

BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDY ABROAD PADUA

CAS SO 333E Italian Food Culture and Society: Foundations, Transitions and Representations / SHA HF 323
Italian Food Culture and Society: Foundations, Transitions and Representations.

Instructor: Professor Giulia Storato

Instructor email: gstorato@bu.edu

Course schedule: two class appointments of two 50-minute hours per week

Office hours: one hour after one of the classes

Course value: 4 Credits

HUB: SO1 1 + ETR 1

Prerequisites: None. Students who have taken a previous sociology and/or anthropology course could be advantaged.

Course description

The course will introduce students to the peculiarities of the Italian food system from a cultural, social and economic perspective. Drawing from assumptions developed within Food Studies, and in particular within the Anthropology of Food, and Sociology of Food and Nutrition, students will acquire knowledge and literacy concerning identity, sustainability, globalization and socio-cultural change, as well as ethnographic, visual and qualitative methods which will help them understand and analyze our contemporary societies and, in particular, the Italian one.

The course will be divided into three parts.

During the first part of the course, the foundations, students will learn how to approach food from a sociological and anthropological perspective, getting acquainted with the works of important traditional authors in this field. By applying these theories, students will explore the cultural roots, ambivalence, developments, and asymmetries of Italian cuisine. These theoretical foundations will be integrated with the work of contemporary social scientists who work on food issues related to both Italian and global contexts. The reference to the work of these last authors will accompany students also in the subsequent parts of the course.

The second part of the course will be dedicated to the social and cultural transitions in contemporary foodways. In particular, students will increase their awareness of contemporary challenges that the world – Italy included – is facing, and on top-down and bottom-up initiatives that are pushing towards more sustainable food systems. Students will also acquire theoretical, epistemological and methodological tools and skills which will allow them to develop the capacity to think critically about the assumptions which are at the basis of these transitions and initiatives, thus learning how to position themselves within them and recognize their central role as consumers in producing social changes. Moreover, students will be invited to reflect on the notions of “sustainability”, “quality”, “local”, “typical”, “traditional” and “migrant” food and on their meanings in terms of both community-building and local development. Furthermore, students will expand their knowledge on processes of “heritagization” of Italian food and on food labels and certifications, becoming more aware of their manifest and latent functions, and thus increasing their awareness as consumers.

This topic will introduce the third part of the course, dedicated to the processes of social construction and representation of Italian food abroad and on factors that contributed to its success.

Course objectives

The objective of the course is to provide students with concepts and tools that are useful in selecting and critically analyzing social and cultural dynamics embedded in the Italian food system, focusing above all on the processes of food production and consumption. Within this general aim, students will:

a) Analyze the social, cultural, political and economic processes embedded in Italian cuisine as well as in its food system.

- b) Develop knowledge on local, regional, national, international and global processes and transitions that can be examined through the analysis of Italian food culture(s) and system(s) and on the systems of inequalities that may be generated within them.
- c) Develop awareness on how to pursue global and local sustainable patterns of food production and consumption; and on labels and certifications which are used to promote local development and to activate community-building processes.
- e) Investigate and analyze the issues and challenges faced by the Italian food system, inserting them within a European and international framework and learning the differences and connections between top-down and bottom-up initiatives and their collective and individual dimensions.
- f) Investigate and be able to compare the processes of construction and representations of Italian food cultures in Italy and abroad.
- g) Acquire methodological skills to conduct social inquiry in the field of Food Studies.

HUB Learning Outcomes

1. Scientific and Social Inquiry

Area: Social Inquiry 1 – one unit

Learning Outcome 1:

Students will identify and apply major concepts used in the social sciences to explain individual and collective human behavior including, for example, the workings of social groups, institutions, networks, and the role of the individual in them.

Through classwork, on-site classes, readings and assignments, students will show to be able to recognize and apply theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding how contemporary societies are structured, the multiple challenges they are facing and how they are changing both socially and culturally. Food, food patterns of production, distribution and consumption in Italy will be the lens through which getting acquainted with all these issues. Students will acquire significant knowledge on the sociological and anthropological theories, approaches and methods that analyze the relationship between food, culture and society, learning how to appreciate the interdisciplinarity embedded in the so-called “Food Studies”, which assigns a significant role also to history. In particular they will study some of the most important social scientists who approached food from a sociological and anthropological perspective, and they will apply their theories to the Italian context and its history, thus acquiring at the same time a general and a situated knowledge.

Students will thus learn to recognize the roots of Italian food culture and cuisine and their relationship with structural elements of the society and its stratification; they acquire knowledge on the role played by food in processes of identity-building and belonging to particular social groups and in the creation of “Otherness”; they analyze contemporary transitions that are occurring in the Italian cuisine and food industry which are expressions of wider cultural, economic, and social changes that are happening both locally and globally. Students are able to recognize institutional and economic forces that may condition how food is represented and consumed on a daily basis and the role of both marketing and the mass media in representing national, local, quality, healthy, sustainable food, driving individuals' eating choices and habits, while promoting local development and creating different – and sometimes conflicting and unequal – layers of belonging. In this sense, they will acquire theoretical and methodological tools to analyze food habits and their cultural and structural elements, linking all levels of social inquiry (macro, meso and micro).

2. Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship

Area: Ethical Reasoning – one unit

Learning Outcome 1:

Students will be able to identify, grapple with, and make a judgment about the ethical questions at stake in at least one major contemporary public debate, and engage in a civil discussion about it with those who hold views different from their own.

During this course students will discuss about some major political, economic and social issues that Italy – and the whole globe – are facing, such as the so-called “refugee crisis”; urban-rural divide; unsustainable social, economic and environmental patterns of food production, distribution and consumption. Through classwork, readings, assignments, discussions with guest speakers, and on-site visits that present a local and specific point of view on the topics above, students will observe, gain in depth experience, debate and make their own ethical reflections on:

- How – through food – it is possible to understand different contemporary transitions and turns (the Age of Migration, the Network society, the movement towards sustainability; heritage food; quality food; local development) which redefine the relationship between global/local, rural/urban, online/offline;
- The role played by food and food practices in reinforcing or counteracting dominant discourses representing certain social groups (e.g., children and young people, women, migrants, inmates);
- Some of the challenges that Italy is facing from the point of view of sustainability and the top-down and bottom-up initiatives taken to overcome them and how they influenced and are influenced by the international and global ones.

Learning Outcome 2:

Students will demonstrate the skills and vocabulary needed to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that face individuals (or organizations, or societies or governments) as they grapple with issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as ‘other’. They should consider their responsibilities to future generations of humankind, and to stewardship of the Earth.

Students will show to be able to elaborate in written and oral forms, by applying the specific terminology and approaches learned in the first part of the course, the ethical issues that they will face during the course, and reflect on the consequences for the future of the planet, such as:

- The ethical and social dimensions of Italian cuisine and industry and how they may relate to incarcerated people, immigrants and refugees, and other socially marginalized groups.
- The positioning within the social stratification system and the consequent representation of certain social groups (women, migrants, inmates) in Italian society and the discourses that surround their presence in Italy in general and in Padua and the Veneto region, specifically;
- How food can be a means which may, on one hand, consolidate stereotypical representations of the “other,” but, on the other, allow marginalized groups to gain a voice and therefore reduce inequalities (Visit Peace 'n' Spice restaurant management - a company made of refugees)
- How choosing sustainability and social inclusion in food production and processing can make a difference for the future of our planet (Visit the Giotto Pastry laboratory which employs prisoners of the Due Palazzi prison in Padua; visit Campagna Amica, organic and zero kilometers products)

Program Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes for Italian and European Studies Program

- Develop new perspectives on one’s own culture and an ability to think critically about one’s own values and beliefs.
- Demonstrate increased proficiency in Italian language from elementary to low-intermediate level.
- Demonstrate knowledge of Italian culture with respect to three of the following areas: history, politics, economics, religion, literature, film and the arts.
- Develop an awareness of cultural differences and an understanding of culture’s role in shaping beliefs and practices.

Learning Outcomes for Internship Program

- Gain an understanding of workplace dynamics, professional expectations, and the influence of culture on both.

- Build proficiency in a range of business or industry skills appropriate to the field of the internship placement, including professional and inter-cultural communication through written, verbal, and nonverbal means.
- Refine and clarify professional and career goals through critical analysis of the internship experience or research project.

Learning statement

The course consists of two class meetings per week, each of those will last 2 hours of 50 minutes each, and of several on-site activities. Attendance at all lessons and activities is mandatory. Students are required to prepare the readings for each class beforehand and arrive to class ready to discuss what they have read. They are encouraged to take notes on the readings, and during regular and on-site classes. The assignments such as presentations and research papers will require particular dedication, and the professor will be available during office hours to help students strengthen the structure of their assignments and key arguments. In some cases, students will be encouraged or requested to make changes to their assignments by the professor.

Teaching methodology

The course will include lessons taught by the professor, based also on selected chapters of two books that students will have to prepare before class appointments. These texts will provide the students with the opportunity to consolidate and deepen their knowledge and skills about the theoretical and methodological tools used by social sciences – and in particular by sociology – for the study of global and Italian cultures and societies through food. Selected readings, based on theoretical approaches and empirical research related to Italian case-studies, will enrich their knowledge and they will be discussed together with the Professor during classes. In this way, students will acquire also interactional skills in both ethical reasoning and social inquiry. The course will host guest lecturers, who will present their research on key-topics for the course and will stimulate class discussion. Thanks to their contribution, students will deepen their knowledge on how to define and conduct a research project in Food and Wine Studies.

Case studies and company visits will also be an essential part of the course and will provide the students with the opportunity to experience and further deepen the topics and main concepts learned in class and face different perspectives on those topics. All students are expected to actively participate during class appointments and to prepare the required readings for the specific sessions indicated on the schedule.

This methodology will allow students to actively be engaged in the learning processes, combining theory with practice and investigating questions and diverse aspects related to the Italian food system.

Course materials

The book written by Paolo Corvo, entitled *Food Culture, Consumption and Society* (published by Palgrave MacMillan) has to be purchased.

All other readings are available on the Blackboard site of the course. Please use your BU ID and Kerberos password to access the material.

Bibliography

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*, Palgrave MacMillan (whole book).

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. The University Chicago Press, London (ONLY selected chapters – see Calendar section).

Fischler C. (1988). Food, Self and Identity. *Social Science Information*, 27: 275-293.

Appadurai A. (1988). How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 30(1): 3-24.

Bourdieu P. 2013 (1984). "The distinction. A social critique of the Judgement of Taste" (tr. by Richard Nice). In Counihan C., Van Esterik P (eds.) *Food and Culture. A reader (3rd edition)*, Routledge, New York and London, pp. 31-39.

Power E.M. (2003). De-centering the text: exploring the potential for visual methods in the sociology of food. *Journal for the Study of Food and Society*, 6(2): 9-20.

Barbera F., Audifreddi S. (2012). In Pursuit of Quality. The Institutional Change of Wine Production Market in Piedmont. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 52(3): 311-331. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.2012.00567.x

Mackendrick N. (2014). Foodscape. *Contexts*, 13(3): 16-18.

EAT – Lancet Commission (2019). *Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems. Food Planet Health*, available online (URL: <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancet-commission-summary-report/>).

Fontefrancesco M.F., Corvo P. (2019). “Slow Food: History and Activity of a Global Food Movement Toward SDG2”. In: Leal Filho W., Azul A., Brandli L., Özuyar P., Wall T. (eds) *Zero Hunger. Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*. Cham: Springer, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69626-3_46-1

de Mayda M. (2021). A Panettone Baked in Prison, and It’s One of Italy’s Best, *The New York Times* (21 december). <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/dining/prison-employment-italy-panettone.html>

Grasseni C. (2014). Seeds of Trust. Italy's Gruppi di Acquisito Solidale (Solidarity Purchase Groups). *Journal of Political Ecology*, 21: 127-221.

World Farmers Market Coalition (2021). *First World Farmers Markets Report*. ONLY Preface (pp. 6-11) and Chapter 6 about Italy (pp. 62-73).

Fontefrancesco M.F. (2020). *Traditional festive food and fragile aspirations of development in Italy: the case of agnolotti pasta*. *Journal of Ethnic Food*, 7(2), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42779-019-0037-z>

Gatto A. (2019). L’Antica Pizzeria da Michele as a Case Study of Traditional Speciality Guaranteed and International Franchising. *Applied Studies in Agri business and Commerce*, 13(1-2): 17–23. <https://doi.org/10.19041/APSTRACT/2019/1-2/2>

Narciso A., Fonte, M. (2021). Making Farm-to-Fork Front-of-the-Pack: Labelling a Sustainable European Diet. *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, 27(1): 54-70.

Abbots E.J. (2016). *Approaches to Food and Migration: Rootedness, Being and Belonging*. In: J. Klein and J. Watson (eds), *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury: 115-132.

Oussedik S. (2012). Food and Cuisine: Part of the Migration Process. *Quaderns de la Mediterrània*, 17: 55-60.

Thoms U. (2011). From Migrant Food to Lifestyle Cooking: The career of Italian cuisine in Europe. *European History online* (<http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/economic-migration/ulrike-thoms-from-migrant-food-to-lifestyle-cooking-the-career-of-italian-cuisine-in-europe>)

Rimoldi L. (2015). How to Show a National Cuisine: Food and National Identities in the Masterchef Kitchen. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(2): 257-262, doi:10.5901/ajis.2015.v4n2p257

Girardelli D. (2004). Commodified Identities: The Myth of Italian Food in the United States. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 28(4):307-324

Grading criteria

Class participation 10%

Midterm exam 20%

Written report on ethnographic walk (3 pages) 10%

Written Report on company visits (5 pages) 15%

Individual Oral Presentation 10%

Group oral presentation 15%

Final written project (7 pages) 20%

Class participation (10%) (ETR)

Students are encouraged to actively participate in all activities proposed during the course (regular classes, on-site classes, guest lectures, discussions), thus developing critical reflection skills on ethical issues embedded in food systems affecting both Italian communities and the ones students belong to. Class participation is understood as regularly engaging in discussion of cases and readings, asking questions, and sharing experience about course topics. See policies below.

Written Report on ethnographic walk around the city (10%) (SO1, ETR)

On-site during Class #7 and due by Class #9

Thanks to this assignment students will apply some tools used in the social sciences, working as social researchers do. In particular, they observe how food is produced, distributed and consumed within the city of Padua, and they reflect on global and local dynamics which are embedded in the city, what is represented

and not, what is valued, and the different layers of belongings that are displayed. Moving from the methodological criteria to study food defined by Corvo, and from the ethnographic and visual methods used by Harper and Faccioli to research the Italian food culture, students will walk around the city of Padua taking field notes and pictures. They note what is linked to food production, distribution and consumption, and interview sellers and customers on this topic. Students will have a guide for field observations provided by the instructor.

Part II: at home (due on Class #9)

In order to complete this assignment, students prepare a 3-page research report (references excluded) on the ethnographic walk done during Class #7. At home, they will be asked to arrange their fieldnotes and pictures in a report about the foodscape(s) of the city, and the wider social and cultural processes and transitions which can be observed through their analysis. A section related to the methodology used has to be included in the paper. The material needs to be framed within a broader theoretical framework, built through the reference to class contents, books chapters and readings, discussed till class #7. In particular, the readings by Power and Mackendrick will be adequate starting points to develop their own reflections. To complete the assignment further scientific literature needs to be examined and an extra bibliography has to be included at the end of the report.

Written Report on company visits (15%) (SO1, ETR)

Part I: during on-site class at Pasticceria Giotto (Class #10) and Campagna Amica (Class #12)

In line with course objectives, the company visits to both these realities will provide students with the opportunity to directly experience how the different dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental, and economic) can be integrated within economic businesses. Pasticceria Giotto is a social and artisan bakery whose employees are also inmates of Due Palazzi prison in Padova.

Students will have a chance to reflect on how food practices can counteract dominant discourses representing certain social groups.

Campagna Amica, led by Coldiretti, a trade-union which organizes farmers' markets around the city, aims at reducing the distance between rural and urban producers and consumers. Students are asked to complete this assignment in order for them to gain a better understanding of both realities and ground their experience in social and scientific analysis.

During the on-site classes and applying the research methods to produce empirical material already experienced to complete assignment 1, students interview employees and take notes about:

- the mission and vision of the company and how it is organized (n. of workers, kind of products, productivity, related activities, etc.)
- the path that led them to start their business
- their consumer's profile
- their commitment to sustainability, considering its different dimensions
- the relationship between rural/urban, local/global, offline/online in their activity.

Students will have a guide for field observations provided by the instructor.

Part II: at home (due on Class #16)

At home, students organize their notes in a 5-page report (bibliography included), adding to the information that they collected during company-visits, a review of scientific literature, personal statements and considerations in relation to topics treated in class, such as "sustainability", "local and typical food", "alternative food networks in Italy".

In particular, students are asked to reflect on how these two different economic realities are pursuing sustainability and creating alternative ways to produce, sell, and consume food. For this reason, they are also asked to include a comparison between the two visited companies and refer to class content, chapters and readings assigned on these topics, and to further scientific literature discussed with the Professor.

Thanks to this assignment, students are able to appreciate the main features and cultural roots and transitions of the Italian food system (movement towards quality, local and sustainable food), interviewing people in

their workplaces and thus becoming more aware of the different symbolic and cultural meanings which are embedded in Italian cuisine and of the political, economic and social structures that sustain and transform it.

Individual Oral presentation (10%) (SO1, ETR)

Presented in class on Class #19

After collecting information on the labels of the products they consume, students prepare a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation in which they select one or more certifications and labels that they found. They reflect on their meanings and the processes behind their presence in the package, referring both to class content and to further literature examined. In particular, students make reference to the article by Narciso and Fonte discussed in class. They observe the dimensions contained in the label (geographical, national, sustainable, nutritional, healthy), what is valued and if potentially contradictory meanings are conveyed. A bibliography related to the themes of “processes of heritagization” and “certifications and labels” must be included and quoted in the presentation.

Through the presentation, students will demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge on how to recognize institutional and economic forces that may condition how food is represented and consumed on a daily basis, and the role of labels in representing national, local, quality, healthy, sustainable food, driving individuals' eating choices and habits, while promoting local development.

Midterm exam (20%) (SO1, ETR)

Written exam

Multiple-choice and 2 open-ended questions exam that covers all the topics, book chapters and readings discussed in class till class #12. In particular it will be based on these topics:

- theoretical frameworks
- the root(s) of Italian Food Culture
- food as a means of belonging and of distinction
- women in wine in the Veneto region
- research tools to explore food cultures
- the local within the global: 2030 Agenda for sustainable development
- Slow Food Movement and sustainability
- Alternative Food Networks in Italy

The exam will take place on Class #13.

Students will apply some sociological and anthropological theoretical milestones to understand Italian cuisine (Corvo, 2015; Harper and Faccioli, 2009; Fischler, 1988; Appadurai, 1988; Bourdieu, 1984), and some methodological and analytical tools which can be used to investigate food and wine cultures (Corvo, 2015; Harper and Faccioli, 2009; Barbera and Audifreddi, 2012; Power, 2003; Mackendrick, 2014). Students show what they learned about sustainability as one of the major ethical issues affecting global contemporary societies. In particular, they will refer to both top-down (Agenda 2030, EAT Lancet Summary Report) and bottom-up Italian and international initiatives (Grasseni, 2014; World Farmers Markets Report, 2021; de Mayda, 2021; Fontefrancesco and Corvo, 2019) that are meant to promote sustainability.

Group oral presentation (15%) (SO1, ETR)

Presented in class on Class #22

Since class #19 students are grouped according to criteria identified by the professor and work together to complete this assignment.

Starting from suggestions and considerations developed by Luca Rimoldi in his article, the groups of students watch a food TV show on Italian cuisine, broadcasted in Italy or in the US, and prepare a 15' PowerPoint presentation, reflecting on the language used, and on the meanings conveyed. In order to support their reflections, they are also invited to listen to Carole Counihan's interview at the link inserted in Blackboard.

In their analysis they focus on how “national cuisine” and the keywords related to the food examined throughout the course (e.g., quality, local, typical, traditional, sustainable, slow) are used and represented.

Adopting an intersectional lens, students are also required to think on who the “ideal” addressee of that TV show can be and why. A bibliography must be included and quoted in the presentation. Further information will be shared during previous classes.

Through group oral presentations students will demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge on the role played by mass media in representing national, local, quality, healthy, sustainable food, driving individuals' eating choices and habits and conveying dominant discourses that can shape inward and outward representations of national cuisines.

Final written project (20%) (SO1, ETR)

Due by the last week of the program.

Students produce a 8-page research project (images and charts, if any, included) related to one of the themes (see title of the classes) treated during the whole course on Italian food culture and industry. The specific topic of the project and the bibliography will be discussed with the instructor during office hours and other guidelines and suggestions will be provided to the whole class towards the end of the course (see Calendar section for the list of all topics – titles of the classes - and all check-ins moments).

Thanks to this assignment students will prove that they have acquired a deep knowledge of Italian food, showing that they are able to appreciate its main features, transitions, representations and diversity, even in different contexts.

To complete the assignment, scientific academic papers, books chapters, and secondary data as well as empirical materials produced by students (such as transcriptions of interviews, focus groups etc.) can be used. In this way, students will have the opportunity to show their ability to connect individual experiences – their own and those they will collect through the analysis of secondary data or the production of authentic material by using social research techniques - within wider social, economic and political forces and structures as they may differ according to the context in which they are expressed. Moreover, students demonstrate that they have acquired the theoretical skills and sociological and anthropological vocabulary needed to reflect on issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as ‘other’, being actively involved in a civic discussion in at least one of the main concerns and transitions which affect contemporary global societies (local and rural development, immigration, sustainability, marginalized communities).

BU Policies

Examinations

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F. Students are required to sit their examinations on the dates, at the times, and in the same classroom as the other students in their class. If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance which causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

Attendance

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity required for the class as indicted in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

Absences

Unjustified absences from class, and any class related activity, will affect the students’ participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

Absence for Religious Reasons

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to

participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section. Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact Boston University Study Abroad.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted and missed assignments will automatically be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

Plagiarism

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. Definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/universitypolicies/policies-code.html>

Disability accommodations

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Disability and Access Services office (DAS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

Interruption of program or early departure

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

Academic Advice

The Director serves as the head of the faculty and as academic advisor. The Director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

Tutorials

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

CALENDAR

PART I: FOUNDATIONS

Class #1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

This introductory class will be split into two different parts. In the first part, students' educational background and expectations about the course will be shared with Professor and the whole class. Moreover, the instructor will provide students with a detailed explanation of the course outline, deadlines, assessment and criteria. In the second part of the class, students will learn how to approach to the study of the Sociology of Food and Nutrition and its main topics. These questions will drive the class: What is Sociology? Why a Sociology of Food and Nutrition? What does it study?

No previous reading is required for this class.

Class #2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Through this class, students will acquire theoretical tools to understand and study food from a sociological and anthropological perspective referring to the work of three social scientists: Levi-Strauss' "culinary triangle", Mary Douglas' "structure of the meal", Fischler's "omnivore's paradox". The latter, being the required reading, will be also object of class discussion. In particular, students will learn how food may reveal the structure of the society and the relationships among its different components as well as the role of food in shaping identities and belongings.

Readings:

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*, Palgrave MacMillan, Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-24

Fischler C. (1988). Food, Self and Identity. *Social Science Information*, 27: 275-293.

Important: Readings for all classes must be completed before the class appointment as they will be discussed in class (see learning statements and teaching methodology section). All readings are essential to consolidate class content and to succeed in the assignments throughout the course.

Class #3: THE ROOTS OF ITALIAN FOOD CULTURE(S)

During this class, students will learn how the theoretical frameworks learned in the previous class can be applied to the Italian case. In particular, this class will provide an examination of the structure of a typical Italian meal and of its manifest and latent functions, as well as of food combinations in Italian cuisine. The last part of the class will be dedicated to the analysis of the historical roots and developments of Italian food culture(s) and on their ambivalence (nationalism vs regionalism; scarcity vs plenty). Taking the cue from the Italian case and referring to the work of another important anthropologist, Arjun Appadurai (required reading), the class will question the notion of "national cuisine". These questions will drive the critical analysis: what is a "national cuisine"? What processes can lead to the construction of a "national cuisine"? The importance of cookbooks in this process will be underlined.

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Chapters: Frames of Reference, pp. 27-66 and Chapter: Food Combinations, Meal Sequence, & Bodily Well-Being, pp. 193-234

Appadurai, A. (1988). How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 30(1): 3-24.

Class #4: FOOD AS A MEANS OF BELONGING AND OF DISTINCTION

This class will examine how food can be considered a means of belonging and of distinction within family and wider society. In particular, and by discussing in class the work of Pierre Bourdieu "The distinction", students will learn how taste is socially constructed differently among different social classes. The class will then

continue by examining how gender and generational imbalances within the family can be observed through its food practices. In doing so, examples from the instructor's previous research will be provided.

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Part I: Love, pp. 69-96 and Power, pp. 97-124

Bourdieu P. 2013 (1984). "The distinction. A social critique of the Judgement of Taste" (tr. by Richard Nice). In Counihan C., Van Esterik P (eds.) *Food and Culture. A reader (3rd edition)*, Routledge, New York and London, pp. 31-39.

Class #5: RESEARCH TOOLS TO EXPLORE FOOD CULTURES

This class will provide students with theoretical tools, methods and research techniques used in social inquiry to analyze food practices within the family and the city. A specific focus will be assigned to qualitative techniques, such as ethnography, in-depth interviews, visual and participatory, creative and art-based techniques. References to the instructor's previous research will be made in order to make students more comfortable with the methods presented. Specific conceptual tools related specifically to food studies will be also deepened (e.g., foodways, food-centered life histories, foodscapes). This class will be preparatory for the first on-site class (#7), where students will be asked to be a social researcher in the exploration of Padova's foodscapes.

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Class, Regionalism, Commitment, pp. 235-276.

Power E.M. (2003). De-centering the text: exploring the potential for visual methods in the sociology of food. *Journal for the Study of Food and Society*, 6(2): 9-20.

Class #6: WOMEN IN WINE IN THE VENETO REGION

GUEST SPEAKER

This guest lecture will represent an example of social research conducted in the field of Food and Wine. The invited guest speaker will speak about a research project conducted in the Veneto Region with family wineries, explaining the methods used and the main results. In line with what has been faced during regular classes till now, through the research presented, students will develop a greater awareness of the Italian wine sector (required reading) and of gender and generational imbalances of power within it.

Readings:

Barbera F., Audifreddi S. (2012). In Pursuit of Quality. The Institutional Change of Wine Production Market in Piedmont. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 52(3): 311-331. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.2012.00567.x

Class #7: PRACTICING SOCIAL RESEARCH. "ETHNOGRAPHIC" WALK THROUGH PADOVA

During this first on-site class (which represents the **first part of assignment 1: Report on "Ethnographic walk"**), students will cover the role of social researchers. Putting into practice everything they learned during regular classes and the first guest lecture, they will walk, accompanied by the Professor, through the city, observing and taking notes and pictures of the different ways food can be produced, sold and consumed. They will pay particular attention to the multi-layered and stratified belongings that are embedded in Padova's foodscape (required reading) focusing on what is represented and what is not; on what is valued and what is not; on which stratification and transitions of the wider society can be observed and how they are reflected in the ways food is displayed. They will also have to opportunity to conduct informal interviews with sellers and costumers within selected commercial activities.

Readings:

Mackendrick N. (2014). Foodscape. *Contexts*, 13(3): 16-18.

PART 2: TRANSITIONS

Class #8: THE LOCAL WITHIN THE GLOBAL: 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This class will discuss the contemporary global changes and challenges for societies and their food systems. In particular, it will focus on contemporary transitions within the Italian family and wider society and on the top-down strategies that have been deployed globally to face these challenges. Particular attention will be given to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, introducing its elements of novelty and its implementation in the EU and Italy. This class will also aim to link politics with individuals' choices, thus exploring and discussing the link between sustainable food system(s) and sustainable diet(s). In order to pursue this last objective, the report by Eat-Lancet commission will be discussed during class.

Readings:

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*. Chapter 2: Food, culture and society, pp. 25-51.

EAT – Lancet Commission (2019). *Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems. Food Planet Health*, available online (URL: <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancet-commission-summary-report/>).

Class #9: SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

During this class, students will analyze Slow Food Movement, starting from its history, developments, mission. A particular focus will be given to the initiatives it put in place – both in Italy and globally - and to their peculiarities. In particular, students by discussing the assigned paper by Fontefrancesco and Corvo (2019), will reflect on the relationship between the Slow Food Movement and the outreach of the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals. By this class (11 am), students are also required to submit in Blackboard **Assignment 1 “Report on ethnographic walk”** (see “Grading criteria” section for further details).

Readings:

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*. Chapter 3: Crisis and the New Patterns of Food Consumption, pp. 52-87.

Fontefrancesco M.F., Corvo P. (2019). “Slow Food: History and Activity of a Global Food Movement Toward SDG2”. In: Leal Filho W., Azul A., Brandli L., Özuyar P., Wall T. (eds) *Zero Hunger. Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*. Cham: Springer, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69626-3_46-1

Class #10: THE DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY. ON-SITE CLASS AT PASTICCERIA GIOTTO

Through this on-site class, students will have the opportunity to come into contact with a social and artisan company which produces quality typical Italian food while pursuing social and inclusive aims. Pasticceria Giotto is in fact a local pastry based in Padova whose employees are inmates of the city prison. Talking with people employed there, students will understand how a business can move towards sustainability in its integrated dimensions (social, environmental and economic). For this reason, during the visit they are asked to take notes in order to fulfill **Assignment 2 “Written report on company-visits”**. See **assignment 2 -part I** in the “Grading criteria” section for further details.

Readings:

Matteo de Mayda (2021). A Panettone Baked in Prison, and It's One of Italy's Best. *The New York Times* (21 December) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/dining/prison-employment-italy-panettone.html>

Individual check-ins for final paper (definitions of topics of interest).

Class #11: ALTERNATIVE FOOD NETWORKS IN ITALY

This class will analyze initiatives which promote sustainability from a bottom-up perspective. In particular, it will present some examples of Alternative Food Networks in Italy (Community Supported Agriculture, Farmer's markets, Solidarity Purchase Groups). These questions will drive the class: What are Alternative Food Networks? How do they work? What are the social and cultural values that drive their actions? What

do they sustain and promote? How can their actions be positioned within contemporary challenges and transitions?

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Constructing the Italian Food, pp. 126-167

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*. Chapter 4: Problematics of food, pp. 88-109)

Grasseni C. (2014). Seeds of Trust. Italy's Gruppi di Acquisito Solidale (Solidarity Purchase Groups). *Journal of Political Ecology*, 21: 127-221.

Class #12: THE GREEN CITY AND ALTERNATIVE CIRCUITS OF TRUST. ON-SITE CLASS AT CAMPAGNA AMICA

Thanks to this on-site class, students will have the opportunity to come into contact with the campaign "Campagna Amica", created by the trade-union Coldiretti, which can be defined an Alternative Food Network in Italian landscape. Campagna Amica is an initiative which aims at reducing the distance between producers and consumers through the organization of different farmers' markets throughout the city. During the visit, students will learn about the organization's history, and its development and the challenges it faces in Italy and in Padova and if and how these markets have the chance to redefine the relationship between urban and rural in Italian territory, while pursuing sustainability in its integrated dimensions (social, economic and environmental). For this reason, during the visit students are asked to take notes in order to fulfill **assignment 2 "Written report on company-visits"**. (See **assignment 2 -part I** in the "grading criteria" section for further details).

Readings:

World Farmers Market Coalition (2021). *First World Farmers Markets Report*. ONLY Preface (pp. 6-11) and Chapter 6 about Italy (pp. 62-73).

Class #13: MID-TERM EXAM (See "Grading criteria" section)

Class #14: QUESTIONING THE NOTION OF LOCAL AND TYPICAL FOOD

Through this class, students will become aware of another contemporary transition occurring in the Italian food cultures and system. Attention will be given to the "quality turn" in the food and wine sector and to the questioning of the concept of quality, here understood as a multidimensional concept and as a social process. A particular focus will then be given to the relationship between quality and place and to the deconstruction of the notion of local and typical food. Assuming Agnolotti pasta as a case-study (assigned reading Fontefrancesco, 2020), the class will critically discuss the link between local food and local development and community-building processes, appreciating how in a global world it is more appropriate to talk about processes of re-localization of food.

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Constructing the Italian Food, pp. 168-173.

Corvo P. (2015). *Food Culture, Consumption and Society*. Chapter 5: Food, Environment and Quality of life, pp. 110-153.

Fontefrancesco M.F. (2020). *Traditional festive food and fragile aspirations of development in Italy: the case of agnolotti pasta*. *Journal of Ethnic Food*, 7(2), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42779-019-0037-z>

Class #15: PROCESSES OF HERITAGIZATION OF FOOD: PRACTICES AND MEANINGS

This class will explore the roots and developments of what has been called the "heritage turn" in Food Studies which led to processes of patrimonialization of food and wine. In particular, it will problematize the relationship between tradition and innovation, local and global by referring to the case-study of "Antica Pizzeria da Michele" in Naples. Through class discussion around this required reading, students will learn how

“The Art of Neapolitan Pizzaiuolo” has been recognized as world intangible cultural heritage and how food as heritage may embed both identity-building processes and marketing strategies for global consumers.

Readings:

Harper D. and Faccioli P. (2009). *The Italian Way*. Constructing the Italian Food, pp. 174-191.

Gatto A. (2019). L'Antica Pizzeria da Michele as a Case Study of Traditional Speciality Guaranteed and International Franchising. *Applied Studies in Agri business and Commerce*, 13(1-2): 17–23.

Check-ins for final paper (proposed subject, methodology and bibliography)

Class #16: CONSUMING HERITAGE AND THE ROLE OF CERTIFICATIONS

This class will continue the reasoning about food as heritage by focusing on certifications and labels which recognize it. In particular, it will focus on how labels and certifications may convey certain and selected representations of quality and locality and how they have to be understood, shared and practiced in order to assure their functions. Attention will be also paid on the sometimes critical relationship between labelling and sustainability by referring to the article by Narciso and Fonte, which will be also discussed in class. The content of this class will be essential for the fulfillment of **Assignment 3** (see the “Grading criteria” section). By this date (11 am), students are also required to submit **Assignment 2 “Written Report on company-visits”** (See “Grading criteria” section for further details).

Readings:

Narciso A., Fonte, M. (2021). Making Farm-to-Fork Front-of-the-Pack: Labelling a Sustainable European Diet. *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, 27(1):54-70

Class #18: FOOD AND MIGRATION

Guest speaker

During this class, we will discuss with a guest speaker the results of a qualitative research project conducted in the Arcella neighbourhood in Padova with people with migratory backgrounds. After an introduction of the migration phenomena in Italy and in the Veneto region as an epochal social and cultural transition within Italy, the guest speaker will focus on how immigrants, living in Padova, build their “sense of home” or experience exile through food and food practices within the household and/or in the workplace. The second part of the class will be dedicated to deepening the knowledge about the relationship between food and migration (required reading). These questions will guide class discussion around the topic: What is the relationship between food and migration? What are the wider social and cultural challenges that this relationship can enlighten? What meanings food can assume in migration?

Readings:

Abbots E.J. (2016). Approaches to Food and Migration: Rootedness, Being and Belonging. In: J. Klein and J. Watson (eds), *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury: 115-132.

Class #18: MIGRATIONS IN ITALY AND THE HYBRIDIZATION OF CUISINE. ON-SITE CLASS AT PEACE 'N' SPICE

This on-site class will allow students to gain direct experience with what they learned during the previous class. Peace 'n' Spice is in fact a successful restaurant based in the Padova city center run by refugees and asylum seekers that proposes to its customers a menu where different cuisines from abroad are mixed, while sourcing most of the raw ingredients locally. It therefore represents a good example of both processes of hybridization and transculturation of food and of the active role played by immigrants in building Italian cuisine and food industry. By employing many refugees and asylum seekers, it also promotes social inclusion.

Readings:

Oussedik S. (2012). Food and Cuisine: Part of the Migration Process. *Quaderns de la Mediterrània*, 17: 55-60.

PART III: REPRESENTATIONS

Class #19: THE CAREER OF ITALIAN CUISINE ABROAD

This class will provide students with historical notes on Italian emigration and on other factors that contributed to the diffusion of Italian cuisine abroad. During this class, the strong relationship between food and migration treated during the two previous classes by an inward glance will be enriched with a outward one, related to how Italian food has been represented abroad. In particular, students will have the opportunity to reflect on the success of the Italian cuisine abroad and the role played by Italian immigrants in this process. Referring to the article by Thoms (required reading), the class will address these questions: why has Italian food spread all around the world? What factors contributed historically to the success of Italian cuisine abroad? What has been changing with globalization? **Assignment 3 – Oral presentation** is due by this class.

Individual Check-ins for final paper (bibliography check, definition of contents and individual suggestions concerning methodology)

Readings:

Thoms U. (2011). From Migrant Food to Lifestyle Cooking: The career of Italian cuisine in Europe. *European History online* (<http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/economic-migration/ulrike-thoms-from-migrant-food-to-lifestyle-cooking-the-career-of-italian-cuisine-in-europe>)

Class #20: FOOD AND MASS MEDIA

This class will focus on the media's power of representation of "us" and "others". The relationship between Italian food and mass media will be developed by referring to Rimoldi's paper (required reading) and by addressing these guiding questions: what is the role of mass media in promoting a "national cuisine", and what role does it also play abroad? How is Italian cuisine represented in mass media both in Italy and abroad? Has it changed across space and along time? How? What meanings are conveyed? And why? Who are the main addressees of mass media's actions around food? This class content will be essential for the fulfillment of **Group Oral presentations** (see the "Grading criteria" section).

Readings:

Rimoldi L. (2015). How to Show a National Cuisine: Food and National Identities in the Masterchef Kitchen. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(2): 257-262, doi:10.5901/ajis.2015.v4n2p257

Class #21: "ETHNIC CUISINES" AND REPRESENTATIONS OF ITALIAN FOOD ABROAD

This class will reflect on how the so-called "ethnic cuisines" can be represented in economic, social and cultural contexts where they usually not originate. The relationship between exocitization and identification will be explored referring to the case-study of Fazoli's examined by Girardelli (required reading). These questions will guide class discussion around the topic: What are the meanings and representations of the so-called "ethnic cuisine(s)"? What are the factors that contributed to the development of the myth of the Italian food? How does it relate with stereotypes, exoticism and belongings?

Readings:

Girardelli D. (2004). Commodified Identities: The Myth of Italian Food in the United States. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 28(4):307-324.

Final paper detailed outline due.

Class #22: FINAL REVIEWS, COMMENTS

This class will summarize the whole course's content and it will be enriched with class discussion around all topics treated. The Instructor will provide students with further details about how to fulfill the final written project properly. Group oral presentations (see "Grading criteria" section).

FINAL WRITTEN PROJECT

Due by TBD