This course is intended to provide a multidisciplinary, comparative, and necessarily eclectic look at the anthropology of food, with a primary focus on issues of food and power. The objective of this course is to give students a thorough grounding in the following areas, several of which will be considered throughout the semester from different angles:

- Differing approaches to the anthropology of food and to understanding dietary patterns;
- Historical and contemporary “food regimes”;
- Commodity chain analyses and the history of particular commodities, such as sugar and chicken;
- Analyses of hunger, malnutrition and famine, as well as cultures of thinness and fatness;
- Debates between proponents of “food security” and “food sovereignty”;
- Food as a human rights and gender issue;
- Debates between proponents of agroecology and industrial agriculture;
- Food-related social movements.

Course requirements include:

1. **Active participation in all class discussions** (16% of course grade). I take this requirement very seriously. Please consider that the only way to not participate actively and achieve a “B” grade is if you achieve an “A” on every other assignment and examination (which for non-participators is nearly impossible). What you learn in this course and how well you do will depend significantly on how deeply you engage with the material and with the other people in the course. If you are extremely shy or inhibited (as many of us are or once were), use this course as an opportunity to get over it, because it will only hold you back. Anthropologists need to be able to interact with people as part of their fieldwork and in academic and other professional settings (as do non-anthropologists). If you are not shy, it is very important that you contribute to creating a supportive environment for those who might be.

2. **Eight one-page, double-spaced reaction papers** on any week’s readings, to be submitted by 10:00AM of the day of the class using the Blackboard “SafeAssign” feature (24% of course grade). These papers must respond to a written question posed by the instructor (and posted on Blackboard) or, alternatively, address an issue that you view as significant in the readings. It is up to you to choose which weeks you wish to write reaction papers, but it is probably not a good idea to leave them all for the latter part of the semester. Under no circumstances should reaction papers be more than one page, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, in twelve-point type. Papers must be carefully proofread. Papers that do not meet these criteria or that are written with less than professional standards will receive lower grades.

3. **An in-class midterm examination** to be held on October 24 (30% of course grade). This exam will consist of short answer and short essay questions, some of which will be distributed in advance.

4. **A take-home final examination** due at 5:30PM on May 19 via the Blackboard “SafeAssign” feature (30% of course grade). This will consist of short essays.

Late assignments and email submissions of assignments will be accepted only under very unusual circumstances. This syllabus may be modified during the course of the semester.
**BOOKS** for the course are available at Shakespeare’s bookstore (Lexington Avenue between 68th and 69th Streets):


*Other assigned readings* may be obtained through web links in this syllabus or via the Library’s Electronic Reserve web page for this course. Go to [http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/](http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/) to sign in. The password is edelman320. Please note that students registered for Anthropology 702.62 (graduate level) should use the Anthropology 320 ERES and Blackboard web sites. There are not separate web sites for Anthropology 702.62.

**A NOTE ABOUT ON-LINE BOOK PURCHASES:**

Many readers value independent, “brick-and-mortar,” neighborhood bookstores because they generate local jobs, are pleasant places to browse, and may feature distinctive services (discounts, alternative magazines and books from small publishers, used books, and readings by local authors). On-line booksellers may offer other advantages (shopping ease, greater selection, convenience); on-line book prices (and shipping charges) vary widely. If you order your textbooks for this course (or other books) via the Internet, you may do so at Shakespeare’s site [http://www.shakeandco.com/](http://www.shakeandco.com/) or you may consult the following sites, which will do an automatic comparison of prices at a large number of on-line stores: [http://www.bookfinder4u.com/](http://www.bookfinder4u.com/) or [http://www.bestwebbuys.com/books/](http://www.bestwebbuys.com/books/) [http://www.bestbookbuys.com/](http://www.bestbookbuys.com/)

If you order books through Amazon, please consider going to its site through the CUNY Graduate Center’s virtual bookshop [http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/) Amazon purchases via this portal generate funds that support the CUNY library system.

**A NOTE ABOUT BLACKBOARD, ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND E-MAIL:**

This course will make use of a Library Electronic Reserves web page (see above) and a Blackboard web site, which registered students may access from any computer with an Internet connection via the [CUNY portal](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/). The syllabus is available on the BB site under “Course Information” and on my Hunter Anthropology [website](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/). Blackboard allows the instructor to email individual students or the entire group, but it only uses Hunter email addresses that students receive automatically when enrolling at the College. It is important that you check your [Hunter email address](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/) or that you set it to forward messages to an account that you check frequently.
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212- 772- 4857) / TTY (212- 650-3230).

OTHER COLLEGE SUPPORT SERVICES

Hunter College also has the following resources available for students who are experiencing academic or other difficulties:

Advising Services: East Building, room 1119, tel. 212 772-4882, AdvisingServices@hunter.cuny.edu

Reading/Writing Center: Thomas Hunter Hall, Room 416, tel. 212 772-4212, http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/

Counseling Services: East Building, room 1123, tel. 212 772-4931, PersonalCounseling@hunter.cuny.edu

These offices are staffed by highly trained professionals who are there to help you. If you are in trouble of any kind, it is imperative that you contact the appropriate office and receive assistance.

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Hunter College Senate requires that the following statement be included on all syllabi:

“Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.”

See also http://studentservices.hunter.cuny.edu/advising/advising_policies_integrity.htm
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Wed. Aug. 29 Course Introduction – What is food? What is a cuisine?


Wed. Sept. 5 Approaches to the anthropology of food and dietary patterns

Douglas, Mary. “Deciphering a Meal.” Chap. 4 in Coulihan, Food and Culture

Harris, Marvin. “The Abominable Pig.” Chap. 5 in Coulihan, Food and Culture


Wed. Sept. 12 Famines and malnutrition in history and theory


Wed. Sept. 19 Historical and contemporary “food regimes”


Wed. Sept. 26 NO CLASS (Yom Kippur—“day of atonement”—observant Jews fast)
**Wed. Oct. 3 Maize**


Pollan, Omnivore’s Dilemma, pp. 15-119.


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**Wed. Oct. 10 NO CLASS (CUNY Monday classes meet today)**

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**Wed. Oct. 17 Agroecology versus industrial agriculture**


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**Wed. Oct. 24 IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

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**Wed. Oct. 31 Sugar (Halloween—kids eat too many sweets)**

Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, entire book
**Wed. Nov. 7 Cultures of thinness and fatness**


**Wed. Nov. 14 Chicken**


**Wed. Nov. 21 The 2008 world food crisis and the impending crisis of 2012-2013 (Day before Thanksgiving— when Americans eat too much)**


World Bank. 2012. “*Food Price Volatility a Growing Concern, World Bank Stands Ready to Respond.*”
Wed. Nov. 28 “Food security” and “food sovereignty”


“Maine Town Becomes First in US to Declare Food Sovereignty.” Sustainable Cities Collective, 2011.


Wed. Dec. 5 Food as a human rights issue


Wed. Dec. 12 Food justice and food-related social movements


Brazil: “Eucalyptus equals drought and hunger”

The take-home final examination will be due on Wednesday, December 19, at 5:30 PM. It should be submitted using the SafeAssign feature on the course Blackboard site.