

Religion & Food
REL 3140
Spring 2018

Class Schedule/Room: Tuesdays—period 5-6 (11:45am-1:40pm) – TUR 2353
 Thursdays—period 6 (12:50-1:40pm) – MAT 0018

Instructor: Victoria Machado

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Office: Anderson Hall 119

Office Hours: Please email in advance!
 Tuesdays—period 3-4 (9:35am-11:30 am)
 Thursdays—period 5 (11:45am-12:35pm)

Course Description:

Food is one of the most critical, yet understudied, aspects of human experience. Most of us like to eat, and food is a tangible way in which we articulate our religious, ethical and moral selves. Religious values shape how we feast and fast, as well as how we feed the deities and feed ourselves. This course will explore the relationship between food and religion by (1) investigating food in the context of specific religious traditions, e.g. Christianity; (2) examining food as a moral and ethical category in religious and secular contexts, e.g., organic and locavore; and above all, (3) exploring various power dynamics associated with food. Topics include, but are not limited to: food and ritual; food and ethics; religion, food, and sustainability.

On a broader level, this class will follow food chains. We will start with the most direct interactions with food as expressed through consumer choices and then explore lesser known interactions with food exemplified through the processes and people involved in moving our food from field to table. Finally, we will look at the land and resources used to grow our food and the moral and ethical implications that surround these elements.

This course fits under the rubric of the humanities because it focuses on how people of different religious traditions understand food in its multiple capacities. This course explores the food-related myths, rituals, texts, and practices of different religious traditions in the U.S.; compares the role of food and eating, addressing topics such as ritual practice, health, relations between humans and the divine, morality/ethics, and sustainability; and demonstrates how food practices reflect and shape gender roles, and social roles among and in-between diverse populations in the United States. It seeks to present an in-depth understanding of the language and concepts used by different traditions to define “food”. This course demonstrates the methodologies used in Religious Studies, including historical, textual, comparative, and ethnographic, and consciously reflects on how and why scholars choose these methods in their investigations.

NOTE: This course fulfills the requirement for a Diversity and a Humanities credit as well as a 2000 word writing count.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Communicate the complex relationship between religion and food
- Think critically about larger societal food/water choices and decisions
- Explain how food practices reflect and shape gender and social roles
- Recognize various power struggles that accompany food/water issues
- Identify justice issues that arise with food access, consumption, and distribution
- Analyze small scale, personal understandings of food
- Work in collaborative and multidisciplinary teams to present information
- Write analytically and comparatively about the broad themes and theories

Course Requirements and Assignments

All assignment must be completed to pass the course.

1. Attendance and participation: Attendance for this class is mandatory. Students are expected to arrive on time, having already read the assigned material. Students are also expected to participate in class discussion in addition to class activities including but not limited to small group discussion, in-class projects, quizzes, and films. Attendance will be taken during each class meeting. (10% of final grade).

2. Group project: Students will develop collaborative projects that thoughtfully display the relationship between religion and food in practical and demonstrable ways. Each group will choose a systemic food issue to investigate. After researching the problem, students will explore a local food initiative that works to alleviate this issue. At least one site visit is required. More detailed information will be provided early in the semester. Projects will be presented in a poster format in class on **Tuesday November 14** and at a larger on-campus poster presentation on **Monday November 18 in the Reitz Union**. Students must attend both sessions for full credit. Additional details concerning the poster will be provided in class. (30% of final grade).

3. Essays: Two individual essays will be completed over the course of the semester. Both require a first draft. This should be submitted to Canvas **AND** brought to class for feedback and discussion. Final papers should be submitted to canvas by the correct date/time. Collectively, these papers will be worth 30% of final grade. *Consistent with the standards of the University Writing Requirement, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments.

4. First Hour Exam (15% of final grade).

5. Second Hour Exam (15% of final grade).

Late Work

No assignments will be accepted after the due dates unless written documentation is provided to the Instructor within 24 hours of the missed assignment. Documentation must come from a medical or legal authority. You must provide the same quality of documentation that is expected by the UF petitions committee. **Late work that involves**

technical difficulties with E-learning MUST be accompanied by a ticket number from the Help Desk. If you have a problem accessing materials or submitting assignments, contact the Help Desk **immediately before contacting the Instructor.** **If your ticket number indicates that you waited until the last minute to submit an assignment, you will not get credit.**

Early work is always accepted!

Grading Scale:

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

University Writing Requirement

This course counts for University Writing Rule 2 credit (2000 words).

The University Writing Requirement ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades now have two components. To receive writing credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Academic Honesty

By enrolling in this course, you are indicating your consent to the University of Florida Honor Code: *"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

Violation of the Honor Code will not be tolerated and can result in immediate Failure and additional disciplinary action. If you do not know what behaviors are considered a violation, it is your responsibility to find out. Visit the following website for more information: <http://www/dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>

Resources for Students

Accommodations: Students who require course-related accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation for you to submit to your instructors. Please deliver this documentation to the Religion Department office (107 Anderson) no later than the end of the first week of class. For more information, contact the Disability Resource Center (which is located at 001 Reid Hall, south side, ground floor) by phone at 392-8565. Please let the Instructor know if there is anything they can do to make your experiences in the course more effective for

you.

Counseling Resources: Resources available on-campus for students include the following: a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling; b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling; c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling; d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

Software Use: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Writing Assistance: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a writing studio, located in Turlington Hall, which offers individual tutoring and assistance with writing. For more information and to make appointments, see <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Course Material

All readings can be accessed via e-learning, ARES, or online articles.

Course Schedule

Introductions

Tuesday August 20: Introductions/Overview of Class

- Introductions/Review Syllabus

Thursday August 22: Studying Religion

- McCutcheon, Russell. "What is the Academic Study of Religion?"

Tuesday August 27: Studying Religion & Food

- Salonen, Sofia Anna. "Living and Dealing with Food in an Affluent Society—A Case for the Study of Lived (Non)Religion" in *Religions*(October 2018)
- Zeller, Benjamin. "Quasi-Religious American Foodways" in *Religion, food, and Eating in North America* (2014)

Thursday August 29: Coding Food

- Douglas, Mary. "Deciphering a Meal" (focus largely on first half)

Tuesday September 3: Food as Symbols and Signs

- Barthes, Roland. "Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption"
- Excerpts from Chidester, David. "Church of Baseball, the Fetish of Coca-Cola, and the Potlach of Rock'N' Roll: Theoretical Models for the Study of Religion in *American Popular Culture*" in *Religion and American culture: a reader* (2003) ed. David Hackett

Consumptive Choices

Thursday September 5: Christian Food Theology

- Grumett, David, "Dynamics of Christian Dietary Abstinence" in *Religion, food, and Eating in North America* (2014)

Tuesday September 10: Gut Science and Spiritual Eating

- Newell, Catherine. "Food Faiths: Gut Science and Spiritual Eating" from *Gut Feeling and Digestive Health in 19th Century Literature, History and Culture* ed. Mannon Mathias and Alison M. Moore

Thursday September 12: Prasadam

- Zeller, Benjamin. "Food Practices, Culture, and Social Dynamics in the Hare Krishna Movement"

Tuesday September 17: Factory Farming

- D'Silva, Joyce "Intensification—the Pressures of Volume" (80-87) in *Animal Welfare in a Changing World* (2019) ed by Andy Butterworth
- "As pigs await slaughter at Farmer John, strangers offer water, love and comfort to the doomed" (March 201) *LA Times* <https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-col1-farmer-john-vigil-la-animal-save-20190305-story.html>

Additional Reading:

- Whittington, Paul "Animal Welfare at Slaughter—A level Global Playing Field" (113-129) in *Animal Welfare in a Changing World* (2019) ed by Andy Butterworth

Thursday September 19: Halal Meat

Group work: Poster Presentation work

- Robinson, Sarah. "Refreshing the Concept of Halal Meat" in *Religion, food, and Eating in North America* (2014)

Additional Reading:

- Excerpts from *Hijra and homegrown* by Eleanor Finnegan

The Power of Food

Tuesday September 24: Religious Fasting

- Bynum, Caroline Walker. "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food for Medieval Women" (1985) in *Representations* Summer 11, 1-25

Thursday September 26: TBA
 Group work: Essay Review #1

Tuesday October 1: Hunger Strikes

- “Starving to Death might help. It couldn’t be much worse than how they were living” in *Eater* (2019) <https://www.eater.com/2019/3/26/18205475/hunger-strike-oral-history-typhoon-haiyan-climate-change-arab-spring-egypt-selman-college-daca>

Additional Reading:

- “Announcement: Grand Chief Polson Hunger Strike” http://albertdumont.com/announcement-grand-chief-polson-hunger-strike/?fbclid=IwAR0dQCNjxFaC8KG0pnKcD98Rn4xFNP7ITIHW1jHJuhUg7f_PHnL3GXmUY
- “American with No Medical Training Ran Center For Malnourished Ugandan Kids 105 Died” (2019) from *NPR* <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/08/09/749005287/american-with-no-medical-training-ran-center-for-malnourished-ugandan-kids-105-d>

Thursday October 3: Keeping Kosher in Prison
 Essay #1 Due

- Siporin, Steve. “The Kosher Con Game: Who’s Keeping Kosher in Prison” (2015) in *Western Folklore* <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=00d01adc-33b3-468d-b2b4-34027da0619c%40pdc-v-sessmgr01>

Tuesday October 8: Dumpster Diving

- Eighner, Lars. “On Dumpster Diving” (2013) in *New England Journal of Public Policy* Vol. 24, Issue 1

Thursday October 10: Voluntary Poverty

- “A Brief Introduction to the Catholic Worker Movement” <https://www.catholicworker.org/cornell-history.html>
- “Dorothy Day on Pacifism and Poverty” (2014) <http://www.bellarminemagazine.com/dorothy-day-on-pacifism-and-poverty/>

Homecoming October 11-12

Tuesday October 15: Food Deserts & Nutrition

- “Food Theology: Nourishing Body & Soul—Just Meals” from *The Gainesville Catholic Worker* <https://gvillecw.wordpress.com/food-theology/>

Thursday October 17: EXAM #1

Local Food & Where it Comes From

Tuesday October 22: Food Insecurity

Guest Speaker: TBA Possibly Anna Prizzia

- “Florida’s flagship university opens a food pantry for students in need” from *The Washington Post* (2016) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2016/06/06/floridas-flagship-university-opens-a-food-pantry-for-needy-students/?utm_term=.ac48157fd572
- “How Hydroponic School Gardens Can Cultivate Food Justice, Year-Round” from *NPR* (2019) <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2019/07/07/737789983/how-hydroponic-school-gardens-can-cultivate-food-justice-year-round>
- “Interview: Kids Around the World Photographed Surrounded by Their Weekly Diet” from *My Modern MET* (June 2019) <https://mymodernmet.com/daily-bread-gregg-segal-interview/?fbclid=IwAR3VEprdxPrh-FkNZ7xvfe5J7JaPt7mtWcroVr-vIXcpliVSRArjQYNDU>

Thursday October 24: Communities Saving Seeds

Guest Speaker: Skype with Beth Roach of Alliance of Native Seedkeepers

- Weinberg, Bill. “Grandfather Corn and the Three Sisters” in *Earth Island Journal* Vol 9, Issue 3

Additional Reading:

- Wade, Matt, “Seed Saver with a germ of an idea – Lunch with Vandana Shiva” (Oct 2010) in *The Sydney Morning Herald* <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1332BA1436F28358>

Tuesday October 29: Sustainable Agriculture

Visit Campus Field & Fork

- TBA

Additional Reading:

- Experts from *The Unsettling of America* – Wendell Berry
- Jacobs, Andrew, “Citrus Farmers Facing Deadly Bacteria Turn to Antibiotics, Alarming Health Officials” (May 2019) *The New York Times* <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/health/antibiotics-oranges-florida.html>

Thursday October 31: Hunting

- Excerpts from *Heart and Blood: Living with Deer in America* by Richard Nelson
- Kheel, Marti. “License to Kill: An Ecofeminist Critique of Hunters’ Discourse” (85-125) from *Animals & Women: Feminist Theoretical Exploration* ed. Carol J. Adams & Josephine Donovan

Tuesday November 5: People Power

Guest Speaker: TBA Possible CIW Presentation

Group work: Essay Review #2

- Striffler, Steve. “Inside a Poultry Processing Plant: An Ethnographic Portrait” (2002) in *Labor History* Vol. 43, No. 3

Thursday November 7: Local Commodities—Spotlighting Florida’s Sugar

- Perez, Elizabeth. “Crystallizing Subjectivities in the African Diaspora: Sugar, Honey, and the Gods of Afro-Cuban Lucumi” (175-194) ” in *Religion, food, and Eating in North America* (2014)
- “Study: Sugar Rules the World and Ruins Teeth” (July 2019) from NPR
<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/07/19/743500431/study-sugar-rules-the-world-and-ruins-teeth>

Additional Reading:

- Excerpts from *Raising Cane in the ‘Glades: The Global Sugar Trade and the Transformation of Florida* (2008) by Gail M. Hollander
- Excerpts from *Sweet Cane: the Architecture of the Sugar Works of East Florida* (2010) by Lucy B. Wayne
- McCollum, Justin. “A Brief Historiography of U.S. Hegemony in the Cuban Sugar Industry” in *The Forum*

****Friday November 8****: *Essay #2 Due*

Tuesday November 12: TBA

Group work: Poster Presentation work

Thursday November 14: Group Poster Presentations

Water Issues

****Monday November 18**** Poster Presentations—Students are required to meet this day. More info TBA.

Tuesday November 19: Phosphate Mining & Water Bottling

Guest Speaker: Merrilee Malwitz Jipson

- *Uncapping the Bottle: A Look Inside History, Industry, and Regulation of Bottle Water in the US* (Fall 2007) by Joyce S. Ahn in *Journal of Food & Law Policy* Vol 3 Issue 2 pp 172-208
- *Bottle Up Our Natural Resources: The Fight Over Bottled Water Extraction in the US* (2003) by Tara Boldt-Van Rooy in *Journal of Land Use & Environmental Law* Vol 18, Issue 2 pp 267-298

Additional Reading:

- Excerpts from *Inside the Bottle: Exposing of the Bottle Water Industry* (2007) by Tony Clarke

Thursday November 21: Endangering Sacred Waters

- “Citizen Resistance to oil Production and Acid Fracking in the Sunshine State” (Ch. 9) by Patricia Widener in *Fractured Communities: Risks, Impacts and Protect against Hydraulic Fracking in U.S. Shale Regions* ed by Anthony E. Ladd (2018)

Tuesday November 26: TBA

Group work: Review

Thanksgiving November 27-30

Concluding Remarks, Synthesis, & Final Paper

Tuesday December 3: EXAM #2