Language, Food, and Society (ANTH 01:070:341)
Rutgers University – Spring 2024

Prof: Kathleen Riley
Email: kcr58@rutgers.edu
Seminar time: Thurs 5:40-8:40
Seminar room: RAB 302
Office: RAB 316 or by Zoom
Office hours: Wed 3:00-5:00 and by appointment

Course Description:

In this course, we explore how food is grown and distributed, cooked and consumed, discussed and represented around the world in culturally diverse ways. We look, on the one hand, at the evolution of human societies as a function of their foodways and discourse regimes -- i.e., how staples and delicacies are produced and consumed by some…and not by others…based in part on how we use language to organize our communities. We also consider how food operates as a semiotic resource: we know who we are and who others are by what and how we eat and what we talk about while we eat… Students will engage in culinary fieldwork: tasting dishes, interviewing chefs, and analyzing mealtime discourse.

Course Format:

Lectures, films, readings, discussions, and fieldwork projects. The course syllabus (and revisions to it), assignment guidelines, additional resources, and lecture notes will be posted on Canvas. Written assignments are submitted through Canvas.

Course Learning Goals:

1. To understand parallels in the evolution of food and language throughout human (pre)history
2. To discuss culturally diverse foodways and foodtalk from around the world
3. To examine how access to food is constrained by symbolic as well as material forces
4. To explore food's role as both topic and tool of communication
5. To use cultural and linguistic anthropological methods to analyze discourse through, about, around and as food

Course Assignments (see guidelines below for details)

Assignments – credit (submission)	Course learning goals met by assignments (see list above)	Departmental learning goals met by assignments*
Seminar DISCUSSION threads – 20%	CLG 1,2,3,4	E01, E02, E04
Foodways COLLABORATIONS – 10%	CLG 2,3,4,5	E02, E03, E04
Food presentation – 20%	CLG 1,2,3,4,5	E01, E02, E04, E05
Article presentations – 20%	CLG 1,2,3,4	E01, E02, E04
Foodways-Discourse Project (FDP) – 30%	CLG 2,3,4,5	E02, E03, E04
Extra-credit food news presentations – 5%	CLG 1,2,3,4,5	E02, EO3, E04, E05

*See https://anthro.rutgers.edu/academics/undergraduate/undergraduate-learning-goals for a numbered list of departmental goals.

Assignments in a nutshell (see Canvas for more detailed guidelines)

1. Seminar DISCUSSION thread (20% of final grade)

Read and view the assigned resources (films, articles, textbook chapters…) and respond to the DISCUSSION thread prompts about them (~300 words each). Your 10 best entries will count towards the total grade for this assignment.

2. Foodways photo-journal COLLABORATIONS (10% of final grade)

Contribute one slide each week to the photo-journal COLLABORATIONS. Each week's COLLABORATION will begin with a slide explaining what to investigate about your foodways, foodscapes, and foodtalk. You will respond to these prompts in your slide with textual and visual data. Your 10 best entries will count towards the total grade for this assignment.

3. Food presentation (20% of final grade) - in-depth guidelines in FILES

Sign up to present a dish and a focal ingredient of your choice to the class. This multisensorial presentation should include both a taste test and explanation of the personal significance of the dish (whether homemade or packaged) as well as a researched 15-min slide show about the environmental and ethnohistorical origins of the ingredient and its nutritional and cultural value., You will submit your slide show (with 7+ references) and a written report (~500 words) on Canvas within 48 hours afterwards providing an analysis of the class multimodal responses to your dish and presentation.

4. Article presentations (20% of final grade) - in-depth guidelines in FILES

Each student will be responsible for collaborating with 3-4 other students on thoroughly reading and informing the rest of the class about 4 articles over the course of the semester. The class will be divided into new groups of 4-5 students every 3 weeks; your group ANNOUNCEMENTS and COLLABORATION will be found in PEOPLE. For each presentation, you and your group will read the assigned article for that week and collaborate on producing a 10-minute slide show and leading a short discussion of some of the interesting points afterwards.

5. Foodways-Discourse Project (30% of final grade) – in-depth guidelines in FILES

Step 1: CITI Training Certificate and proposal due 2/29
Step 2: Interview data due 3/21 (5%)
Step 3: Ethnography of SPEAKING and FEEDING data due 4/4 (5%)
Step 4: Annotated bibliography due 4/18 (5%)
Step 5a: Oral presentation 4/25 (5%)
Step 5b: Project report due 5/2 (10%)

6. Extra-credit LFS online COLLABORATIONS (<5% of final grade):

We will be collecting and discussing links to timely articles, websites, youtubes, conferences, etc. related to food and language. Feel free to add to the weekly COLLABORATION slide prior to class whenever you see something of interest. If you choose, you may sign up to give a couple of short (5-min) presentations on any pieces of interest (each presentation is worth a couple of extra points for a max of 5 over the course of the semester). Details can be found in FILES under "assignment guidelines".

Course Outline: (under construction)

The resources for DISCUSSION are italicized. The articles for presentation are ***boldfaced and italicized.*** The FDP due dates are listed in **boldface**.

Date	Topics	Assignments and class activities
1/18	Intro: Linguistic landscapes, foodscapes, and situated foodtalk	*DISCUSSION: Karrebæk et al; film trailers* Food presentation: honey and acorn bread,
1/25 Theresa	Food Inter(activism)	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap.1 and Nabhan* ***Article presentation: Basra*** Food presentation: gleaned food
2/1	Co-evolution and globalization of food and language	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 2; Food Inc.* ***Article presentation: Nyman*** Food presentation: snails in mushroom caps, caribou and cactus salad
2/8	Food-and-language methods	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 3; Babette's Feast* ***Article presentation: Paugh/Izquierda*** Food presentation: breadfruit and coconuts
2/15	Language through Food	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 4; A Place at the Table* ***Article presentation: Bourke*** Food presentation: carbohydrates
2/22	Guest speaker:	*DISCUSSION: Lesh 2019; Secret of the Grain* ***Article presentation: Tuomainen*** Food presentation: carbohydrates
2/29	Language about Food **FDP Step 1 due**	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 5; Wasted!* ***Article presentation: Cavanaugh*** Food presentation: proteins
3/7		*DISCUSSION: Lasater-Wille 2017; Like Water for Chocolate* ***Article presentation: Abarca*** Food presentation: proteins
break		
3/21	Language around food **FDP Step 2 due**	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 6; Kiss the Ground* ***Article presentation: Jarvenpa*** Food presentation: fruits and vegetables
3/28	Guest speaker: Maria Gloria Dominguez (IFNH) – Nutrition and Microbiome	*DISCUSSION: Yount-André 2016; Eat Drink Man Woman* ***Article presentation: Hellman*** Food presentation: fruits and vegetables
4/4	Language as Food **FDP Step 3 due**	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 7; The C-word; In Organic We Trust* ***Article presentation: Krogel*** Food presentation: spices and stimulants
4/11		*DISCUSSION: Patrick et al. 2017; Spirited Away (on reserve)* ***Article presentation: Karrebaek*** Food presentation: spices and stimulants
4/18	**FDP Step 4 due**	*DISCUSSION: LFS Chap. 8* and *Dossa and Dahl* ***Article presentation:***
4/25	**FDP Step 5a presentations**	Potluck
5/2	**FDP Step 5b due**	

Required texts:

Textbook (available at the bookstore and library)

- Riley, Kathleen C., and Amy Paugh (2019) Food and Language: Discourses and Foodways across Cultures. New York: Routledge. https://bit.ly/3fIMVbE

Articles (available in FILES)

- Abarca, Meredith E. (2007) *Charlas Culinarias*: Mexican Women Speak from their Public Kitchens. *Food and Foodways* 15:183-212.
- Bourke, Nicole (2001) Eating Your Words: Communicating with Food in the Ecuadorian Andes. In Joy Handry and C. W. Watson, eds., *An Anthropology of Indirect Communication*. Pp. 85-100. London: Routledge.
- Cavanaugh, Jillian R. (2016) Talk as Work: Economic Sociability in Northern Italian Heritage Food Production. *Language and Communication* 48:41-52.
- Dahl, Bianca (2014) "Too Fat to Be an Orphan": The Moral Semiotics of Food Aid in Botswana. *Cultural Anthropology* 29(4):626-647.
- Dossa, Parin (2013) Structural violence in Afghanistan: gendered memory, narratives, and food. *Medical Anthropology* 32(5):433-47.
- Hellman, Jörgen (2008) The Significance of Eating during Ramadan: Consumption and Exchange of Food in a Village in West Java. *Food and Foodways* 16:201-226.
- Jarvenpa, Robert (2017) "Women Are in the Village and Men Are Always in the Bush": Food, Conversation and the Missing Gender in Northern Dene Society. *Semiotic Review* 5. https://www.semioticreview.com/ojs/index.php/sr/article/view/3/4 Accessed 1/8/22
- Karrebæk MS, Riley KC, Cavanaugh JR. 2018. Food and Language: Production, Consumption, and Circulation of Meaning and Value. *Annual review of anthropology* 47(1):17-32.
- Karrebæk, Martha (2014) Rye Bread and Hallal: Enregisterment of Food Practices in the Primary Classroom. *Language and Communication* 34:17-34.
- Krögel, Alison (2009) Dangerous Repasts: Food and the Supernatural in the Quechua Oral Tradition. *Food and Foodways* 17:104–132.
- Lasater-Wille, Amy (2017) Creating Tastes and Tasting Creatively. *Semiotic Review 5* https://www.semioticreview.com/ojs/index.php/sr/article/view/4. Accessed: 01/08/2022.
- Lesh K. Size Matters: The Values Behind Basque Food, Font and Semiotics. BOGA (Boise, Idaho). Published online 2019. doi:10.18122/boga/vol7/iss1/3/boisestate. Accessed 1/8/22.
- Manning, Paul (2008) Barista Rants about Stupid Customers at Starbucks: What Imaginary Conversations Can Tell Us about Real Ones. *Language and Communication* 28:101-126.
- Nabhan, Gary Paul (2004) Rooting out the causes of disease: Why diabetes is so common among desert dwellers. In Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader, 2nd edition*. Pp. 360-380. New York: Routledge.
- Nymann, Hanne (2015) Feasting on Locusts and Truffles in the Second Millennium BCE. In Susanne Kerner, Cynthia Chou, and Morten Warmind, eds., *Commensality: From Everyday Food to Feast*. Pp. 151-163. London: Bloomsbury.
- Patrick, Donna; Shaer, Benjamin; Budach, Gabriele (2017) Language and territorialization. *Semiotic Review 5* https://www.semioticreview.com/ojs/index.php/sr/article/view/8. Accessed: 01/08/2022.
- Paugh, Amy, and Carolina Izquierdo (2009) Why is This a Battle Every Night?: Negotiating Food and Eating in American Dinnertime Interaction. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 19(2):185-204.
- Tuomainen, Helena Margaret (2009) Ethnic Identity, (Post)Colonialism and Foodways: Ghanaians in London. *Food, Culture, and Society* 12(4):525-554
- Yount-André C. (2016)Snack Sharing and the Moral Metalanguage of Exchange: Children's Reproduction of Rank-Based Redistribution in Senegal. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 26(1):41-61.

Technology requirements and teaching tools (via Canvas):

Please visit the Rutgers Student Tech Guide website here for resources available to all students. If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons, please email the Dean of Students deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/. For this course, we will be relying heavily on the Canvas platform (see here for general instructions on using Canvas) to provide the following:

1. Overview information about the goals, activities, resources, and channels of communication for the course; this information can be found in MODULES, CALENDAR, FILES, and ASSIGNMENTS.
2. Weekly MODULES will include a) an overview DISCUSSION, which will inform you about the activities for the week, , and b) other DISCUSSIONS and COLLABORATIONS for the week's activities.
3. ASSIGNMENTS and GRADES will be used for the submission of some assignments and to post grades for all assignments.
4. ANNOUNCEMENTS will be used to send out unexpected changes to our operating procedures as well as news about relevant events and opportunities.
5. Communication with me should be handled in the following ways: by emailing me using my RU email (do NOT use the BOX on Canvas) or by visiting me during my office hours..

Course Policies

Regular and timely participation in course activities counts heavily as student non-compliance creates havoc for everyone else in the class (not just the instructor!).

- If you are unable to attend class due to any emergency or health concern please use the Self-Reporting Absence Application here: https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ If you have been told to quarantine, or are experiencing symptoms of any transmittable disease, please remain at home and do not attend in-person class meetings. If you are unable to participate in any online COLLABORATIONs or DISCUSSION threads on a given week, email me and notify your group colleagues (if applicable) Alternative assignment opportunities will be available for for all excused absences or assignment disruptions.
    - Seek assistance from a Dean of Students if you anticipate a prolonged period of non-participation.
- Academic integrity and ethical treatment of others is required.
    - Please carefully review the Rutgers website on student conduct here, especially the code of conduct found here.
    - Please carefully review the Rutgers policy on academic integrity here. As discussed in the latter: *Rutgers University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. By enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for familiarizing yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy and the possible penalties (including suspension and expulsion) for violating the policy. As per the policy, all suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to): cheating, plagiarism, aiding others in committing a violation or allowing others to use your work, failure to cite sources correctly, fabrication, using another person's ideas or words without attribution, re-using a previous assignment, unauthorized collaboration, and sabotaging another student's work. If in doubt, please consult the instructor.*

- Plagiarism (i.e., the theft of intellectual property) is not acceptable as stated in the university policies:
    - *Students agree that by taking this course some written work will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com via Canvas for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.*
- You will also be required to sign the Rutgers Honor Pledge on every major exam or assignment as follows: *On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).*
- All course participants should treat other course participants with consideration, bearing in mind that we all come to the table with diverse sensibilities and sensitivities. No topics are intrinsically taboo here, but a) please avoid discussing any named individual's criminal activity in any class interactions or assignments, and b) if there are any topics (such as sexual violence) that you find too difficult to discuss with relative strangers, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can organize the discussion groups appropriately.
- Additionally, we will attempt to establish norms over the course of the semester for HOW to collaborate and engage in discussion with relative strangers in ways that are respectful and mindful of their integrity (e.g., avoiding offensive epithets and "impolite" discourse moves such as micro-aggressions). This can be tricky whether online or off as no one can know everything in advance about what makes someone else feel uncomfortable in interaction. However, we can all attempt to learn in good faith about how to engage in constructive discussions with those who do not share our norms.
- Please note that any form of recording during course activities requires the consent of all participants.

- Disabilities and Accommodations: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of its educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, please visit the Office of Disability Services here. Share the resulting Letter of Accommodation with me as soon as possible so that we can make the appropriate adjustments in a timely fashion.

Additional resources for academic success at Rutgers:

- Learning Centers: https://rlc.rutgers.edu/
- Academic Advising for SAS students: https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/advising/advising
- Student Success resources: https://success.rutgers.edu/
- Tutorials for using Online Learning Tools (eg., Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath, and RefWorks) can be found through the RU Libaries here: : http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/tutorials

STUDENT-WELLNESS SERVICES:

Report a Bias Incident If you experience or witness an act of bias or hate, report it to someone in authority. You may file a report online and you will be contacted within 24 hours. The bias reporting page is here.
Bias is defined by the University as an act, verbal, written, physical, psychological, that threatens, or harms a person or group on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, atypical heredity or cellular blood trait, military service or veteran status. **Click here to report a bias incident**

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/
http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/ CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Crisis Intervention : http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/crisis-intervention/

Report a Concern: http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / https://ods.rutgers.edu/
Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.