



## **BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDY ABROAD PADUA**

### **CAS SO 333E/ SHA HF 323 ITALIAN FOOD, CULTURE AND SOCIETY: Foundations, Transitions and Representations**

**Course meets:** 2 hours twice a week + on-site 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;
- 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; Guest speaker of Slow Food)

### **Learning statement**

The course consists of two class meetings per week, each of those will last 2 hours, 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 and articles 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 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) must 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**

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- 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.
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### **Grading criteria**

- Class Participation 10%
- Written Report on ethnographic walk (3 pages) 10%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- 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*

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 methods used by Rachel Black 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 and will have a conversation with a member of the cooperative Il Tamiso, a network of small organic farmers and producers.

### *Part II: at home*

In order to complete this assignment, students prepare a 3-page research report (references excluded) on the ethnographic walk done during class. 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 week 3. In particular, the readings by Power (2003) and Mackendrick (2014) 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.

### **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 #10. 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 October 24.

Students will apply some sociological and anthropological theoretical milestones to understand Italian cuisine (Corvo, 2015; Fischler, 1988; Appadurai, 1988; Bourdieu, 1984), and some methodological and analytical tools which can be used to investigate food and wine cultures (Corvo, 2015; 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 (de Mayda, 2021; Fontefrancesco and Corvo, 2019) that are meant to promote sustainability.

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

#### *Part I: during on-site class at Pasticceria Giotto and Campagna Amica*

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*

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*

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.



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

Presented in class

Starting from suggestions and considerations developed by Luca Rimoldi in his article, the 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 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 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)**

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 indicated 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**

#### **WEEK 1**

##### **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

This introductory class will be divided into two parts. In the first part, students will share their educational backgrounds and expectations for the course with the professor and the entire class. Additionally, the instructor will provide a detailed explanation of the course outline, deadlines, and assessment criteria. In the second part of the class, students will learn how to approach the study of the Sociology of Food and Nutrition and its main topics. The following questions will guide the class: What is Sociology? Why a Sociology of Food and Nutrition? What does it study?

No prior reading is required for this class

##### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Through this class, students will acquire theoretical tools to understand and study food from sociological and anthropological perspectives, drawing on the work of three social scientists: Levi-Strauss' "culinary triangle," Mary Douglas's "structure of the meal," and Fischler's "omnivore's paradox". Fischler's work, which is the required reading, will also be a subject of class discussion.

In particular, students will learn how food can reveal the structure of society and the relationships among its different components, as well as the role of food in shaping identities and a sense of belonging.

#### **WEEK 2**

##### **THE ROOTS OF ITALIAN FOOD CULTURE(S)**

During this class, students will learn how the theoretical frameworks learned in the previous session can be applied to the Italian context. Specifically, this class will examine the structure of a typical Italian meal, its manifest and latent functions, and the combinations of foods in Italian cuisine.

The final part of the class will focus on the historical roots and development of Italian food cultures and their ambivalence (nationalism vs. regionalism; scarcity vs. abundance). Using the Italian case and referencing the work of anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (required reading), the class will question the concept of "national" cuisine. The following questions will guide the critical analysis:

What is a “national” cuisine? What processes lead to the construction of a national cuisine? The importance of cookbooks in this process will be highlighted.

### **FOOD AS A MEANS OF BELONGING AND OF DISTINCTION**

This class will examine how food can serve as a means of belonging and distinction within the family and wider society. By discussing Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “social distinction”, students will learn how taste is socially constructed and varies among different social classes.

The class will then explore how gender and generational imbalances within the family are reflected in food practices.

### **WEEK 3**

#### **RESEARCH TOOLS TO EXPLORE FOOD CULTURES**

This class will equip students with the 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 placed on qualitative techniques such as ethnography, in-depth interviews, and visual, participatory, creative, and art-based methods. References to the instructor’s previous research will be provided to help students become more comfortable with the methods presented. Specific conceptual tools related to food studies, such as foodways, food-centered life histories, and foodscapes, will also be explored in depth.

This class will prepare students for the first on-site class, where they will act as social researchers to explore Padova’s foodscapes.

#### **WOMEN IN WINE IN THE VENETO REGION**

This class will provide students with theoretical tools used in social inquiry to analyze the gendered division of labor within family-run businesses. The reading provided is preparatory for the discussion in class, which is based on research conducted in Veneto by the instructor and focused on gender and generations in family wineries in Italy. In line with what has been faced during regular classes till now, through the research presented, students will develop a greater awareness of gender and generational imbalances of power within family-run business in the wine sector.

### **WEEK 4**

#### **PRACTICING SOCIAL RESEARCH. “ETHNOGRAPHIC” WALK THROUGH PADOVA**

During this first on-site class, which constitutes the initial part of Assignment 1: Report on the “Ethnographic Walk”, students will assume the role of social researchers. Applying the knowledge acquired during the previous classes, they will accompany the professor on a walk through the city, observing, taking notes, and capturing pictures of the various ways food is produced, sold, and consumed. We will visit the *mercato sotto il salone*, the market of *Piazza delle Erbe* and have a talk with a representant of the cooperative *Il Tamiso*, a network of organic producers that sell their product in the market.

Particular attention will be given to Padova’s foodscape, as discussed in the required reading, focusing on the embedded multi-layered and stratified belongings. Students will explore what is represented and what is not, what is valued and what is not, and how the stratification and transitions of wider society manifest in the display of food. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to conduct informal interviews with sellers and customers at selected commercial establishments or shops.

## **PART 2: TRANSITIONS**

## **THE LOCAL WITHIN THE GLOBAL: 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

This class will explore contemporary global changes and challenges facing societies and their food systems. It will particularly focus on the ongoing transitions within Italian families and broader society, as well as the top-down strategies implemented globally to address these challenges.

Special attention will be dedicated to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, introducing its innovative elements and its implementation in the EU and Italy. Moreover, the class will aim to link politics with individuals' choices by examining and discussing the connection between sustainable food systems and sustainable diets. To achieve this objective, the report by the Eat-Lancet Commission will be reviewed and discussed during the session.

### **WEEK 5**

#### **SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

##### **Guest Speaker Matteo Breda (Slow Food Padova)**

During this class, we will engage in discussions with the guest speaker who will present the Slow Food Movement, beginning with its history, developments, and mission. A particular focus will be placed on the initiatives it has implemented, both locally and globally, and their unique characteristics.

Students will reflect on the relationship between the Slow Food Movement and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda, by discussing the assigned paper by Fontefrancesco and Corvo (2019). Additionally, by this class students are required to submit

**Assignment 1: Report on Ethnographic Walk** on Blackboard (see the Grading Criteria section for further details).

#### **THE DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY. ON-SITE CLASS AT PASTICCERIA GIOTTO**

During this on-site class, students will have the opportunity to engage with a social and artisanal company that produces high-quality typical Italian food while promoting social inclusion. Pasticceria Giotto, located in Padova, is a local pastry shop whose employees are inmates from the city prison. Through conversations with the staff, students will gain insights into how a business can embrace sustainability across its various dimensions: social, environmental, and economic.

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

### **WEEK 6**

#### **MID-TERM EXAM** (See "Grading criteria" section)

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

Through this on-site class, students will have the opportunity to engage with the initiative "Campagna Amica" campaign, created by the trade union Coldiretti, which can be considered as an Alternative Food Network within the Italian landscape. Campagna Amica aims to bridge the gap between producers and consumers by organizing various farmers' markets throughout the city.

During the visit, students will learn about the organization's history, development, and the challenges it faces both in Italy and in Padova. They will explore whether and how these markets have the potential to redefine the relationship between urban and rural areas, while striving for sustainability across social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

To facilitate their learning experience, students are encouraged to take notes during the visit in order to fulfill **Assignment 2, titled "Written Report on Company Visits"**. Further details can be found in part I of Assignment 2 in the Grading Criteria section.

## **WEEK 7**

### **ALTERNATIVE FOOD NETWORKS IN ITALY**

This class will analyze initiatives that promote sustainability from a bottom-up perspective. Specifically, it will present examples of Alternative Food Networks in Italy, such as Community Supported Agriculture, Farmer's Markets, and Solidarity Purchase Groups. The following questions will guide the discussion: What are Alternative Food Networks? How do they operate? What social and cultural values underpin their actions? What do they sustain and promote? How do their actions address contemporary challenges and transitions?

## **WEEK 8**

### **QUESTIONING THE NOTION OF LOCAL AND TYPICAL FOOD**

In this class, students will explore another contemporary transition within Italian food cultures and systems. We will focus on the "quality turn" in the food and wine sector, examining the evolving concept of quality as a multidimensional concept and a social process.

Special attention will be given to the relationship between quality and place, and the deconstruction of the notions of local and typical food. Using Agnolotti pasta as a case study (referencing the assigned reading by Fontefrancesco, 2020), we will critically discuss the link between local food, local development, and community-building processes. The case study will be used also to appreciate processes of re-localization of food in a global world.

### **PROCESSES OF HERITAGIZATION OF FOOD: PRACTICES AND MEANINGS**

This class will delve into the roots and evolution of the "heritage turn" in Food Studies, which has sparked processes of food and wine patrimonialization. We will particularly examine the intricate relationship between tradition and innovation, as well as local and global dynamics, using the case study of "Antica Pizzeria da Michele" in Naples.

Through class discussions centered around the required reading, students will explore how "The Art of Neapolitan Pizzaiuolo" has been recognized as a world intangible cultural heritage and how food as heritage can encompass both identity-building processes and marketing strategies for global consumers.

Additionally, by this date students are required to submit **Assignment 2, the "Written Report on Company Visits"**. Further details can be found in the Grading Criteria section.

## **WEEK 9**

### **THE ITALIAN FOOD INDUSTRY. ON-SITE CLASS AT IL MOLINO ROSSETTO**

During this on-site course, students will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Italian food industry, business models, and quality, local, and sustainable food practices. Moreover, this class will further explore the concept of food as heritage by examining certifications and labels that recognize it. Specifically, we will focus on how these labels and certifications may convey specific representations of quality and locality, and how they must be understood, shared, and practiced ensuring their functioning. We will also address the sometimes-critical relationship between labeling and sustainability.

### **MIGRATIONS IN ITALY AND THE HYBRIDIZATION OF CUISINE**

This class will center on encounters involving different food habits and their connection with migrations. We will delve into the social, cultural, and historical challenges associated with food and migration, exploring the potential for coexistence and conviviality among strangers, intimate strangers, or friends, where individuals view each other reciprocally as both equal and different.

We will contemplate questions regarding the future of citizenship and commensality/conviviality, exploring the reshaping of boundaries and senses of belonging in societies that formally recognize national and international principles of cultural diversity.

## **WEEK 10**

### **FOOD AND MIGRATION**

**Guest speaker prof. Francesco Della Puppa (University Ca' Foscari – Venice)**

During this class, we will engage in discussions with the guest speaker who will present the findings of a qualitative research project conducted in the Arcella neighborhood of Padova with people from migrant backgrounds. We'll start with an introduction to migration phenomena in Italy and the Veneto region, highlighting their significance as epochal social and cultural transitions. The guest speaker will then focus on how immigrants in Padova construct their "sense of home" or experience exile through food and food practices within their households and/or workplaces.

In the second part of the class, we'll delve deeper into the relationship between food and migration through the required reading. Guiding questions for class discussion will include: What is the relationship between food and migration? What wider social and cultural challenges does this relationship illuminate? What meanings can food assume in the context of migration?

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

## **PART III: REPRESENTATIONS**

### **THE CAREER OF ITALIAN CUISINE ABROAD**

This class will offer students historical insights into Italian emigration and other factors that facilitated the spread of Italian cuisine abroad. Building upon the previous discussions on the strong relationship between food and migration, this session will broaden the perspective to include an outward glance, examining how Italian food has been represented internationally.

Students will reflect on the global success of Italian cuisine and the role played by Italian immigrants in this process. Drawing on the required reading by Thoms, the class will address questions such as: Why has Italian food become ubiquitous worldwide? What historical factors contributed to the success of Italian cuisine abroad? How has globalization impacted these dynamics?

Additionally, **Assignment 3 – Individual oral presentation** is due by this class.

## **WEEK 11**

### **FOOD AND MASS MEDIA**

In this class, we will explore the power of representation wielded by the media in shaping perceptions of "us" and "others". Specifically, we will delve into the relationship between Italian food and mass media, drawing on Rimoldi's paper as required reading. We will address key questions such as: What role does mass media play in promoting a "national cuisine"? How is Italian cuisine portrayed in mass media within Italy and on the international stage? Have these representations evolved over time and across different geographical contexts? What meanings are conveyed through these representations, and why? Understanding the content of this class will be crucial for the successful completion of the **Group presentation** as outlined in the Grading Criteria section.

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

## **"ETHNIC CUISINES" AND REPRESENTATIONS OF ITALIAN FOOD ABROAD**

In this class, we will contemplate the representation of “ethnic cuisines” within economic, social, and cultural contexts where they typically do not originate. We will explore the relationship between exoticization and identification, drawing on the case study of Fazoli’s as examined by Girardelli (required reading). Key questions that will guide our discussion include: What meanings and representations are associated with so-called “ethnic cuisines”? What factors have contributed to the development of the myth of Italian food? How does this myth relate to stereotypes, exoticism, and senses of belonging?

**Final paper detailed outline due.**

## **WEEK 12**

### **FOOD AND GASTRO-NATIONALISM**

In this class, we explore how the proliferation of food-related discussions – such as the practice of photographing food and sharing the images on social media, often referred to as “food porn” – creates an environment that fosters both food hybridization and nationalism. Drawing on the text written by Benasso and Stagi (2019), we will use the representations and discourses surrounding *pasta alla carbonara* as a case study. *Pasta alla carbonara* is one of the most iconic dishes of Italian cuisine, and it is often perceived as being threatened by potential foreign “contaminations”. This dish exemplifies a contested terrain where local, regional, and national identities are embodied and distinctions are emphasized.

### **FINAL REVIEWS, COMMENTS**

In this final class, we will summarize the main contents covered throughout the course. We will engage in class discussions that revisit the topics we have explored, allowing for reflection and synthesis of key concepts. Additionally, the instructor will provide students with further details on how to successfully complete the final written project.

**Group Oral Presentation** (see Grading Criteria section)

### **FINAL WRITTEN PROJECT**

Due by TBD