CIEE Berlin, Germany

Course title: Food, Nutrition, and Culture
Course code: FSCI 3001 BRGE
Programs offering course: Global Architecture and Design, Semester Global Internship, Berlin Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Global and Community Health
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring Block I 2020

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 completing this course, students will:

- Examine the historical roots of contemporary German cuisine and the influence of nutrition on historical events.
- Discuss nutrition basics, contemporary food guidelines and how they have changed over time.
- Investigate the Berlin culinary scene.
- Relate marketing and production practices to their influence on food choice.
- Evaluate how governments and trade policies influence nutrition practices.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

This course is taught through short lectures, discussion of the assigned readings, and partner and group work. Active student participation is crucial for the success of the course. That includes careful preparation of the readings and other assigned homework. We realize that the 6-week schedule is intense and crafted the assignments accordingly.

There will be at least three excursions through which students will be introduced to Berlin’s food culture. Dates and locations are listed in the course calendar. Excursions are a part of the course and their attendance is mandatory.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Discussion Questions / Brief Reflections 20%
2. Mid-term Exam 20%
3. Three Short Papers 15%
4. Final Project 25%
5. Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Discussion Questions / Brief Reflections

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.

Three Short Papers

Students will be assigned three short papers throughout the course, each worth 5% with 450 words per submission.

Final Project

The final project will conclude with a 15-minute presentation, conducted in teams assigned by the instructor. Your group will analyze a current food trend represented by a specific site in Berlin (e.g. Coffee Barn in the Café Kranzer; vegetarian butchery in Bergmannstraße) 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.

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. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all 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, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

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 any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

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.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

Class: 1.1 Orientation

- Introductions
- Syllabus discussion and course overview
- Introduction to Nutrition Studies
- What is “German” food?

*Mini-Excursion to Marheineke Markthalle*

Class: 1.2 History of German Food

- Regionalism
- Global influences
- Eating and food in two Germanies

*Abendbrot in one of the kitchens together: What Germans eat for dinner*

Reading:

- Heinzelmann (2014), *Beyond Bratwurst*, 7-10, 291-345

**Week 2**

Class: 2.1 History of Nutrition Studies / Effects of Industrialization

- Since when do we care about a healthy diet?
- History of the industrialization of food/processed foods
- “Culinary Modernism”
- What are Critical Food Studies?

Reading:

**First Short Paper Due**

Class: 2.2  Nutrition Basics / History of German Food in the 20th Century

- USDA Dietary Guidelines versus German Nutrition Society Guidelines
- Chronic nutrition-related illnesses (such as diabetes and coronary heart disease)
- German food shortages during times of war

Reading:


**Week 3**

Class: 3.1  Alcohol: Historical, Cultural, Nutritional Aspects

- History of beer and wine in Germany
- The US: between prohibition and beer-drinking
- Cultural and legal differences around alcohol consumption
- Effects of alcohol consumption on health

Reading:


Class: 3.2  Excursion to a Local Brewery

**Week 4**

Class: 4.1  Too Much of a Good Thing? Diet-related Illnesses / Diets

- Obesity and health risks
- The science and culture behind fad diets

Reading:


**Second Short Paper Due**

Class: 4.2  Food Marketing & Consumption Patterns

- How to read food labels
- U.S. and EU health claims
- Food advertising to adults and children

Reading:


**Week 5**
Class: 5.1 Sustainable Food Production & Voting with your Wallet

Genetically engineered crops vs. the EU Precautionary Principle
Pesticide, hormone, and antibiotic use

*Food, Inc.* excerpt screening and discussion

Reading:

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

Class: 5.2 Excursion: Tour of Markthalle 9

With author Ursula Heinzelmann

**Third Paper Due**

**Week 6**

Class: 6.1 Food Fights: Food & Family

- Food and family tradition
- Ethnic traditions

**Project Presentations**

Reading:


Class: 6.2 Food & Identity

- American food psyche
- Food trends and identity

**Project Presentations**

Reading:


**Course Materials**

**Readings**


Noah, Lars. “Genetic Modification and Food Irradiation: Are those strictly on a need-to-know basis?” 118 Penn St. L. Rev. 759 (Spring 2014).


