GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS
Course: HIST 390 – History and Culture of Food in Italy
Credits: 3 Credits
Instructor: Dr. Guido Gualandi, PhD
Fall Semester 2015 – Meeting Times Wednesday 3.35 – 6.30 pm – Room TBA

OFFICE HOURS
Wednesday 6.35-7.00 pm or by appointment (email: guido@guidogualandi.com)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this course we will examine the relationship between food and culture in Italy through a variety of readings, discussions, out-door activities and tasting experiences. We will look at food in its social and cultural context from a multi-disciplinary perspective — history, anthropology, sociology, and geography. The course will trace the historical evolution of Italian cuisine in time and space focusing on the many global influences which over the centuries have shaped the use of different food products, preparation methods, consumption patterns, i.e. the Italian approach towards food. We will look at food in its social and cultural context through a multi-disciplinary approach — history, anthropology, sociology, and geography. A major focus will be on understanding the extraordinary significance of food in the definition of “Italianness” from an Italian, as well as from an international (i.e. American) perspective.

Lectures and class discussions will be supplemented by special food workshops in which we will explore the history, culture and taste of selected Italian food products: bread, wine, olive oil as well as gelato. We will visit food markets in Florence, and go on one or more fieldtrips to Tuscan food producers.

COURSE METHOD
The course will be taught through a combination of formal lectures, class discussions, student presentations, tastings and out-door activities designed to engage students with the local community such as a culinary walking tour in Florence as well as field trip to food facilities in the Tuscan countryside.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course you should be able to:

☐ understand the relevance of an interdisciplinary approach studying food;
☐ be familiar with the historical and social construction of taste;
☐ develop an understanding of food as a most fundamental cultural aspect of Italian society

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the module students will:

☐ have deepened their understanding of the topic area;
☐ have acquired new perspectives on approaching food as an academic subject;
☐ be able to describe and discuss their newly acquired knowledge and understanding;
☐ have developed their research, writing, and discussion skills, and extended their capacity for critical analysis and reflection;
☐ have developed the confidence to explore ideas individually and in groups.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Course requirements include regular class attendance, class participation, required readings, paper project, a mid-term exam and a final exam.

Attendance is mandatory. For spirited discussion we will need your active attention and participation. Absences will have an effect on your final grade.
Class Participation: I expect that you will be committed to giving a professional effort in this class. Participation means active engagement in the course: being consistently prepared for class (having really read that day’s assignments); asking questions, responding to questions; offering your own insights and opinions; attentive listening to others. I begin by assuming a C for each student’s class participation grade and move from there.

The Required Readings are an integral part of this course and should not be considered supplemental. Reading assignments should be done for the class day they are assigned.

**Paper Project (30%)**
Each student is expected to write a paper of about 10-12 pages. Topics must be selected in agreement with me. The topics are determined by the available reading, and guidance will be given throughout.

You may choose to pursue further a topic that we are exploring in class, or examine another area of academic interest which is related to the subject of this course. I urge to discuss project ideas with me early on. This is to help you get thinking about your project early enough to do a good job. Time passes by quickly (particularly in Florence!). I will not accept any paper without the approved paper outline (see below) attached! Late papers will receive a drop in grade.

**Basic Resources and Bibliography.** Conduct a thorough search. Some basic resources are available at our library. You must also explore the Internet and look through magazines, newspapers, and archives. Journal articles are one of the primary sources of new theories and research findings. Get access to important databases such as JSTOR.

**Paper Outline.** The outline of your paper project should contain:
- the title of your paper;
- the bibliographic references, and
- a short abstract.

The paper outline should be a short, single-spaced, 1-2 paragraph statement of the goals and conclusions of your paper. It should allow the reader to grasp immediately what the paper seeks to communicate in terms of questions, evidence, methods, or interpretations. The more detailed and specific your outline, the easier writing your paper will be. The approved outline must be attached to the proper paper.

**Mid-Term Exam (25%)**
An exam covering all topics presented until the mid-term exam. It will consist of a series of multiple choice and short answer questions. The exam will take approximately 90 minutes to complete. It will constitute 25% of the final grade.

**Final Exam (35%)**
The final exam is the final step in the sequential learning process the course involves. In this exam you bring together the various concepts/topics we have studied. The exam will take approximately 90 minutes to complete. It will constitute 35% of the final grade. This is the only time the exam will be given. Students who plan to depart prior to the exam should not take this course. You must pass the final exam to pass the course.

**Review Sessions**
Thorough review sessions are held in indicated sessions prior to both the midterm and final exams. A written study guide will be made available for students.

**ASSESSMENT**
10% Class Attendance and Class Participation
30% Paper Project
25% Mid-Term Exam
35% Final Exam

GRADING
Grading will be done on a percentage basis: (A 92.5-100) (A- 90.0-92.4) (B+ 87.5-89.9) (B 82.5-87.4)
(B- 80.0-82.4) (C+ 77.5-79.9) (C 72.5-77.4) (C- 70.0-72.4) (D+ 67.5-69.9) (D 60.0-67.4) (F 0-59.9)

Academic Misconduct
This includes all forms of cheating i.e. copying during exam either from a fellow student or making
unauthorized use of notes and plagiarism, i.e. presenting, as one's own, the ideas or words of another
person for academic evaluation (paper, written tests, etc.) without proper acknowledgment. This
includes also insufficient or incomplete acknowledgement, or failure to acknowledge a source that has
been paraphrased. If you have concerns with any aspect of the course, please feel free to discuss
them with me. If you ever feel that I have treated you in less than a respectful manner, please raise the
issue with me.

CLASSROOM POLICY
Use of technology in the classroom. Please note that mobile phones must be turned off before the
beginning of each class. Use of a mobile phone during class (such as texting) may be grounds for
considering you absent from class that day

ABSENCE POLICY ON LECTURES AND EXAMS
Following university policy, more than four absences will result in automatic half-grade reduction for
each additional absence. More than six absences will result in an F for the course. There will be no
written make up tests without a medical certificate.

REQUIRED READING
A culinary History of Food, Edited by JL Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, Columbia University Press,
1999
2) Additional ‘Required Readings’ will be made available by the instructor.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS*

Week 1
What will this course be about? Historical Perspectives on the Study of Food.
Introduction to course material.
Eating with awareness. Making Sense of Food (and of Italians!)

Week 2
Excursion: Exploration of the Florentine Food System (culinary walking tour, includes
tasting of street foods)
Workshop (Student Paper Projects)

Week 3
Prehistoric Societies and Food – The Domestication of Fire and the Neolithic
Revolution
Required Readings:
Montanari/Flandrin (1999) 13-38
Food Systems and Models of Civilization in the Classical World – The Definition of
Cultural Identity through Food and the Ideal of Moderation

Week 4
Food as a Source of Sin and of Salvation: The Christian Food Model and Early
Medieval Food Culture: You Eat What You Are
The Arabs and Their Influence on European Food Culture - The Triumph of Spices
Required Readings:
Montanari/Flandrin (1999) 90-140

(Fri): Field Trip
This field day-trip is of fundamental importance (mandatory!) for our class. Please schedule your
obligations in time so you can participate.

NOTE: PAPER OUTLINES MUST BE GIVEN IN BY Oct 22nd

Week 5
The Renaissance Banquet and the Introduction of Modern Table Manners
The Age of European Colonialism and the Columbian Exchange
Required Readings:
Montanari-Flandrin (1999) 349-393

Week 6
class discussion REVIEW

Week 7
(Mon-Wed): MID-TERM EXAM WEEK

Week 8
The Hot Beverage Revolution The French “Taste” Revolution in the 17th Century: The
Rejection of Artificial Cuisine
Required Readings:
Montanari/Flandrin (1999), 401-432
NOTE: PAPERS MUST BE HANDED IN BY WEDNESDAY, Nov 24th LATEST!

Week 9
Wine as a Marker of Civilization
Wine Appreciation (includes wine tasting)
Required Readings:
TBA
Week 10
Food and Industrialization – The Emergence of a Global Food System and the Return of the Omnivore’s Dilemma,
Required Readings:
Montanari/Flandrin (1999) 435-470

Week 11
The Codification of Italian Culinary Identity in the 19th and 20th Century
Required Readings: Montanari/Flandrin (1999) 457-499

Week 12
Italian Food Culture – The Invention of the ‘Mediterranean Diet’
Required Readings: Montanari/Flandrin (1999) 500-553

Week 13
Slow Food vs. Fast Food

Week 14
Cooking event
Class Discussion + REVIEW

Week 15
FINAL EXAM WEEK
*Note: We will stick to this schedule as closely as possible, but please be advised that this calendar is subject to some minor modification. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to get in touch with a class member or me to find out the following week’s material and activities.