



## Course Goals

I have both substantive and practical learning goals for this course. Substantively, by the conclusion of the course you should:

- Be familiar with the basic nutritional needs of humans and have a sense of various ways that societies have responded to these needs;
- Understand how patterns of food production shape the structure and interdependencies of groups in society; and
- Appreciate how food-related practices contribute to social solidarity and inequality, both within and across groups.

Practically, you will have an opportunity to:

- Scrutinize your own food opportunities and food-related behavior;
- Critically review social scientific literature on food;
- Conduct original quantitative or qualitative research;
- Write about and share findings of your sociological research with peers.

## Course Requirements

- Conduct a focused inquiry research project (30%)
- Complete three short essays/problem sets (PS 1= 10%; PS 2 = 15%; PS 3 = 15%)
- Take an in-class midterm exam on November 14 (20%)
- Maintain a regular Food Log (10%). Instructions for entries will be posted on the course website
- Regularly attend class and participate in informed ways in class activities and discussions (priceless)

*Focused Inquiries* Focused inquiries are small, contained research projects. You will begin with a question, conduct a preliminary literature review, and bring some empirical data to bear on your attempt to answer it. Your research project will result in a 15-20 minute presentation (10% of your grade) to the class as well as a short (5-10 page) written report (20% of your grade). While each of you will conduct your own focused inquiry, students interested in similar topics may form a research group and work on linked projects. Examples of possible topics and detailed guidelines for these projects will be available early in the quarter. We will spend time developing and trouble-shooting research projects throughout the quarter, and I will ask you to turn in interim reports along the way. Each focused inquiry should include:

- A statement of your question;
- A discussion of why it is sociologically interesting or important;
- Your preliminary ideas about what you think the answer is

- Analysis of data that bear directly on your question;
- Interpretation of your results.

*Food Logs* Food Logs offer an opportunity to record aspects of your own eating habits and observations about others' interactions with and around food. The idea is not for me or anyone else to monitor your consumption patterns, but rather to provide you with a vehicle to reconsider what food tells us about social relations, inequality, and solidarity. For your food logs, I will ask you to consider a particular aspect of your food-related interactions (where does your food come from, who do you eat with, do you take 'food risks,' how much do you spend on food, etc.); my hope is that active and regular reflection will enhance the quality of your engagement with the course material and ultimately leave you with a rich and long-lasting understanding of how this most ordinary of activities reflects deeper social arrangements. Food logs will be graded on a P/F basis.

### **Course Website**

The course website is located at: <http://courses.washington.edu/soc401b>

Check often for updates, announcements, and relevant materials, including electronic readings.

### **Special Thanks**

Special thanks are due to the Office of Undergraduate Education, which has generously supported the international and global aspects of this course.

### **Important Dates:**

<b>October 2</b>	<b>Draft of Problem Set 1 due</b>
<b>October 9</b>	<b>Revised Problem Set 1 due</b>
<b>October 11</b>	<b>Food log due</b>
<b>October 16</b>	<b>Problem Set 2 due</b>
<b>October 25</b>	<b>Midterm</b>
<b>November 1</b>	<b>Food log due</b>
<b>November 6</b>	<b>Problem Set # 3 (part 1) due</b>
<b>November 13</b>	<b>Problem Set # 3 (part 2) due</b>
<b>November 15</b>	<b>Food log due</b>
<b>November 20</b>	<b>Presentations</b>
<b>November 27</b>	<b>Presentations</b>
<b>December 4</b>	<b>Presentations/Food log due</b>
<b>December 11</b>	<b>Final Research Report due by 5 pm</b>

## Weekly Outline

*N.B. This is a tentative outline, and is subject to change.*

### **Week 1 Course Overview**

#### *Readings*

- Mills, C.W. 1959. "The Promise" in *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press.
- Beardsworth, Alan and Teresa Keil. 1997. "Sociological Perspectives on Food and Eating." Chapter 2 in *Sociology on the Menu*. Routledge
- Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (<http://www.fao.org/>)

### **Week 2 Conceptual Primers: Inequality and Nutrition**

#### *Readings*

- Hurst, Charles. Chapters 2, 3, and 8 in *Social Inequality: Forms, Causes, and Consequences*.
- Federal Dietary Guidelines (<http://www.health.gov/DietaryGuidelines/>)
- Nestle, Marion. 1999. "Meat or Wheat for the next millennium?" *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* 58: 211-218.

### **Week 3 Variation in What We Eat**

#### *Readings*

- Beardsworth, Alan and Teresa Keil. 1997. "The Origins of Human Subsistence." Pp. 13-31 in *Sociology on the Menu*. Routledge
- Gabaccia, Donna. 1998. "Colonial Creoles" Chapter 1 in *We Are What we Eat*.
- Silva, Nikki and Davia Nelson. 2005. "An Unexpected Kitchen: The George Foreman Grill." Pp. 16-31 in *Hidden Kitchens*.

### **Week 4 Variation in What We Eat (continued)**

#### *Readings*

- Menzel, Peter and Faith D'Aluisio. 2006. *The Hungry Planet*. Ten Speed Press.
- Beardsworth, Alan and Teresa Keil. 1997. "Sugar and Confectionary." Chapter 11 in *Sociology on the Menu*. Routledge

### **Week 5 Food and Social Organization**

#### *Readings*

- Nolan, Patrick and Gerhard Lenski. 2004. "Pre-industrial Societies" Chapters 5-7 in *Human Societies: An introduction to MacroSociology*. Paradigm Publishers
- Komlos, John and Marieluise Baur. 2004. "From the tallest to (one of) the fattest: the enigmatic fate of the American population in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century." *Economics and Human Biology* 2:57-74.
- Beardsworth, Alan and Teresa Keil. 1997. "Food, Family, and Community" and "Eating Out" Chapters 4-5 in *Sociology on the Menu*. Routledge

## **Week 6 Industrial Food Production**

### *Readings*

- Goody, Jack. 1997. "Industrial Food: Towards the Development of a World Cuisine" Pp. 338-356 in Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Routledge.
- Beardsworth, Alan and Teresa Keil. 1997. "The Making of the Modern Food System." Chapter 2 in *Sociology on the Menu*. Routledge
- Pollan, Michael. 2006. "Industrial Corn." Pp. 15-121 in *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. Penguin Press.
- Nestle, Marion. 2003. "From 'Eat More' to 'Eat Less,' 1900-1990. Pp. 31-50 in *Food Politics*. University of California Press.

## **Week 7 Local Food Opportunities**

### *Readings*

- Austin, et. al., 2005. "Clustering of Fast Food Restaurants Around Schools." *American Journal of Public Health*. 95:1575-1581.
- Fitchen, Janet. "Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty in the United States." Pp. 384-401 in Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Routledge.

## **Week 8 Food and Social Solidarity (ethnicity, religion, region)**

### *Readings*

- Gabaccia, Donna. 1998. *We Are What We Eat*.

## **Week 9-11 Results of Our Research/Wrap-Up and Festivities**