HUMN 281I: Food and Film – Writing Intensive
Spring 2017 Syllabus

Registration Numbers:
Section 01: 3431
Section 03: 3433

Tuesday Discussion:  
Section 01: 5:00-5:50 PM, ARTS 107
Section 03: 4:00-4:50 PM, ARTS 107

Wednesday Film Showing: Sections 01 & 03: 7:00-9:50 PM, Ayres 106

Thursday Discussion:  
Section 01: 5:00-5:50 PM, ARTS 107
Section 03: 4:00-4:50 PM, ARTS 107

Instructor:  
Dennis Rothermel
Office:  ARTS 378
Office Phone:  898-5058
Office Hours:  Wednesdays 4:00-5:30 PM, Thursdays 2:30-3:30 PM

Course Description

This course explores themes about food in international cinema, with special attention to the social, cultural and historical context of food as depicted in film, the cultural issues regarding national, ethnic and gender identity, and how the art and history of cinema have presented the many roles that food plays in our lives. This is a General Education Writing Intensive course, in The Arts category of the Food Studies GE Pathway.

HUMN 281I, Food and Film – WI, incorporates the following General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

Written Communication: Demonstrates the ability to question, investigate and draw well-reasoned conclusions and to formulate ideas through effective written communication appropriate to the intended audience.

Critical Thinking: Identifies issues and problems raised in written texts, visual media and other forms of discourse, and assesses the relevance, adequacy and credibility of arguments and evidence used in reaching conclusions.

Active Inquiry: Demonstrates curiosity to ask questions, seek answers, contemplate, and pursue investigations with intellectual rigor, while making connections between cognitive and personal development.

Diversity: Demonstrates an understanding of and facility with different intellectual viewpoints as well as the unique perspectives of others based on varied experiences, identities and social attributes.

Creativity: Takes intellectual risks and applies novel approaches to varied domains.
HUMN 281 Specific Course Goals and Objectives

1. Development of a facility for insightful observation and description of cinema, to include an understanding of cinematic style
2. Experience in the task of interpretation of cinema as a means of comprehending the ideas or message imparted by a work of cinema
3. Exploration of cinema as art, including understanding significant theoretical writings on cinema and art
4. Explore how the cinema represents the many roles that food plays in our lives – as sustenance, as expression of identity, as a form of entertainment, as ritual, as a means to bring people together into a community
5. Exploration of food as culinary art, including understanding significant theoretical writings on the culinary arts, and on food and film
6. Explore how film shows how food transmits culture and constitutes national, gender, and ethnic identity
7. Explore the social, cultural, and historical context of food, as depicted in film
8. Exercise general reading and writing skills, oral communication, as well as skill in insight, observation, analytical thought, critical thinking, and creative thought

Required Text

Course Readings for HUMN 281, Food and Film, Spring 2017
Available from Chico Packet Pro

Course Requirements

1. Four short papers (3-5 pp. each).
3. Final exam.
4. Class attendance and participation.

The preliminary calculation of the course grade will be the average of the letter grades assigned to the four short papers and the final exam. Each individual paper counts for one fifth (20%) of the final grade, and the final exam counts for one fifth (20%) as well. All members of the class need to submit four individual papers and pass the final exam in order to receive credit for the course.

The four short papers will address the film showings during the semester. See General Advice On Writing Papers, below.

The final exam will focus upon the readings that will have been assigned and discussed during the semester. The final exam will have two parts, the first of which will be multiple choice in format and the second part consisting in a written essay. The essay part of the final exam will be an opportunity to discuss the theoretical concepts found in these readings as applied to the films studied during the course of the semester.
Class participation will be tabulated based on responses to impromptu in-class writing exercises, contributions to group discussions of film showings, on-line quizzes, and responses for two optional special assignments.

Discussion Groups will each be assigned a heuristic question to consider for thirteen film showings. These questions will be announced before each Wednesday film showing and then discussed during the Thursday session the next day. Time will be set aside during these Thursday sessions for the Discussion Groups to meet and put together some thoughts regarding their assigned questions. Each group will submit a brief written summary of those thoughts, signed by all members present in class that day. These written responses will be graded as “terrific” (“√+”), “fine” (“√”), or “bizarre” (“?”), which will contribute 2 points, 1 point, or 0 points to class participation for the members of the discussion group who were present that day in class and contributed to the group’s discussion.

Responses to impromptu informal in-class brief writing exercises on Tuesday afternoon sessions will also contribute to the calculation of the class participation segment of the course grade. These exercises will conclude discussion of readings assigned for specific Tuesdays. The written responses will be graded as “terrific” (“√+”), “fine” (“√”), or “bizarre” (“?”), which will contribute 2 points, 1 point, or 0 points to class participation.

On-line quizzes will be scheduled for Tuesdays and other dates during the semester. Class participants should read the reading(s) assigned for specific Tuesdays in advance and complete a brief quiz (or quizzes) on-line via the Blackboard/Learn site for the course by 3:00 PM on the day designated for discussion of the assigned reading in class. Performance on on-line quizzes will contribute to the tabulation of points for class participation. The general expectation is that nearly everyone should be able to answer all or nearly all of the questions correctly for each quiz. Doing so will contribute one point to class participation, and two points for longer quizzes.

Two special assignments will be optional opportunities to taste food on your own time, and to reflect about what you taste. Completing these special assignments will contribute typically 2 points but up to 5 points to class participation for each assignment.

A score for class participation above the expected norm will increase the final grade for the class by one step in the grading scale, e.g., from a B+ to an A-. A score for class participation below the expected norm will decrease the final grade for the class by one or more steps in the grading scale. Nearly everyone will have good reason to miss a small number of activities that contribute to the class participation tabulation. Accordingly, the expected norm for the class participation tabulation will be adjusted downwards from the score derived from participating in all scheduled activities. It will thus not be necessary to petition your friendly instructor for an exception or a make-up for having missed one of these opportunities. Moreover, these weekly activities are timely exercises; there is no point pedagogically to complete them later.

A special accounting of attendance will apply to the Wednesday evening sessions. Students need to sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of the session, and again at the end. The two signings complete registered attendance for the showing. Missing more than four evening
sessions will result in the demotion of the final grade by one full letter, e.g., from an A- to a B-.

Any case of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of “F” for the course. In any such case, your instructor will report the incident to Student Judicial Affairs.

Here is a link to Executive Memorandum 04-036: Policy on Academic Integrity and the Establishment of the Academic Integrity Council; Revised
http://www.csuchico.edu/prs/EMs/2004/04-036.shtml

Here is a link to a document that will help you learn what constitutes plagiarism:
http://www.csuchico.edu/sjd/_assets/docs/integrity/Avoiding%20Plagiarism.pdf

Here is a link to an on-line tutorial that will help you learn what constitutes plagiarism:
http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/

**General Advice on Writing Papers**

**General Requirements.** Four short Writing Assignments are required for HUMN 281I: three to five pages each, approximately 750-1250 words. A minimum of three pages of type-written prose (at 250 words per page) is necessary for even the simplest exposition of ideas concerning any of the assigned topics. It would entail an unusual degree of succinctness of expression to expect that a very good, or excellent effort could be restrained to less than this lower limit of three pages. At the other limit, efforts that exceed five pages are not discouraged. Nearly all of the papers that your instructor has received for these assignments that have exceeded the upper suggested limit have been well worth the effort of reading them, and not just because they were longer, but because their content warranted that length. These tend to be the papers that get the best grades.

**General Objectives of the Paper Assignments.** The assigned papers are primarily exercises in interpretation. To an equal degree, they will also rely upon your developed powers of observation and description. Issues of aesthetics, such as you might be willing to invoke and discuss, will be welcome and may contribute to the worth of a paper, but such is not necessary for a good or excellent effort. Criticism, i.e., judgment and evaluation, is not the issue here. For that matter, your instructor is not interested in whether you liked the films or not, and he summarily ignores any such testimony, either positive or negative. What is important for the task of interpretation is what you have to say about a film that reveals your comprehension of it. This presumes, first of all, that you have understood the film and are able to grasp the film-maker’s meanings and intentions. The effort to acquire this understanding should be paramount in your viewing of the film, as well as in your thinking about it for the sake of class discussion and also in preparation of your written work for the class. The exercise of writing about film can be counted as well-informed just insofar as it requires real intellectual effort to come to terms with a film in order to understand it, and in order to have some perspective upon what the film-maker has to say. Writing about film entails the translation of the rich visual experience of viewing a film into a linguistic discourse about that visual experience. This is real work, and, for the sake of education, the harder the better. The confession that “I couldn’t really get into this movie” will be taken by your instructor as a request for a failing grade.
What Counts as Quality in the Grading of the Papers. There are no specific or simplistic right or wrong answers to any of the questions offered as parts of the paper topics; yet it is not at all difficult to distinguish between a good essay and a meek one. Central to the issue of interpretation is the ability to fathom and relate the structures of meaning that the film-maker has woven into the film. The lack of attentiveness to what the film-maker means to say amounts to misrepresentation of the film – sometimes willfully so – and this will suffice to render an interpretation very clearly misbegotten. The films selected for our schedule all are sufficiently rich and complex in meaning so that simply pursuing this one goal – i.e., what does the film-maker (usually the person credited as the “director”) have to say? – will easily suffice, if pursued earnestly, to discover and explicate much that is insightful and revealing, even though much, much more might remain unrevealed and unmentioned.

Your friendly instructor pays attention to five aspects in evaluating writing assignments submitted for HUMN 2811: description and observation; interpretation and exposition; understanding the film-maker; comprehension of meaning; and composition and coherence. A detailed Writing Assignment Evaluation Matrix is posted on the Blackboard/Learn website for HUMN 2811. The assigned letter grade for a submission will be a holistic reflection of how well these five aspects have been realized. Poor composition will result in demotion of the grade by one or more steps.

Grading Standards. Generally, your instructor expects excellent work to be marked heavily by genuine and original insight, observation and/or analysis. Good work will have at least some of this same content. Satisfactory work exhibits minimal original effort or content. Thus, merely regurgitating your instructor’s ideas counts as having absorbed aspects of one developed interpretation but having added nothing to that by way of one’s own contribution. This may show that you have listened carefully and absorbed what your instructor has said, but merely repeating this constitutes no better than satisfactory work. If you can use your instructor’s ideas as a springboard for the development of your own ideas and analysis, then that warrants a better grade. Blatant disregard of the purposes of the exercise will warrant an evaluation of poor of failing work. Any case of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of “F” for the course. In any such case, your instructor will report the incident to Student Judicial Affairs.

Paper Delivery. All papers will be due 5:00 PM on a Friday. Papers will be deliverable via the course Blackboard/Learn site. It is advised that papers should be prepared as a word-processor file and then uploaded, or the contents copied and pasted into the location provided on the Blackboard/Learn site.

Policy on Late Papers. Late papers will be demoted. When in a quandary as to whether to submit a poor paper on time or a better paper late, please attempt to consult with your instructor for proper advice. Generally speaking, your instructor prefers better papers to hastily-written papers, but in fairness to those who submit papers on time, late submission will have its cost.
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Schedule of Film Showings

All Showings 7:00-9:50 PM, Wednesday Evenings, in Ayres 106

Amuse bouche Segment

January 25: Akira Kurosawa, Dodes’Ka-Den (Japan, 1970)

Starter Segment: Family Dinner

February 1: Jodie Foster, Home for the Holidays (USA, 1995)
February 8: Peter Hedges, Pieces of April (USA, 2003)
February 22: Cedric Klapisch, Family Resemblances (France, 1996)

Entrée Segment: Chef’s Crisis

March 8: Adrienne Shelly, Waitress (USA, 2007)
March 22: Ritesh Batra, The Lunchbox (India, 2013)
March 29: John Wells, Burnt (USA, 2015)
April 5: Sandra Nettlebeck, Mostly Martha (Germany, 2001)

Dessert Segment: The Exquisite Taste

April 12: Ken Loach, The Angel’s Share (UK/France/Belgium/Italy, 2012)
April 19: Juzo Itami, Tampopo (Japan, 1985)
April 26: Alfonso Arau, Like Water for Chocolate (Mexico, 1992)
May 3: Luca Guadagnino, I Am Love (Italy, 2009)
Friday, Jan. 27:  *** HUMN 281I Syllabus

Monday, Jan. 30:  * Timothy Corrigan, excerpts from *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* (Pearson Education, Inc., 2015; 9th ed.). ** “Tips on Writing about Film”


Friday, Feb. 10:  ** “Common Technical Terms,” parts 1 and 2.


Tuesday, Feb. 21:  * Roland Barthes, “Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption,” from: Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader* (Routledge, 2008); 2nd ed.).


** Excerpts from Wil Brawley, ed., Restaurant Owners Uncorked (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011).


Tuesday, April 11:  ** Rick Dolphijn, “An Aesthetics of the Mouth: Creativity between the Culinary and the Arts,” ANGELAKI journal of the theoretical humanities April 2006.


(* -- These readings are all contained in HUMN 281I: Food and Film – Course Readings – Spring 2017.)

(** -- These readings are all contained in the “Course Readings – Texts” folder on the Blackboard/Learn website for HUMN 281I.)

(*** -- This reading is contained in the “Syllabus and Schedules” folder on the Blackboard/Learn website for HUMN 281I.)
HUMN 281I: Food and Film -- WI
Spring 2017
Schedule of Quizzes

Quiz #1: *** HUMN 281 Syllabus 5:00 PM, Fri., Jan. 27
Quiz #2: * Corrigan, A Short Guide, pages 13-27, 42-46; ** “Tips on Writing about Film” 5:00 PM, Mon., Jan. 30
Quiz #3: ** Stern, “Consumer Myths…” 3:00 PM, Tues., Jan. 31
Quiz #4 * Long, “Holiday Meals: Rituals of Family” 3:00 PM, Tues., Feb. 7
Quiz #5: ** “Common Technical Terms,” parts 1 and 2 5:00 PM, Fri., Feb. 10
Quiz #6: * Harrison, “American Food Journal” 3:00 PM, Tues., Feb. 14
Quiz #7: ** “Common Technical Terms,” parts 3 and 4 5:00 PM, Wed., Feb. 15
Quiz #8: * Barthes, “Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption” 3:00 PM, Tues., Feb. 21
Quiz #9: ** Green, “All in the Family: … Kechiche’s … The Secret of the Grain” 3:00 PM, Tues., Feb. 28
Quiz #10: * Flammang, “Alice Waters’ Delicious Revolution” 3:00 PM, Tues., Mar. 7
Quiz #11: ** Trillin, from: American Fried 3:00 PM, Tues., Mar. 7
Quiz #12: * de Certeau and Giard, “The Nourishing Arts” 3:00 PM, Tues., Mar. 21
Quiz #13: * Bourdain, from The Nasty Bits and A Cook’s Tour 3:00 PM, Tues., Mar. 28
Quiz #14: ** Excerpts from Restaurant Owners Uncorked 3:00 PM, Tues., Mar. 28
Quiz #15: * Revel, from Culture and Cuisine 3:00 PM, Tues., Apr. 4
Quiz #16: * Dominique Crenn, from Atelier Crenn Metamorphoses of Taste 3:00 PM, Tues., Apr. 4
Quiz #17: ** Dolphijn, “An Aesthetics of the Mouth…” 3:00 PM, Tues., Apr. 11
Quiz #18: * Ashkenazi, “Food, Play, Business, … in Itami Juzo’s Tampopo” 3:00 PM, Tues., Apr. 18
Quiz #19: * López-Rodrígues, “Cooking Mexicanness … in Como agua para chocolate” 3:00 PM, Tues., Apr. 25
Quiz #20: * Lupton, “Food and Emotion” 3:00 PM, Tues., May 2

(* -- These readings are all contained in HUMN 281: Food and Film – Course Readings – Spring 2017.)
(** -- These readings are all contained in the “Course Readings – Texts” folder on the Blackboard/Learn website for HUMN 281I.)
(*** -- This reading is contained in the “Syllabus and Schedules” folder on the Blackboard/Learn website for HUMN 281I.)
Schedule of Due Dates

5:00 PM, Friday, February 3, 2017: Short Paper #1:
   Dodes’ Ka-Den

5:00 PM, Friday, March 10, 2017: Short Paper #2:
   Home for the Holidays
   Pieces of April
   Family Resemblances
   The Secret of the Grain

5:00 PM, Friday, April 14, 2017: Short Paper #3:
   Waitress
   The Lunchbox
   Burnt
   Mostly Martha

5:00 PM, Friday, May 12, 2017: Short Paper #4:
   The Angel’s Share
   Tampopo
   Like Water for Chocolate
   I Am Love

8:00-9:50 PM, Wednesday, May 17, 2017: Final Exam, in Ayres 106
HUMN 281I Weekly Routines

Tuesday Reading Assignment Discussion Routine
In advance:
   Read the assigned reading(s).
   Visit the Blackboard/Learn site and complete the brief quiz (or quizzes) on the reading(s)
   by 3:00 PM on the day that discussion of the essay is scheduled for class.
Beginning of class:
   Your friendly instructor will offer some further commentary on the structure and im-
   portant points of the assigned reading(s).
Further discussion:
   A brief in-class writing exercise based upon one or another idea or theory from the read-
   ing will complete the class session, in conjunction with close study of a brief film clip
   from that week’s Wednesday film showing.

Wednesday Night Film Showing Routine
Upon arrival to class:
   Sign the attendance sheet, first column (“7:00 PM”).
   Check announcements displayed on the screen
Beginning of class:
   Your friendly instructor will offer some commentary on the structure and important
   points of the evening showing’s film and filmmaker.
   You friendly instructor will display the heuristic questions assigned to the several discus-
   sion groups
Film showing
At the end of the movie showing:
   Sign the attendance sheet, second column (“9:50 PM”).

Thursday Film Discussion Routine
Gather into your assigned discussion group; commence discussion of the heuristic question as-
signed to your discussion group for the previous night’s film showing.
   One member of the group needs to serve as secretary, to compose a brief discussion sum-
   mary, consisting of a few of the ideas that the group comes up with.
   Everyone present in class in the discussion group should sign the discussion summary.
   One member of the group needs to serve as spokesperson for the group, to report orally to
   the rest of the class regarding your group’s heuristic question.
After approximately 20 minutes of discussion, the instructor will draw the class to attention and
ask spokespersons from the various groups to report to the class for a broader discussion.
Your friendly instructor will have follow-up questions for the group to respond to
At the end of class, the discussion group secretary should give the discussion summary to your
friendly instructor.