will serve as a capstone, highlighting many of the concepts and themes we will discuss during the semester. Students will also have a moment to reflect on their food experiences throughout the semester in and outside of the classroom.
*Failure to attend this dinner will count as one absence.

Final Exam (25%)
The final exam is the final step in the sequential learning process the course involves. In this exam you 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.
The exam must be passed to receive a passing grade in the course. No alternative exam dates will be offered.

Review Sessions
We will review for both the midterm and 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.

Academic Misconduct
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. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism according to the LUC Student Handbook.

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.

Textbook
There are no required texts; all required readings will be in the course reader. Additional reading assignments, both optional and required, may be made available by the instructor.
Course Bibliography

Artusi, Pellegrino. L’Arte del Mangiar Bene.
D’Agata, I. “Native Wine Grapes of Italy”, University of California Press, 2014


