ANTHROPOLOGY 3750: FOOD AND CULTURE
COURSE SYLLABUS

University of New Orleans
Spring 2012

Instructor: Ann Kos Edwards (www.annedwards.info)
Office: MH 328; Telephone: (504) 280-1135
Office Hours: MWF 1-2pm and MW 5:30-6pm
Also after class and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS:
The additional required readings are on my website: www.annedwards.info
Ethnographic films will supplement the reading materials.

OPTIONAL TEXTS:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The range of human dietary and culinary customs is both broad and fascinating. Many people enjoy items which we do not consider food at all. In turn, many of our favorite foods are taboo or even abhorrent to others. In most cases, however, the selection and preparation of food is a reasonable response to available resources and technology. In others, diet has subtle biological functions; heavy reliance upon proteins or upon carbohydrates may, for example, carry significant symbolic messages. In all cases, food ways are a unique key to the intimate cultural heritage of a people.

This course explores human diet and nutrition from an evolutionary and cross-cultural perspective. It emphasizes ecological and cultural aspects of diet throughout the world. It is based on the view that the diet of a human group is the result of a complex interrelationship among environmental factors, history, economics, religion, technology and biological requirements.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
Examination of human diet and nutrition from an evolutionary and ecological perspective. The sociocultural and biological dimensions of food practices. Topics include the social roles of food: why we eat what we eat and with whom. Also discussed are food taboos and beliefs, food getting and preparation, changing food habits, contemporary problems of food production and malnutrition, and the effect of cultural and environmental influences on nutrient intake.
COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To expose students to other cultures through the study of food systems and thus to foster international awareness and the cross-cultural perspective.
2. To enable students to explore the ramifications for American and others of our society's way of constructing the food-cultural relationship.
3. To provide students with better understanding of various customs and eating practices of people that are distant and different from us. Why are some people strictly vegetarian?
4. To provide students with an understanding of voluntary self-starvation and involuntary hunger.
5. To give students the opportunity to develop their writing skills through food journals and essays as well as enrich their vocabulary by learning new terms concerning anthropology and nutrition in various cultures.
6. To provide students with the background knowledge to be able to understand and answer the basic questions: “Who eats what, why, when, how, and with whom?”

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular attendance and class participation are critical for a good grade. You will be allowed two (2) class absences without a change in your final grade. Thereafter, each additional class absence will reduce your final grade by two (2) points. You must sign an attendance sheet passed around during class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and/or examinations, falsifying identity, and acting as an accessory to incidents of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available on the university’s website.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC-260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course requires a midterm exam and a final exam, an individual project in the form of an oral presentation-demonstration and a written research paper with a minimum of 10 references (to be discussed in class).

Topics may be selected from a variety of subjects that are connected with food and cultures from around the world or from the ethnic groups in the New Orleans area. Students will also be required to keep a food journal. The topics and the journal will be discussed in class in greater detail. If time permits, a field trip to an ethnic restaurant or a food festival will be arranged as part of this course (at cost to the student).

SUGGESTED READING SCHEDULE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>McIntosh:</th>
<th>Pollan:</th>
<th>Website:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction and Chapters 1-7</td>
<td>Article</td>
<td>Article</td>
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Week 4  McIntosh: Chapter 3  The Early Dietary Patterns  
Website  Article  The Abominable Pig by Harris, M.

Week 5  McIntosh: Chapter 4  Dietary Patterns from Columbian Times…  
Website  Article  Traditional Medical Values of Food by Anderson, E. N.

Week 6  Schlosser: Introduction and Chapters 1-4  
McIntosh: Chapter 5  American Food Habits: The New Republic…  
Website  Article  The Psychoanalytic Study of Infantile Feeding Disturbances by Freud, A.

Week 7  Schlosser: Chapters 5-10  
McIntosh: Chapter 6  American Food Habits: The Twentieth Century

Week 8  McIntosh: Chapter 7  Understanding Food Habits

Week 9  Pollan: Chapters 8-14  
Website  Article  Where Fat is a Mark of Beauty by Simmons, A.

Week 10  McIntosh: Chapter 8  Food and Ideology  
Website  Article  The Sweetness of Fat by Sobo, E.

Week 11  McIntosh: Chapter 9  American Food: A Characterization  
Website  Article  Soul, Black Women, and Food by Hughes, M.

Week 12  McIntosh: Chapter 10  The American Diet: An Assessment and Prognosis  
Website  Article  Time, Sugar, and Sweetness by Mintz, S.

Week 13  Website  Article  Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty in the Contemporary United States by Fitchen, J.

Week 14  Website  Article  Beyond the Myths of Hunger by Lappe, F. & Collins, J.

Week 15  Pollan:  Chapter 15-20

Week 16  FINAL EXAM WEEK

**GRADING SCALE:**

Midterm: 30%
Final: 30%
Project / research paper: 30%
Food journal / class participation: 10%

A = 90 – 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 70 – 79
D = 60 – 69
F = 59 or below