Syllabus Spring 2014 - Undergraduate

FScN 2001: Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives: A Food System Approach to Cooking

Credits: 3  Time and Place Offered:
Lecture: Mon 9:35 am – 11:30 am, XXXXXX, St. Paul Campus
Lab: Mon 3 – 6 pm  or Tues 4-7 pm, 126 McNeal Hall, St. Paul Campus

Instructors
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TAs

Course Description:
This interdisciplinary course will provide students with the knowledge, critical thinking and technical skills necessary to make food choices based on nutritional, environmental, and local and global societal issues. Students will be challenged to consider their food choices as both influencing and being influenced by larger food system dynamics and to view these issues from multiple perspectives. Through lectures, classroom discussions, and a cooking laboratory, students will learn about the issues from the instructors and expert guest lecturers representing multiple disciplines such as plant, animal and environmental sciences, public health and nutrition, anthropology, geography and sociology, economics and public policy, as well as external food & health practitioners. Assignments will include reading peer-reviewed articles and exploring professional resource sites on the topics to be discussed, personal writing in assigned papers, online discussions and blogging, home meal preparation, as well as small group activities. Through these assignments, students will learn to think critically about our food system and their own personal values and convictions with regard to this system. Students will be challenged to reconsider their perspectives based on new learning and the introduction of complex issues of equity, environmentalism, and community health. Students will learn tangible cooking skills in their weekly labs and through home cooking assignments. Students will create resources related to healthy food that will be useful to themselves as well as to other university and community members.

Student Learner Outcomes:
1. Understand and be able to discuss the interconnectedness of environmental, cultural, economic, social, nutritional and personal issues within the food system as it relates to production, processing, purchasing, consumption and disposal, as well as personal food choices.
2. Critically examine and be able to articulate and challenge your personal perspectives and values in regard to a ‘healthy’ food system.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of perspectives in the food system, and critically evaluate information and the validity of source material.
4. Understand and be able to demonstrate basic cooking skills and confidence, and be able to troubleshoot and problem solve in the context of meal preparation.

LECTURE SCHEDULE – BASIC OUTLINE

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A detailed outline of lecture topics, speakers and required readings will be available on our course Moodle site which will be updated regularly. You are responsible for staying up-to-date on assignments and reading requirements.

COURSE INTRODUCTION
Wk 1: Class orientation; how food systems influence human and environmental health, modeling
Wk 2: Critical thinking about controversial issues & identifying reliable resources

IMPACT OF FOOD PRODUCTION ON THE PLANET AND PEOPLE
Wk 3: Feeding a growing world population, given finite resources
Wk 4: Food systems indicators
   *Introduction to group project assignment, form groups*
Wk 5: Environmental and human health
   *Introduction of class Paper #1 requirements*
Wk 6: Comparison of differing farming systems (economic, environmental, human health, etc.)

FOOD CULTURES: FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL
Wk 7: Multiple approaches to the study of food from the social sciences
Wk 8: The nutrition paradox: underweight and overweight within the same population
Wk 9: Food, heritage & democracy
   *Class paper #1 due*

FOOD AND YOU
Wk 10: Understanding nutrition & interpreting diet recommendations
Wk 11: How to address health disparities in an inequitable system
Wk 12: Infrastructural & environmental barriers to healthy eating
   *Introduction to class Paper #2 requirements*
Wk 13: Connecting to your food community
Wk 14: Class fieldtrip

GROUP PROJECTS – CREATING RESOURCES
May 8 Student project presentations (15-20 min per team)
   *Resource & presentation formatted for web due*
   *Class paper #2 due*
LAB SCHEDULE: BASIC OUTLINE

See Cooking on a Student’s Budget Syllabus Spr 2014

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

- How to Cook Everything, Mark Bittman 2000 (soft cover recommended)
- Additional required readings will be assigned each week and available on the Moodle site.

Recommended (books are available to check-out on a weekly basis):
  - Note about the use of this textbook: The chapters in this book discuss topics in some cases from perspectives that can be legitimately argued. They will serve as a starting point for discussion from multiple perspectives and to challenge our critical thinking skills.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Attendance and participation: Regular attendance is expected and critical to your success in this class. Students will receive participation credit in both lecture and lab for both being present and participating in discussions. Students are expected to submit via the blogsite a personal reflection on each of their two field trip experiences. 400-500 words, including location and date of visit. Due within one week of visit.
** Prior notification of absence is required. One class or lab may be missed with no penalty.

Course readings and pop quizzes: Each week, required journal articles or policy papers must be read prior to lecture. Articles will come from scholarly journals such as Social Science and Medicine, Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition, American Journal of Public Health, as well as policy documents from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and profesional organizations such as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Organization). They will provide the background needed to participate as both a listener and commentator during lecture periods. Five pop quizzes or short writing reflection exercises will be given to verify your understanding of key concepts and perspectives offered by guest speakers and within the assigned readings. The lowest grade will be dropped, for a total of four counting towards your grade. No make-ups will be given.

Online Writing & Discussion: Every week for 10 weeks, from the weekly lectures of Jan 30 through Apr 17, students will be expected to write and submit brief self-reflection pieces or participate in facilitated online discussions pertaining to weekly readings or speaker presentations. Students will be evaluated based on their ability to articulate a position/perspective and provide supporting evidence from reliable resources. Students will also be evaluated on important writing criteria including the submission of essays that are grammatically correct, accurately written and logically structured. The purpose of this activity is to sharpen the students’ verbal and written communications in relation to issues of food, health and agriculture. These writings will be brief (length requirements will vary) and graded on a 6 point scale.

Written papers: The topic will be on an ideal food & nutrition system for Minnesota. Paper #1 (3-4 pages, double-spaced 12 pt font) to be completed by March 29. Students will complete a second paper (paper #2) related to the first (2-3 pages, double spaced, 12 pt font) during the last two weeks
of class, to be handed in by May 10. Writing prompts and full descriptions of the 2 assignments will be handed out in class.

Final Group Project: In lecture during the 2nd week of classes students will be assigned groups of 3-5 students to embark on a creative learning assignment that should speak to the personal interests of the group. Project outputs should be envisioned as resources for fellow students and/or family and community members to use to increase awareness of or access to food resources and tools to achieve healthy diets. Suggested project formats: documented cooking or field trip video, community hands-on instruction in cooking or preservation, mapping of resources in a neighborhood, development of multi-lingual recipe compellation, community survey of food needs, photo documentation of food environments. These are suggestions – students are encouraged to design a project that represents their skill sets and interests. The group will be expected to meet with an instructor in the initial weeks to discuss their ideas and get feedback and approval. 15-20 minute presentations of projects will he slated for the last day of lecture on the last day of lecture and projects will be due in the form of an uploadable resource (as well as the Powerpoint presentation) by the end of the semester, date TBD.

Grading Breakdown:
- Attendance & participation 3 points each: 14 lectures; 6 points each field trips; one excused absence: 50 points
- In-class pop quizzes or reflection writing on assigned readings (multiple choice and short answer); 4 @ 5 points each = 20 points
- Online writing & discussion participation: 6 x 10 weeks = 60 points
- Paper: part 1 = 40 points; part 2 = 20 points for a total of 60 points
- Group end of semester project: 60 points
- Total possible points: lecture = 250, lab = 338

Assignment of final grades:
Grades of "A" through "F" will be assigned on the basis of percentage of points earned. In general, grades will be distributed as follows: "A"= 93-100%; "A-"= 90-92; "B+"= 87-89; "B"= 83-86; "B-"= 80-82; "C+"= 77-79; "C"= 73-76; "C-"= 70-72; "D+"= 67-69; "D"= 60-66; "F"= less than 60% of the total points. An “S” grade will be equivalent to a “C-”. The exact percentages of possible points required for each grade will be determined after all of the exams have been given and the marks for the entire class reviewed. The grades will not be curved.

**See policies below for further understanding of course expectations.

COURSE POLICIES

Policy on Tests and Assignments: All assignments will be due at the time and date stated in class. Exams will be given on the dates stated in class. The only exception to this will be for grave medical or personal reasons. In these cases prior notification and documentation is expected.

Exams: Exams will include objective questions (short answer or multiple choice) and will also require explanation or analysis of the manner in which specific regulations would apply to certain products or situations. Exams must be completed during class. Make up exams will not be offered. If you have an illness or family emergency, contact the instructor and an alternative exam will be offered prior to the official exam time.
University of Minnesota Grading Policy Statement
A – Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B – Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
C – Achievement that meets the course requirements in every aspect.
D – Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
S – Achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the Instructor, but may be no lower than equivalent to a C-).
F (or N) – Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either: 1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit; or 2) was not completed, and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would receive an “I” (see also I).
“I” – (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the Instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., hospitalization), a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between the instructor and student.

Student academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty
Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:
“Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.”
Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Participants with special needs are strongly encouraged to talk to the instructor as soon as possible to gain maximum access to course information. All discussions will remain confidential. University policy is to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disability conditions (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services and their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located in Suite 180 McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak Street. Staff can be reached by calling 612-626-1333 voice or TTY.

Student Mental Health and Stress Management
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/.