**FYRS - 1**

**THE GALLATIN SCHOOL OF INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY**

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**

**FIRST YEAR RESEARCH SEMINAR**

**FOOD CULTURE AND FOOD WRITING**

*(FIRST-UG710)*

**SPRING 2017**

**MON. AND WEDS. 9:30-10:45 A.M.**

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Instructor: Scott Korb  
E-mail: smk21@nyu.edu  
Classroom: 1 Washington Place, Room 501  
Office Hours and location: Mon. 12-3:30, Thurs. 12-3:30; 1 Washington Place, Room 614

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We love food and it haunts us. We indulge in it and abstain from it. It makes us sick and it heals us. We worry over where it comes from and serve it during our religious rituals. We pay a fortune for it and we give it away. Its preparation is a science and an art. With a major focus on crafting the research essay, this course asks students to consider the many, often contradictory, roles food has played, and continues to play, in culture. And through a process of writing, workshopping, and the all-important rewriting, students will have their own hand in the kitchen of the essay writer.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Writing should be pleasurable, hard work. And when done well, it should exhibit a Democratic Spirit. I’ve tried to select readings that, above all, make this point obvious. The aim of this course is to help you merge cogent, lively writing with precise, exploratory thinking. From the outset, a major emphasis will be placed on research methods. Over the course of the semester you will expand your repertoire of styles, forms, and techniques while finding and explaining (in writing) ideas that are new to the world. Most importantly, you will learn to construct interesting, arresting essays that build upon the work you do for your daily assignments.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Throughout the course I will help you learn to write effectively; you can also expect a great deal of help from your classmates. We will often have workshops in class. You can expect to write for every class. Major course requirements are as follows:

1. A series of instructor-evaluated writing exercises. These exercises will allow you to respond critically to the readings and begin to develop essay ideas. Required lengths for each will be specified when we discuss the exercise in class.
2. Four peer-evaluated/instructor-graded essays, each with multiple drafts. (For each essay, all drafts must be submitted with the final essay on the due date.

The four essays, like our readings, will all consider food culture and food writing. Exactly what interests you about our relationship to food—where we get it, how and why we eat it, what it means—is up for you to decide (or learn, I hope). Over the course of the semester, you’ll be expected to explain
to me and your classmates what's at stake in how we think about food. Where you need it, we’ll be there to help you along the way.

The first essay will require you to eat something and write about the “meal” in a way that makes meaning, through thoughtful analysis, of the food experience. (3-4 pages; no more than 1,200 words.)

The second essay will require you to write critically about a piece of food writing (either something we’ve read in class or a piece you’ve found on your own) in an extended, formal way, perhaps drawing on an informal writing exercise. This essay may be interpretive or argumentative – that is, you may expound on the text or take issue with its claims, or both. (3-4 pages; no more than 1,200 words.)

The third essay will require you to write about the preparation of food in a comparative way that makes meaning of the difference(s) in preparation. Your emphasis may be on one of the two (or more) food preparations – or any of the steps or decisions made along the way – but you must do some comparative analysis. (4-5 pages; no more than 1,500 words.)

The fourth essay will require you to research some aspect of food culture that is of interest to you, gather evidence from of a variety of other thinkers and writers and develop an organizing principle around which you present this evidence in support an idea of your own. This final piece of writing may be a further development of the ideas you’ve presented in the previous essays, but no material from your other essays may appear word-for-word in the final one. (10-12 pages; no more than 3,600 words.)

All essays and out-of-class writing exercises should be typed, double-spaced, in twelve-point font with one-inch margins. All essays must be accompanied with with some organizational plan you used while developing the essay; this could be a formal outline, a drawing, a chart, what have you. The research essay will require a formal outline. Please use MLA citation style (with in-text citation and a Works Cited list) for all papers. We will go over the specifics of citation in class.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS
This course requires a great deal of class participation. You’ll be expected to share not just your responses to your classmates’ writing and the required readings, but also to question both me and your classmates and to be ready to defend (and, occasionally, abandon) your own ideas.

Every student will have marked at least one passage from each class’s required reading that you will be prepared to read aloud and discuss with the class. The selection may be a beautiful paragraph, or a revealing turn of phrase, or an example of what you believe to be awful thinking. Whatever it is, it should be marked.

If, due to illness, emergency, or religious holiday, you cannot attend class, please be in touch with me directly as soon as possible so that you can be prepared for your next class. Please be aware that more than two absences will jeopardize your course grade.

STANDARDS AND GRADES
All final essays must:

- explore and develop an idea from diverse evidence in a coherent, interesting way;
• have a thoughtful, elegant beginning, middle, and end;
• be grammatically correct; and
• have a tone appropriate for the intended audience.

A work achieves excellence in all listed standards. B work achieves general superiority in all listed standards. C work is average in each standard. D or F work is seriously deficient in one or more of the listed standards. Final grades break down as follows:

Each of four essays: 80% (essay 1, 15%; essay 2, 15%; essay 3, 20%; essay 4, 30%)

Daily writing assignments: 10%

Participation and attendance: 10%

ePORTFOLIOS
You are among the first to participate in Gallatin’s new ePortfolio program. You will be asked to add content to your ePortfolio at least three times this semester, and we encourage you to maintain your ePortfolio through the rest of your time at Gallatin. For example, you might want to show your adviser your ePortfolio during advisement sessions to demonstrate your progress. You should have already received instructions via email on how to access and use your ePortfolio. Please note that students are expected to adhere to NYU’s Code of Conduct:
https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/compliance/code-of-ethical-conduct.html

You must comply with NYU Web Publishing’s Terms of Use:
https://wp.nyu.edu/terms-of-use/

Any questions about the ePortfolio program can be directed to gallatin.edtech@nyu.edu.

A NOTE ON PLAGIARISM
As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website [http://gallatin.nyu.edu/about/bulletin/undergrad/policies/integrity.html] for a full description of the academic integrity policy.

Course Book
J.M. Coetzee, Elizabeth Costello
COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK ONE
Mon., Jan. 23 — *Introductions*
Weds., Jan. 25


WEEK TWO
Mon., Jan. 30
Weds., Feb. 1 — Group 1 full-class workshop


WEEK THREE
Mon., Feb. 6 — complete Group 1 workshop; small-group workshops
Weds., Feb. 8


WEEK FOUR
Mon., Feb. 13
Weds., Feb. 15 — essay one due


WEEK FIVE
Mon., Feb. 20


Weds., Feb. 22

WEEK SIX
Mon., Feb. 27 – Group 2 full-class workshop
Weds., Mar. 1 – complete Group 2 workshop; small-group workshops

No readings

WEEK SEVEN
Mon., Mar. 6
Weds., Mar. 8 – essay two due


SPRING RECESS (Mon. Mar 13 - Sun. Mar 19)

WEEK EIGHT
Mon., Mar. 20 – Video: *The French Chef*


Weds., Mar. 22


WEEK NINE
Mon., Mar. 27 – Group 3 full-class workshop
Weds., Mar. 29 – complete Group 3 workshop; small-group workshops

No readings

WEEK TEN
Mon., Apr. 3


Weds., Apr. 5 – Essay three due; research topics due
**WEEK ELEVEN**
Mon., Apr. 10

*Reading:* Stephanie Danler, “The Unglamorous Reality of Working in a Top Restaurant,” excerpt from *Sweetbitter, Bon Appétit*, Apr. 21, 2016

Weds., Apr. 12

*Reading:* Tove Danovich, “Penn Station’s Underground Raw Bar,” *Edible Manhattan*, Nov. 16, 2015

**WEEK TWELVE**

Mon., Apr. 17 – Group 4 full-class workshop  
Weds., Apr. 19 – complete Group 4 workshop; small-group workshop  

*No readings*

**WEEK THIRTEEN**
Mon., Apr. 24


Weds., Apr. 26


**WEEK FOURTEEN**
Mon., May 1 – Group 5 full-class workshop  
Weds., May 3 – complete Group 5 workshop; small-group workshop  

*No readings*

**WEEK FIFTEEN**
Mon., May 8 – **Final essay due**