Loyola University Chicago  
John Felice Rome Center  
Litr 268R: Italian Cultural History: Food & Wine  
Course Syllabus  
Spring Semester 2018  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:40-4:55 pm in Sala 6  
Instructor: Elizabeth Simari (esimari@luc.edu)

Practicum/Site visits fee: $90

Course Description
Perhaps the best way to learn about the Italian people is to examine the history of the country’s gastronomy and its gastronomic traditions. By learning about its individual products and different time periods throughout history together we will gain a greater understanding of Italian history and culture.

In this course we will use the food and wine of Italy as way to examine the history of the country and the dramatic changes from Ancient Rome to modern times. 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.

Food is a key for understanding the past. Italy is especially interesting in this respect since modern Italian identity is based, in large part, on food. And many Italian products 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. In a number of tasting experiences, more conventional power-point based lectures, discussions and films 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
By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of Italian food culture and demonstrate a historical appreciation of the change in eating and drinking habits in modern Italy. Students will leave Rome with a good knowledge of Italian food and wine culture.

Assessment
10% Class Attendance and Participation  
20% Blog  
15% Roman Neighborhood Blog Essay  
20% Mid-Term Exam  
15% Presentation  
20% 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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80% - 83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77% - 79%</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74% - 76%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70% - 73%</td>
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Course Requirements
Course grades are based on midterm and final exams, various written assignments (e.g. one short essay and a blog), one group presentation and attendance and class participation.

Class Attendance, Class Participation, Required Readings (10%)

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 10% of the final 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 twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

Unexcused absences (including the final dinner) beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade (by 5%). Arriving (or leaving early) more than 15 minutes late to class counts as half an absence. Therefore arriving 15 minutes late twice counts as one full absence. Absences may be excused in case of an emergency with a note by the doctor or a Student Life Adviser.

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 blog 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.

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 week of our course. Blog entries must be numbered (according to syllabus) and include the following:

1. A reflection on a personal food/wine experience. This can include cultural experiences and observations on Italian eating habits, customs, etc.
2. A one-paragraph response to one of the readings from the week and 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 or http://atasteofitaly.tumblr.com/, https://ciboallestero.wordpress.com/. (Note: the first two 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%).

**Roman Neighborhood Blog Essay (15%)**
Students are assigned to write an essay on their blog on one of neighborhoods throughout the Eternal City (the Jewish Ghetto, Testaccio, Esquilino and Trastevere). Students interested in writing on another neighborhood can discuss their proposal with the professor. These essays will account for 15% of the final grade. More details to follow.

**Mid-Term Exam (20%)**
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.

**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 5:00 pm on **Tuesday, March 13**, but are encouraged to do so earlier.

d. Grades will 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 10-15 min. presentation.

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

**Dinner at a Roman Trattoria**
We will have final dinner at a local restaurant (most likely at Da Cesare al Casaletto). This dinner – scheduled for **Thursday, March 22** – will allow students to reflect on the food of the city they are living in. Closer to the date of the dinner I will give you detailed instructions on how to reach Da Cesare with public transportation. If you are interested, past students have told me that a cab cost less than 20 euros.

*Failure to attend this dinner will count as an absence.

**Final Exam (20%)**
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 20% 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. 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.

Academic Misconduct
This includes all forms of cheating i.e. copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes and plagiarism, i.e. presenting, as one's own, the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation (e.g. papers, presentations, written tests, etc.) without proper acknowledgment. This includes also insufficient or incomplete acknowledgement, or failure to acknowledge a source that has been paraphrased. Loyola University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Essential to intellectual growth is the development of independent thought and a respect for the thoughts of others. I will report students who cheat to the Director for appropriate action, and I will not hesitate to fail students for plagiarism. If you have concerns with any aspect of the course, please feel free to discuss them with me.

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.

WEEK 1

Tuesday, January 16: Introduction to the Study of Food

Thursday, January 18: Modern Italian Food Culture
Required Readings: Dickie: 1-10, Parasecoli 257-276
Write: Blog #1: In addition to your weekly blog, please describe your first impressions and expectations of food; ways of eating; products; markets in Italy. Also include a 1-2 paragraph biography, which must include your major, university, interests, why you are taking this class, hometown, college and if you have visited Italy before.

WEEK 2

Tuesday, January 23: Pasta Practicum
Required Readings: Dickie 13-30, 48-52

Thursday, January 25: The Food in Ancient Rome
Required readings: Corbier 128-140; Steel 16-17
Write: Blog #2

WEEK 3

Tuesday, January 30: Food Practicum: Bread
Required Readings: Franklin 235-241

Thursday, February 1: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Whites
Required Reading: D’Agata 1-5, 111-113, 194-196
Write: Blog #3

WEEK 4

Tuesday, February 6: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Reds
Required Reading: D’Agata 353-358

Thursday, February 8: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine - Pairing
Required Reading: Parasecoli 258-259
Write: Blog #4

WEEK 5

Tuesday, February 13: The Middle Ages
Required readings: Montanari (1999) 165-177
Write: ROMAN BLOG ESSAY DUE TODAY

Thursday, February 15: Food Goes International: The Columbian Exchange
Required short film: “1492- Globalization and Fusion Cuisines” located on Kanopy from LUC Library site
Write: Blog #5

WEEK 6

Tuesday, February 20: Food Practicum: Cheese
Required readings: Firebaugh 359-364

Thursday, February 22: Review for Midterm and blogs due

WEEK 7

Tuesday, February 27: MIDTERM

Thursday, March 1: FILM “Cooked: Earth” by Michael Pollan
Write: Blog #6

WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK (MARCH 2-11)
WEEK 9

Tuesday, March 13: The Slow Food Movement (FILM) + Hand in presentation proposal

Thursday, March 15: Slow Food class discussion + group work for presentation
Required Readings: Laudan 134-144

WEEK 10

Tuesday, March 20: The Renaissance
Required Readings: Dickie 65-76; Grieco 307-313
Write: Blog #7

Thursday, March 22 @ 7:30 pm: Dinner - The Food of Rome and Lazio
Required Reading: Zanini De Vita 5-18
Write: Blog #8

WEEK 11

Tuesday, March 27: Class Presentations
Write: No blog on presentations

Thursday, March 29: Class Presentations
Write: No blog on presentations

WEEK 12

Tuesday, April 3: The European Food Revolution + Chocolate Practicum

Thursday, April 5: The Risorgimento and Italian Unification through Food
Required Readings: Dickie 211-232
Write: Blog #9

Thursday, April 10: Mussolini and Futurist Cuisine
Required Readings: Dickie 270-276; Helstosky 63-81

Thursday, April 19: The Invention of Italian-American Food + blogs due
Required Readings: Levenstein 75-90
Write: Blog #10

WEEK 13
Tuesday, April 17: Italian-American food in Big Night (FILM)

Thursday, April 19: Final Review + bring your laptops to class to fill out course evaluation

**WEEK 14: FINAL EXAMS**
**APRIL 23-26TH**

Course Bibliography

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