

**FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR (FALL 2007)
SALT COD AND COOL WHIP
DR. ELISABETH PIEDMONT-MARTON**



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DESCRIPTION

At Southwestern all First-Year seminars focus on developing the student's abilities in the following areas: reading, writing, critical thinking, research, informed discussion and creativity. In this section we'll be reading about food and culture in the United States. We'll also be cooking and eating – and talking and writing about food, cooking, and eating.

Food is an old subject. But the academic study of the way people produce, procure, prepare, and eat food as a path to understanding culture is relatively new. This course will situate itself at the multi-disciplinary interchange that characterizes this new field of inquiry and will introduce students to the ways in which practices of everyday life as well as historical and literary texts may be open to intellectual inquiry about food and eating. Among the questions we'll pursue are, what was the impact of West African slaves in the development of American food, what was the “home economics movement” and how did it effect gender roles, why is American food still considered inferior as a world cuisine, and how are food and politics intertwined?

TEXTS

Laura Shapiro, *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America*
David Kamp, *United States of Arugula*
Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*
Selected additional readings available as hand-outs

POLICIES

You are expected to prepare for and attend each class meeting. Failure to do so will affect your grade, but more important, it will diminish your capacity to fully engage in the intellectual pursuits and debates of the class, and to take advantage of a valuable opportunity to be challenged and taken seriously as a thinker and writer.

You are responsible for the readings and assignments listed on the syllabus for each class day. Assignments are due on the day indicated. No late papers are accepted, except on rare occasions and with advance arrangement. If an emergency prevents you from attending class, you should consult with a classmate to see what you missed and you responsible for making it up.

Short papers (1-2 typed pages) are based on the reading and class discussion. The two “major” papers (essays) will be longer (approximately 5 pages), and will require some additional research and reading.

Your final grade will be determined by the following formula:

Four short papers @10% each	40%
Journal and activities	10%
Two essays @25% each	50%

All students are expected to understand and adhere to Southwestern University’s Honor Code and to practice integrity and respect for others in class discussions and written work.

Southwestern University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should provide documentation and schedule an appointment with the Academic Services Coordinator (3rd floor of Cullen, est. 1286) at least two weeks before services are needed. In each class where a student requests academic accommodations, the student must meet with the faculty member teaching the course at least one week prior to the requested accommodation.

MORE ABOUT PAPERS

You’ll write four short, “low-stakes,” papers in this section of FYS, as well as two longer ones. When you are listed as a presenter for one of your short papers, please distribute copies of your paper to your classmate the day (or night) before it is due.

The essays, approximately 5-7 pages in length, will engage your critical capacities with at least two texts, and the second and final essay will discuss at least two texts as well as some outside research.

I encourage you to **revise** any of your papers (except the final one) for a new grade. Revisions are always due one week from the time you get your paper back from me with comments. *Please be advised that this rule overrides the schedule printed on this syllabus.*

Revised papers will be evaluated on the basis of how substantively and thoughtfully you have rewritten them. It's entirely possible to submit a revision and not receive a new grade. Correcting surface errors does not alone constitute revision, and you should not assume that because I have not marked all of them on your paper, you have not made any errors in grammar, punctuation, and usage. *You must submit the version of the paper with my comments along with your revised paper.*

ACTIVITIES & JOURNAL

You are required to complete at least **two** of the following **activities** (or alternatives approved by me): prepare one dish for the class from your home food culture, bake a pie, a loaf of bread or a cake from scratch, roast a chicken, or make a souffle.

Your **journal** is a record of your encounters with and reflections on food. This is where you'll track your experiences with new foods and new ways of eating, and where you'll record your experiences preparing food. The journal is also the place where you'll jot down and explore questions that arise from your reading which you may want to develop more fully in your papers.

SCHEDULE OF READING & ASSIGNMENTS (subject to change)

WEEK 1 Historical perspectives and critical questions	M 8/20 (10-12)	Introduction to course and discussion of summer reading (Shapiro)	
	T 8/21 (9-12)	Kamp, Preface, Introduction and chapters 1 and 2	
	Th 8/23 (9-12)	Kamp, 3 and 4 Discuss first paper	Honor Code Module 11:00
	F 8/24 (10-12)	Work on paper – no reading assignment	Library Module 10:00—meet in library One Community, Many Voices 11:00
WEEK 2	T 8/28 (9:30-10:45)	Discussion of papers presented	SHORT PAPER #1 DUE Presenters: Andrade, Wippel, Armendariz, Pena
	TH 8/30	Kamp 5-7	Field trip to Georgetown Farmer's Market
WEEK 3	T 9/4	Kamp 8-10	
	TH 9/6	Kamp 11-12	
WEEK 4	T 9/11	Discussion of papers presented	SHORT PAPER #2 DUE Presenters: Clinton, Truman, Dunkerley, Miller
	TH 9/13	Hand-out (article from Gastronomica)	
WEEK 5	T 9/18	“The Meaning of	ESSAY #1 DUE

		Eating," from <i>Near a Thousand Tables</i> , Felipe-Fernandez Armesto (handout)	
	TH 9/20	NO CLASS	INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES
WEEK 6	T 9/25	Pollan, part I	
	TH 9/27	Discussion of papers presented	SHORT PAPER #3 DUE Presenters: Holifield, Porter, Marsh, Mock
WEEK 7	T 10/2	Pollan, Part II	
	TH 10/4	Pollan, Part III	
WEEK 8	T 10/9	Discuss Prospectus, continue discussing Pollan and other readings	Short paper #4/(prospectus) due
	TH 10/11	Discussion of food journals, wrap-up, open topic final thoughts	

FINAL ESSAY DUE IN MY OFFICE (MBH 208) BY 5:00 ON THURSDAY, 10/18.