

People, Identity, and Food ANTH3010 (4 credits)

International Honors Program (IHP) **IHP Food Systems: Agriculture, Sustainability, and Justice**

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

Food cultivation, preparation, distribution and consumption habits play a central role in every culture. These practices are at times tasks and at other times rituals, sometimes leisurely activities and at other times dire necessities. As such central features of human societies they are inevitably imbued with meaning and understood and communicated in various symbolic ways. Access to food, eating habits and choices, and the preparation of certain foods often reveal distinctions of age, gender, status, class, occupation, ethnicity, religion among others, within and among cultures. Eating together is an important social act often accompanied by customs or rituals specific to cultural groups. Processes and practices of food production, distribution and consumption are deeply cultural understandings that are also constantly changing in an increasingly globalized world. Even the concept of what constitutes natural resources is mediated, defined, and circumscribed by the particular experiences, tastes, attitudes, as well as the cultural, economic, and historical choices of the cultural group to which the individuals making such a determination belong.

This comparative course will explore, among other questions:

- What roles do food play in people's lives including and beyond nutrition?
- How do access and relationships to food affect every aspect of our lives, from health and family economics to social association, geographic choices, and leisure?
- In what ways do certain groups identify themselves through food practices?
- How do cultural and religious beliefs, family organization, gender roles, inheritance patterns, and community norms play a role in local food production and distribution chains?
- What role does gender play in the division of labor of food systems and therefore in efforts to intervene in food systems?
- How are globalization and rapid urbanization changing relationships between people and their environments, and consequently with production and distribution chains, and therefore with food itself?
- How do the construction of identities, demand for foods, and distribution systems shape one another? Are access to food, and strategies for nutrition and health, culturally determined?

Course Goals

- Cultivate a community of respect, curiosity, and mutual support.
- Honor every member of our learning community as a whole human.
- Realize the ways in which we are all teachers *and* learners.
- Introduce students to capitalist processes which shape agrifood systems.
- Encourage students to embrace and grapple with uncertainty and complexity.

- Promote empathy, self-reflection, and critical thinking as complementary and mutually reinforcing learning skills.
- Ask questions that genuinely interest you.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of basic principles and foundations of cultural anthropology.
- Demonstrate understanding of basic principles and foundations of environmental anthropology.
- List, define and discuss concepts related to individual and collective identity culture and core beliefs.
- Identify and describe basic principles of ethnography and related research methodologies.
- Apply ethnographic research methodologies within diverse cultural contexts.
- Demonstrate a comparative cross-cultural and cross-geographic framework for the analysis of issues related to identity, community, the environment and food.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English

Instructional Methods

SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a *concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation* embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

Reading, preparation, and participation

This course depends on you being prepared for class discussion. For each class, you should read the assigned readings, prepare one or two questions, and raise them in class. These may be clarifying, reflective, or provocative questions about the readings, and can relate to your experiences outside the classroom. You will be assessed based on your contribution to group discussions, including your questions and responses to peers' questions, as well as your active listening and sharing of air-time.

Country-Specific Assignment

In each location the relevant local faculty member will assign coursework integrating readings, excursions/site visits/ and in-class lectures.

Assessment

20% Reading, preparation, participation

80% Country assignments as assigned by local faculty each term

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the coordinator or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared.
- Complete assignments on time.

- Be attentive, engaged, and respectful with hosts, lecturers, and everyone else you meet.
- Do not cheat or plagiarize.
- Respect difference.
- Take ownership of your own learning as an individual and as a group.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

Course Schedule

**Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs*

Module 1: Ecuador

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGICAL METHODS

DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2011). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers*. Rowman Altamira.

Ferraro, Gary, and Susan Andreatta. *Cultural anthropology: An applied perspective*. Nelson Education, 2011. (Chapter 2)

SESSION 2: CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS TO HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY

Ellis, Frank. *Rural livelihoods and diversity in developing countries*. Oxford university press, 2000. (Chapter 2)

Messer, E., & Shipton, P. (2002). Hunger in Africa: untangling its human roots. (Chapter 12)

SESSION 3: INTRODUCTION OF ECUADORIAN CULTURES AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL METHODS

Walmsley, E. (2005) Race, place and taste: Making identities through sensory experience in Ecuador. *Etnofo* 18: 43-60.

SESSION 4: GENDER AND RACIALIZATION IN MARKET SPACES: ANDEAN CASE STUDY

David McMurray & Joan Gross (2007) Teaching about Globalization and Food in Ecuador. *Food, Culture & Society*, 10:3, 472-489, DOI: 10.2752/155280107X239890

Corr, Rachel (2016). "We make them give more": Women's roles in the exchange and redistribution of food across ethnic boundaries, *Food and Foodways*, 24:3-4, 173-193, DOI: 10.1080/07409710.2016.1210897

SESSION 5: RITUALS AND FOOD CONSUMPTION: THE INTERSECTION OF FOOD, IDENTITY, AND MEMORY

Ferraro, Emilia. (2008) Kneading life: Woman and the celebration of the dead in the Ecuadorian Andes. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14: 262-277.

Module 2: Malawi

SESSION 1: SMALLHOLDER LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURE

- Diamond, J. (1987). The worst mistake in the history of the human race. *Discover* 1987.
- Netting, Robert McC. *Smallholders, Householders: Farm Families and the Ecology of Intensive, Sustainable Agriculture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Selected pages (subsection, not a whole chapter): "Demography and Technology as Modeled by Malthus, Marx, and Boserup" pp. 276-285.

SESSION 2: AGRICULTURAL AND ECOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: RESEARCH METHODS

- Crane, J. and M. Angrosino. (1992) *Field Projects in Anthropology*. Waveland Press: Illinois. (Projects 2, 4, and 6: Making Maps, Interviewing informants, and Collecting Life Histories)

SESSION 3: APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL/AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Rodney, W. (1997). How Europe underdeveloped Africa. In R. R. Grinker & C. B. Stiener (Eds.), *Perspectives on Africa: A reader in Culture, History, & Representation* (pp. 585-596). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Ferguson, J. (1994). The anti-politics machine: "Development" and bureaucratic power in Lesotho. *The Ecologist* 24: 176-181.
- Clapp, Jennifer. "The Political Economy of Food Aid in an Era of Agricultural Biotechnology." *Food and Culture: A Reader, Second Edition*. Eds. Counihan, Carole and Penny Van Esterik. New York: Routledge, 2008. 539-53.

SESSION 4: A GEOGRAPHICAL AND SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE ON FOOD

- Born, B., & Purcell, M. (2006). "Avoiding the local trap scale and food systems in planning research" *Journal of planning education and research*, 26(2), 195-207.
- Donald, B., & Blay-Palmer, A. (2006). "The urban creative-food economy: producing food for the urban elite or social inclusion opportunity?". *Environment and planning A*, 38(10), 1901-1920.
- Wiskerke, J.S.C. (2009), "On Places Lost and Places Regained: Reflections on the Food Geography and Sustainable Regional Development", *International Planning Studies*, n. 14, vol. 4, pp. 369-387

SESSION 5: FOOD AND THE CITY: WHY FOOD IS (ALSO) AN URBAN ISSUE

- Morgan, Kevin. "Nourishing the city: The rise of the urban food question in the Global North." *Urban Studies* 52.8 (2015): 1379-1394.
- Pothukuchi K. e Kaufman J. (1999), "Placing the Food System on the Urban Agenda: The Role of Municipal Institutions in Food Systems Planning", *Agriculture and Human Values*, n. 16, pp. 213-224.

SESSION 6: CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY OF FOOD

- Susanne Freidberg (2003) Editorial Not all sweetness and light: New cultural geographies of food, *Social & Cultural Geography*, 4:1, 3-6

SESSION 7: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS