



## CIEE Toulouse, France

<b>Course title:</b>	Food, Nutrition, and Culture (in English)
<b>Course code:</b>	FSCI 3101 TOFR (ENG)
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Business and Culture, Toulouse Language and Culture
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3.00
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45.00
<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2023

### Course Description

France has a worldwide reputation in the field of gastronomy as a key element of the art of living. Eating occupies a central place in French culture. UNESCO has recognized social practices of food as intangible heritage. Thus, eating goes beyond the biological dimension. Cultural and social dimensions shape our food practices. One of the objectives of this course is to acquire knowledge and understanding of social phenomena concerning the evolution of eating habits, service, table arts, and "learned" culinary techniques, from the Middle Ages to the present day. The major paradigms of French gastronomy (medieval, grand cuisine, classical cuisine, nouvelle cuisine), approached through a socio-historical approach, allow us to understand what we were, what we are, and what we could "become" as a society. This course will also address the social and cultural dimensions of food, including the variety of ways and places in which it is prepared and consumed. The objective is to understand local populations through their consumption practices and to understand the influence of social and cultural factors in our eating habits.

### Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Gain a solid knowledge of France's food and culinary culture
- Articulate French values as exemplified by eating habits, patterns, and traditions
- Analyze the organization of the catering industry in France
- Become familiar with current challenges to public health as illustrated by the food industry

### Course Prerequisites

None

### Methods of Instruction

Instruction will be supported by a mix of authentic and secondary materials, including films, videos and PowerPoint presentations. The main classroom activity is discussion, initiated by short lectures and informed by the assigned materials (which will be discussed in class). The course will include guest lectures. Readings are assigned to help students gain familiarity with key concepts and terms, which they will then be expected to integrate into their oral and written work (including a midterm and a final exam). Active engagement in class will be enhanced through student-led presentations, and experiential co-curriculars to local markets, supermarkets, and restaurants.

### Assessment and Final Grade

1.	French Food Presentation	20%
2.	Take-home Essay	20%
3.	Fast Food Presentation	10%
4.	Supermarket Report	10%
5.	Final Exam	30%
6.	Participation	10%
	TOTAL	100%

### Course Requirements

#### **French Food Presentation**

Each group (or student) will prepare a 10 to 15 minutes class presentation on a French dish or culinary tradition they would like to research and discuss.

Through online research and readings, the students are expected to discuss:

- The dish and its ingredient's story and background
- How the dish is embedded in a geographical and socio-historical context
- How this product may, or not, be linked with 'terroir'
- How the dish may have inspired other dishes

### **Take-home Essay**

Students will write an essay exploring the differences between French and American food cultures. For 2-3 dimensions of the food system of their choice, they will use the concepts examined in class and cite concrete examples illustrating the differences – or common point – between France and America. They will also rely on their readings of scientific articles and their own subjective experiences. For each dimension, examples from at least 2 different sources are expected. Assessment will be based on the understanding of the chosen food systems dimensions, and the use of diverse and relevant examples. (2000 - 2500 words)

### **Fast Food Presentation**

Students prepare a 5 to 10 minutes class presentation on a chosen sequence of the movie 'SuperSize Me' by Morgan Spurlock. They present the sequence to their classmates, and use the concepts seen in class to point out what is highlighted in the peculiar sequence they have chosen. The concepts seen in class and readings will be used to discuss the relevance of the sequence, at the time the movie was filmed, but also currently. Students are expected to present one example of how Spurlock's observations may – or may not – still apply.

### **Supermarket Report**

Students will write a short report (1200-2000 words) detailing their trip to a local supermarket. During the visit in the supermarket, students are expected to look for communicational clues and labels that can be found on product. The students will take pictures and analyze the packaging of a category of food of their choice. They will discuss the differences highlighted by labels for seemingly similar products, and the meaning of different labeling. Through the chosen products and the stakes of their labels, students discuss public health issues, food regulations and scientific uncertainty.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be split into two parts:

- A quiz, that will include questions related to
  - Turning points and important notions of the History of French Gastronomy
  - Food labels and regulations
  - *Terroir*
- A written part.
  - Students will choose 3 questions out of 4, and will address them in a few paragraphs (400-800 words), using knowledge they have acquired in the class
  - Some questions may come with documents (images, text) to describe and analyze.

### **Participation**

Students will be given several assignments, articles to read and discuss in class, regular reading of documents (press & research articles), films and videos to be discussed in class. Students are expected to remain fully engaged in all learning, most of which requires active participation. Participation includes being on time and remaining engaged for the entire class. Students should take part in discussions, ask questions, and promote a positive learning environment.

### **Attendance**

To encourage engaged learning, regular class attendance is required throughout the program. This includes any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as internship, service-learning, or other required field placement.

An excused absence in a CIEE course will only be considered if approved by a CIEE Center Director/Academic Director (not the Instructor), and:

- it is a self-certified absence for illness (only once per course, requires formal request before or within 24 hours, cannot miss assessment worth more than 5% of final course grade)
- a doctor's note from a local medical professional is provided
- evidence of a family emergency is provided
- it is a pre-approved observance of religious holiday

Unexcused absences include personal travel and/or travel delays, as well as missing more than 25% of a single class period (including tardiness and early departure). Assessments missed due to unexcused absences will be marked as zero. Students with over 10% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff. Students with over 20% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff, receive a formal warning letter (shared with their home institution) and lose 10% of the final course point total (e.g., a final A grade of 93% will be lowered to a B grade of 83%).

For more detail, please consult your CIEE Academic Manual.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive and inclusive teaching and learning environment. All students are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness, respect, and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in grade penalties or disciplinary action. See the CIEE Student Academic Manual for further information on academic integrity.

***N.B. Course schedule and co-curriculars are subject to change. The final duration and distribution of content and assignments will be determined and presented to students at the onset of the course.***

### **Weekly Schedule**

#### **Week 1**

Class: 1.0 Introduction

- Students' and professor's introductions
- Presenting and explaining this semester's syllabus
- Learning contract
- Workshop:
  - Why did you choose this course? Why France?
  - What is French gastronomy to you?
  - What are your eating and drinking patterns? (+ check if anyone is subject to food restriction (pork/meat/alcohol/dairies/gluten...), as it may influence the co-curricular activities)
  - share with other students

Class: 2.0 Introduction to French Gastronomy

Middle age, Renaissance and genesis of gastronomy, 'golden age' of French gastronomy (19th century)

- How gastronomy emerged from a specific socio-historical context
- How gastronomy and the etiquette evolved at turning points:
  - Medieval cuisine
  - Renaissance
  - The French Revolution
  - Cuisine bourgeoise

Watch:

French Gastronomy – The Origins of Haute Cuisine at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHMnktPx1Mg>

#### **Week 2**

Class: 3.0 The French 'Nouvelle Cuisine'

- The critique system, the Michelin guide, Gault & Millaut.
- Apparition of the French 'Nouvelle Cuisine'.

- The chef's role before and after the 'Nouvelle Cuisine'.
- Women's slow rise from domestic cook to the rank of great chefs.

Class: 4.0 From a Global French 'Nouvelle Cuisine' to Local Gastronomies

- Local and regional cuisine diversity

Read:

The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine at <https://www.theguardian.com/food/2019/jul/16/the-rise-and-fall-of-french-cuisine>

### Week 3

Class: 5.0 Co-curricular: Cooking Techniques from the 'Classical' French Gastronomy

Groups of 2-3 students, each will try and cook a chosen baked good, and taste/comment on other groups' baked items.

Class: 6.0 Co-curricular: Lunch at Local Restaurant offering "Nouvelle Cuisine"

Students meet and discuss the importance of food with the Chef.

### Week 4

Class: 7.0 Local Gastronomies, Terroir, and Tourism

- Rural areas, territories, and terroir. Defining the 'terroir', created during the 19th century, and now recognized by the UNESCO.
- How terroir and local gastronomy may be used to assign value to various regions and make them attractive to interior or foreign tourists.

Class: 8.0 Terroir Products from the Southwest Region

- Overview of the most representative terroir products around France.
- Specific regulations concerning cheese and wine.
- Focus on the Southwest region

Watch:

The Unique Terroir of the Burgundy Wine Region at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0nHe2CUXCE&list=PLC0VPgBApe6F5EMZrl47P2NStFPb63wPc&index=2>).

Read:

- Terroir and Cultural Patrimony : Reflections on regional cuisines in Aquitaine at <https://journals.openedition.org/aof/1531>
- Exploring terroir product meanings for the consumer at <https://journals.openedition.org/aof/187>

### Week 5

Class: 9.0 Co-curricular: Visiting a Place Producing Food with Terroir

Students visit a cheese maker near Toulouse (cheese maker, pedagogical/educational farm) followed by cheese/wine tasting.

Class: 10.0 Cheese maker visit debrief in the light of readings around "Terroir" notion

Read:

'Terroir and the Family Farm. Local Food and Raising Heritage Pigs in Northern Kentucky' at <https://journals.openedition.org/aof/10603>

### Week 6

Class: 11.0 Terroir vs. International Cuisine

The Impacts of Globalization on French Cuisine

Students explore and discuss the influence of globalization of French culture via French cuisine and eating habits.

Read:

The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine at <https://www.theguardian.com/food/2019/jul/16/the-rise-and-fall-of-french-cuisine>

Class: 12.0 Cuisine Workshop: North African Pastries and Mint Tea

Students sample and deconstruct North African impacts on French cuisine and culture.

### **Week 7**

Class: 13.0 The Food System I

Students define and discuss different components of a food system and its dimensions on food cultures (the edible, the ways of consuming, the culinary, temporality, the food chain system).

Read:

Broad themes of difference between French and Americans in attitudes to food and other life domains: personal versus communal values, quantity versus quality, and comforts versus joys' (Rozin, Remick, Fischler, 2011).

Class: 14.0 The food system II

In-class conversation to discuss the most visible differences between France's and US' food cultures.

Read: 'Mastering French Cuisine, Espousing French Identity' (Shields-Argelès, 2010)

Due: Take-Home essay

### **Week 8**

Class: 15.0 Oral presentation: French dish

Each group (or student) will prepare a 10 to 15 minutes class presentation on a French dish or culinary tradition they would like to research and discuss.

Through online research and readings, the students are expected to discuss:

- The dish and its ingredient's story and background
- How the dish is embedded in a geographical and socio-historical context
- How this product may, or not, be linked with 'terroir'
- How the dish may have inspired other dishes

Due: French Food Presentation

Class: 16.0 'Food modernity' in a French context

The rise of industrial food and its place in the kitchen. Students define and discuss 'Anomy' (rearrangement, loss of rules), consumers' responsibilities, individualization of food

Read 'Commensality, society and culture' (Fischler, 2011) (available for free at <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01246748/document>)

### **Week 9**

Class: 17.0 'Food modernity' in a French context II

Students explore food anxiety (UEO = Unidentified Edible Object) [rough translation of 'OCNI' : 'Objet Comestible Non-Identifié'.]

Class: 18.0 Co-curricular to organic and traditional supermarket

Students visit two supermarkets, meeting with owners and discussing product purchase policy.

## **Week 10**

Class: 19.0 Introduction to socio-anthropology of food

Students investigate concepts used in the social sciences related to food

Due: Supermarket Report

Class: 20.0 Social and nutrition issues related to food modernity

- From production to consumption
- Obesity and social status
- Eating disorders
- Evidence-based nutritional policy in Europe and the US

Watch:

Super Size Me at <https://watchdocumentaries.com/super-size-me/>

Due: Fast Food Presentation

## **Week 11**

Class: 21.0 Food and the Environment

- Slow food and virtuous globalization
- Healthy alternatives
- Alternative trends and diets

Watch:

Nossiter, Jonathan. Mondovino. Diaphana Films, Goatworks Films, Les Films de la Croisade Production. 2004

Class: 22.0 Sustainable gastronomy

- A growing interest for a healthy, home-made, and possibly organic meal
- Movements in community gardens, biodynamic farming
- Local initiatives

## **Week 12**

Class: 23.0 Final Exam Preparation

Main concepts seen in class throughout the semester

Class: 24.0 Final exam

Due: Final Exam

## **Course Materials**

### **Readings**

Fischler: 'Commensality, society and culture', 2011

Fournier, Poulain: 'Eating According to One's Genes? Exploring the French Public's Understanding of and Reactions to Personalized Nutrition', 2018

Poulain, Jean-Pierre: Eating and the place of food in the society, 2017

Rozin, Remick, Fischler,: 'Broad themes of difference between French and Americans in attitudes to food and other life domains: personal versus communal values, quantity versus quality, and comforts versus joys', 2011

Warde, Alan: The practice of eating, 2005

### **Online Resources**

<https://journals.openedition.org/aof/> : bilingual (french/English) journal about food anthropology

<https://journals.openedition.org/aof/1531>)

<https://journals.openedition.org/aof/10603>)

<https://journals.openedition.org/aof/187>)

<https://journals.openedition.org/aof/6616>)

A short video about wine & terroir: 'The Unique Terroir of The Burgundy Wine Region'  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0nHe2CUXCE&list=PLC0VPgBApe6F5EMZrH47P2NStFPb63wPc&index=2>).

<https://slowfoodusa.org/>

<https://www.slowfood.com/slow-food-eus-impact-in-2021-lets-rewind/>

<https://slowfoodusa.org/history/>

International Panel of experts of Sustainable Food Systems [https://www.ipes-food.org/\\_img/upload/files/NewScienceofSusFood.pdf](https://www.ipes-food.org/_img/upload/files/NewScienceofSusFood.pdf)

Online documentary, 'Super Size Me' (2004): <https://watchdocumentaries.com/super-size-me/>

World Intellectual property organization, 'The feta case' <https://www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/details.jsp?id=5578>

the 'camembert war' : 4'30" video: 'France: The camembert war' <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7fenfs>

The Guardian article, 2019 'French camembert war flares up again over labelling stink'  
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/13/french-camembert-war-flares-up-again-over-labelling-stink>)

The Connexion article, 2020 'Camembert ruling ends 20-year cheese war – for now'  
(<https://www.connexionfrance.com/Mag/Food-and-Drink/Camembert-ruling-ends-20-year-cheese-war-for-now>)

Inews article, 2018 'The sad end of the camembert wars' (<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/the-sad-end-of-the-camembert-wars-130462>)