

Course Title: *Global Food and Culture*
Course Number: *UGPH 670*
Course Pre- and Co-requisite(s): *None*
Course Location: *Online, Zoom Link on Canvas*
Course Date & Time: *Wednesdays, 6-8PM*
Course Instructor: *Minna Sabbahi, RDN, MPH*
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Urban-Global Public Health
One Riverfront Plaza, Newark NJ 07102
minnas@shp.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: *By Appointment Only*
Course Website: canvas.rutgers.edu
Required Course Text: *None*

Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources: The class readings consist of articles and book chapters. Readings will be posted on the Canvas system for the course.

Course Description: Food tells a unique story about people, places, and perspectives. By understanding what drives people to eat the foods they do, we can gain insight into the broader factors that influence nutrition and health outcomes of populations around the world. The overarching aim of this course is to provide students with a deeper understanding of the cultural, social, environmental, political and economic determinants that affect the food choices, nutrition and health of populations globally. Students will learn cultural concepts that relate to food and body shape preferences, they will examine how different farming and food systems influence the foods that populations have access to, and they will learn about the diverse dietary patterns from around the globe, and how they might influence health outcomes. A combination of lectures, individual assignments, virtual in-class group discussions and presentations will be used to meet the course objectives.

Selected Concentration Competencies Addressed: Each concentration identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Public Health Nutrition include:

1. Analyze local and global food systems.
2. Demonstrate the use of evidence-based research in practice to study the relationships between diet, nutrition, and health outcomes across the life span.
3. Utilize culturally appropriate assessment methodologies to identify and prioritize diet and nutritional problems for diverse population groups.

Please visit the Concentration webpages on the School of Public Health's website at sph.rutgers.edu for additional competencies addressed by this course for other degrees and concentrations.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a. Identify cultural, social, environmental, political, and economic determinants that affect the food choices, nutrition, and health of populations globally

- b. Apply qualitative research methods to understand the drivers of food choice
- c. Demonstrate appreciation for personal, social, cultural, economic, and historical variations and diversity in food, eating, and nutrition
- d. Demonstrate the ability for systems thinking to analyze food systems globally from multiple perspectives

Competency	Course Objectives(s)	Course Topics	Assessment(s)
Analyze local and global food systems.	a, d	Introduction to Food and Culture, Sociocultural Aspects of Food, All Guest Lectures	<i>Nutrition and Food Systems Analysis, Reflections</i>
Demonstrate the use of evidence-based research in practice to study the relationships between diet, nutrition, and health outcomes across the life span.	b, c	Understanding Food Choices, Language and Food	<i>Nutrition and Food Systems Analysis</i>
Utilize culturally appropriate assessment methodologies to identify and prioritize diet and nutritional problems for diverse population groups.	b, c	Understanding Food Choices, Examining dietary patterns and health	<i>Qualitative Interview Assignment</i>

Course Requirements and Grading: Over the course of the semester, students will have the opportunity to earn 100 points. The course grades will be based on online quizzes and homework, assignments, and class participation. A detailed description of the assignments and their grading criteria will be posted on Canvas.

1. *Reflections [3 x 5 pts.]:* Each student will be responsible for writing three brief reflections- (500 word limit) based on specific topics related to food and culture from readings, videos, lectures, etc. Each reflection topic will be provided to students along with a question to consider in their reflection. Appropriate citations and APA or AMA formatted references are required for all reflections. [Due: September 28th, October 26th, November 30th]
2. *Qualitative Interview Assignment [25 pts.]:* Students will develop a semi-structured interview guide on the topic of the determinants of food choice. Interview guides should be based on concepts discussed in class as well as the academic literature related to food choices. It should also be tailored to a specific population. Students will submit their interview guides to the instructor for feedback, incorporate the suggested changes, and then subsequently conduct an interview with a volunteer who consents to participating and being audio-recorded. Students should record the interview and take detailed field notes. Students will write a reflection (~750 words) related to conducting the interview, their key takeaways from the interviews and how the findings relate to the existing literature. Appropriate citations and APA or AMA formatted references are required for all reflections. [First draft due October 12th; Final interview guide + reflection due November 2nd]

3. *Nutrition and food system analysis [30 pts.]*: Students will conduct an analysis of the food system in a specific country in the world. Each student will be asked to select a country from a specific region of the world to ensure that different regions and countries are covered by the class. The analysis will contain: 1) an overview of the food system (including political, economic, social, environmental, and cultural drivers); 2) a description of dietary patterns, and how the food system may influence those patterns; and 3) the main diet-related health problems (e.g., obesity, anemia, etc.) and priorities in the country. Students will be asked to use existing data sources (e.g., Global Dietary Database, Demographic Health Surveys, etc.) to describe current dietary patterns in the country. The paper should not exceed 2,000 words and should contain 3-5 tables/graphs to depict the nutrition and food situation in the country. Appropriate citations and APA or AMA formatted references are required. [Due December 14th]
4. *In-class presentations [20 pts.]*: Building on their nutrition and food system analysis, each student will present an overview of the food and culture of their selected country to the class using powerpoint or an equivalent presentation software. The presentations will be approximately 5-7 minutes in length, with additional time for questions from the class. The presentations should cover the following topics for their selected country: what people typically eat, why they eat it (e.g., determinants of food choice (with a particular reference to culture)) and how dietary patterns influence the health of the population. Students should also have one slide that describes the country's national dish, including its cultural significance. Students will be assessed by both the instructor and their peers. [Due December 7th and 14th]
5. *Class participation [10 pts.]*: This course is designed to be highly interactive. Class participation is expected from everyone during in-class group work, activities, and discussions. Regular class participation and attendance are required and will be assessed throughout the semester. Please notify the instructor if you expect to be absent.

Summary of Grading:

1. <i>Reflections</i>	15 pts.
2. <i>Qualitative Interview Assignment</i>	25 pts.
3. <i>Nutrition and Food Systems Analysis Assignment</i>	30 pts.
4. <i>In-Class Presentation</i>	20 pts.
5. <i>Class Participation</i>	<u>10 pts.</u>
<i>Total:</i>	100 pts.

Grading Policy:

94 – 100	A
90 – <94	A-
87 – <90	B+
84 – <87	B
80 – <84	B-
77 – <80	C+
70 – <77	C
<70	F

Late Assignments: Students will lose a full letter grade for each 24 hours after the due date for the assignment has passed. All homework assignments need to be either emailed to the instructor prior to class or handed in during class. Homework received after class will receive lose 0.5 points per day. All written work must be completed to receive a passing grade in this class. Please let the instructor know as early as possible if you have any concerns about meeting assignment deadlines.

Zoom Etiquette: The following are class policies for our class sessions with Zoom. Please read carefully; these policies apply to the Fall 2022 semester. All students are expected to adhere to the policies.

General: Log into Zoom using your Rutgers NetID and sign-in with your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. (If you use a different name than what is listed on the class roster, please email the instructor in advance of the class or send a private Chat message.) Using your full name allows the instructor to know who is in attendance and to quickly sort students into their groups when needed. Users who do not log into Zoom using their Rutgers NetID may have trouble accessing the Zoom classroom.

Video: Please turn on your video when possible. We recognize that this isn't always easy but this will help to build our class community. Seeing the faces of your classmates more closely duplicates the typical in-person learning experience and may shift your mindset into more focus and attention. Seeing each other can also provide each of us with positive social interactions.

- If you're unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions or prefer to not show your living space as a background, feel free to use a virtual background (several virtual background images created by the School of Public Health are available in the [SPH Student Connect](#) Canvas page).
- To save bandwidth, there may be times during class when the instructor asks students to turn off videos.
- Add a photo to your Zoom profile. (Then in times when videos are off, we'll see photos of everyone rather than an empty box.)
- If you have limited internet bandwidth or other issues impacting your video use, please inform the instructor.

Audio: Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.

- Use a headset, if possible. If you own headphones with a microphone, please use them. This improves audio quality.
- Be in a quiet place, if possible. Turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

Chat: Stay on topic and be respectful. Use the chat window for questions and comments that are relevant to class.

NOTE: Class meetings on Zoom will be recorded and made available for students in the course on Canvas only.

Course Schedule:

09/07/2022: **Week 1 Introduction to food and culture**

- Class Overview:
 - Describe what is meant by food and culture
 - Define the material and ideational (cognitive) sociocultural elements of food
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - De Garne, I., 1972. The socio-cultural aspects of nutrition. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 1(2), pp. 143-163.

09/14/2022: **Week 2 Understanding Food Choice**

- Class Overview:
 - Conceptualize food choice
 - Discuss the drivers of food choice
 - Discuss different qualitative approaches to examining food choices
 - Describe how to develop a semi-structured interview guide and conduct in-class exercise
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - Sobal, J. and Bisogni, C.A., 2009. Constructing food choice decisions. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 38(suppl_1), pp.s37-s46.
 - Bisogni, C.A., Connors, M., Devine, C.M. and Sobal, J., 2002. Who we are and how we eat: a qualitative study of identities in food choice. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 34(3), pp.128-139.
 - Family Health International. *Qualitative Research Methods: A data collector's field guide*. Module 3: In-depth interviews.
 - Fox, E.L., Peltó, G.H., Bar, H., Rasmussen, K.M., Young, S.L., Debrosse, M.G., Rouzier, V.A., Pape, J.W. and Pelletier, D.L., 2018. Capturing changes in HIV-infected, breastfeeding mothers' cognitive processes from before delivery to five months postpartum: An application of the pile sorting technique in Haiti. *Current Developments in Nutrition*
 - Online 30:
 - Students can access the website to conduct pile sorts here:
 - <https://5pyifwn0.optimalworkshop.com/optimalsort/class>
 - Instructions are provided for the different pile sorts
 - Note the labels that you used to name the different piles in the first sorting exercise and be ready to explain why you sorted them that way in class

09/21/2022: **Week 3 Resistance through Food Culture**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Shehnaz Abdeljaber, speak about cultural preservation and resistance through food amongst Palestinians living in occupied Palestine and the Diaspora
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - [Food as Control, Food as Resistance](#)

- [Decolonisation on \(in\) the Ground: Farming as Colonial Resistance in Palestine](#)
- Online 30:
 - Watch: [Palestinian Food Recipes that Serve Up Resistance](#)
 - Watch: [Saving Palestine's Forgotten Food](#)
 - Instructions: Think about the ways that you incorporate resistance and/or cultural humility in your own food/dietary habits. Be prepared to discuss during class.

09/28/2022: **Week 4 Language and Food**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Dr. Kathleen Riley, speak about how food and language are interrelated
 - Breakout into small groups to discuss reflections
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - Chapter 3 of Food and Language: Discourses and Foodways across Cultures
 - Amy L. Paugh, & Kathleen C. Riley. (2018). *Food and Language: Discourses and Foodways across Cultures*. Taylor and Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315695235>
 - Outline 30: Browse the various vignettes throughout the book
- *Assignment Due:* Reflection #1

10/05/2022: **Week 5 Indigenous Food Cultures in the US**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Andi Murphy, speak about indigenous food culture and resilience in the US
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - Read [Indigenous Food Security is Dependent on Food Sovereignty](#)
 - Outline 30:
 - Listen to the Podcast on [Navajo Food Sovereignty](#)
 - Watch: [How this Sioux Chef is bringing back Indigenous Food](#)

10/12/2022: **Week 6 Weaponization of Food and Culture**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Dr. Banan Abdelrahman, speak about the weaponization of food on various global populations and the ensuing implications on current food culture
- *Assigned Readings Due:* TBD
- *Assignment Due:* Draft of qualitative interview guide

10/19/2022: **Week 7 Sociocultural Aspects of Food**

- Class Overview
 - Discuss the role of using food as a lens to examine politics, equity and sociocultural dynamics of populations
 - Examine food meanings and symbols

- Examine the structure of meals
- Examine the links between religion and food
- Mid-Course Evaluation
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - Barilla Foundation. [The cultural dimension of food.](#)
 - Pak-Gorstein, S., Haq, A. and Graham, E.A., 2009. Cultural influences on infant feeding practices. *Pediatrics in review*, 30(3), p.e11.
 - Online 30:
 - In [Parts Unknown](#), Anthony Bourdain uses food to explore different social, economic, political and religious contexts.
 - Students are asked to watch one episode of parts unknown and answer the following questions during class time in breakout groups:
 - How does Anthony Bourdain use food to better understand the historical, political, economic, social, culture, equity, religious, etc. aspects of the city/country?
 - What did you learn about the food culture in your selected city/country that you didn't previously know?

10/26/2022: **Week 8 Food Culture and Identity**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Alaa Al-Shujairi, speak about food sovereignty and revitalization of indigenous food culture/methods
 - Breakout into small groups to discuss reflections
- *Assigned Readings Due:* TBD
 - Watch: Nadir Nahdi's [The Impact of Partition on Food](#): Muhglai Tikka Roll-Simmering Memories Tik Tok Video
- *Assignment Due:* Reflection #2

11/02/2022: **Week 9 Food Typologies, Dietary Patterns and Health**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Dr. Emily Merchant, speak about food typologies and impact on food and culture
- *Assigned Readings Due:* TBD
- *Assignment Due:* Final Qualitative Interview Guide + Reflection

11/09/2022: **Week 10 Food Sovereignty and Urban Agriculture in Cuba**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Meredith Taylor, speak about food justice and her work on methods and production practices used by groups with limited resources in Cuba
- *Assigned Readings Due:*
 - Introduction (pages 1-28) in Garth. (2020). *Food in Cuba: The Pursuit of a Decent Meal*. Stanford University Press.
 - Outline 30:
 - Watch: A Growing Culture's [Food Sovereignty Stories](#)

11/16/2022: **Week 11 Food Culture in Central and South America**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Anthony Carrion, speak about control of land by foreigners in Central and South America and the ensuing impact on food culture
- Assigned Reading Due:
 - Preface (pp.xi-xviii) of Galvez. (2018). *Eating NAFTA: trade, food policies, and the destruction of Mexico* (1st ed.). University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/j.ctv3znx6r>
 - Before Chapter of Harsh Times: A Novel by Mario Vargas Llosa
 - Online 30:
 - [Watch Cultural Studies Food Matters Week: Eating NAFTA and the Destruction of Mexico](#)

11/30/2022: **Week 12 Urban Agriculture in Newark, New Jersey**

- Class Overview:
 - Hear Guest Lecturer, Emilio S. Panasaci, speak about his organizations, Urban Agriculture Cooperative and Planting Seeds of Hope, as they relate to the local food system, community development and overall food and culture
- Assigned Readings Due:
 - Santo R, Palmer A, Kim B. Vacant lots to vibrant plots: A review of the benefits and limitations of urban agriculture. Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future. Baltimore MD, 2016.
 - Palmer, L. Urban agriculture growth in US cities. *Nature Sustainability*. 2018;1(1):5-7. doi:10.1038/s41893-017-0014-8
 - Zezza, A. and Tasciotti, L., 2010. Urban agriculture, poverty, and food security: Empirical evidence from a sample of developing countries. *Food policy*, 35(4), pp.265-273.
 - Read up more on Emilio's organizations: [Urban Agriculture Cooperative](#) and [Planting Seeds of Hope](#)
 - Online 30:
 - Aerofarms Newark
 - [How Aerofarms' vertical farms grow produce](#)
 - NYTimes. A vertical farm in Newark.
 - <https://nyti.ms/2FVwLrj>
 - Student should watch the video and formulate their opinion on the merits of vertical farming (do the pros outweigh the cons?)
- Assignment Due: Reflection #3

12/07/2022: Week 13 **Student Presentations Part 1**

- Class Overview:
 - Students will conduct presentations on the food and culture of different regions around the world

12/14/2022: Week 14 **Student Presentations Part 2**

- Class Overview:
 - Students will conduct presentations on the food and culture of different regions around the world
 - Final Course Evaluation
- Assignment Due: Nutrition and Food System Analysis Paper

Student Well-Being: The School of Public Health recognizes that students may experience stressors or challenges that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. If the source of your stressors or challenges is academic, students are encouraged to discuss these challenges and circumstances with their instructor, if they feel they may need additional support or temporary accommodations at the beginning or during this course. The course instructor may consider making reasonable temporary adjustments depending on the student's situation. For personal concerns or if additional support is needed, students may reach out to the [Office of Student Affairs \(studentaffairs@sph.rutgers.edu\)](mailto:studentaffairs@sph.rutgers.edu) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the [SPH Student Connect Canvas page](#).

Overview of School Policies: Academic and non-academic policies and procedures, such as Auditing a Course, Retaking Courses, Grade Grievance and others that cover registration, courses and grading, academic standing and progress, student rights and responsibilities, graduation and more may be found under [Policies](#) on the School of Public Health website. Below are select specific policies; however, students are responsible for keeping informed about academic and non-academic policies and procedures beyond those noted on this syllabus.

Learning Management System: Canvas will be used extensively throughout the semester for course syllabus, assignments, announcements, communication and/or other course-related activities. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Canvas and check it regularly. If you have difficulties accessing Canvas, please inform the instructor and Canvas Support (help@canvas.rutgers.edu). Canvas is accessible at canvas.rutgers.edu.

School of Public Health Honor Code: The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the School Catalog (sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html). Each student bears a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her graduate work. For example, all students are expected to observe the generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another's work, to refrain from falsifying data, and to refrain from receiving and/or giving aid on examinations or other assigned work requiring independent effort. In submitting written material, the writer takes full responsibility for the work as a whole and implies that, except as properly noted by use of quotation marks, footnotes, etc., both the ideas and the works used are his or her own. In addition to maintaining personal academic integrity, each student is expected to contribute to the academic integrity of the School community by not facilitating inappropriate use of her/his own work by others and by reporting acts of academic dishonesty by others to an appropriate school authority. It should be clearly understood that plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to sanctions up to and including separation from the Rutgers School of Public Health.

Students with Disabilities: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student must apply for Services by first completing a Registration Form with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (ODS) at ods.rutgers.edu. The student will also be required to participate in an ODS intake interview and provide documentation. If reasonable accommodations are granted, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations which should be shared with your instructors as early in your courses as possible.

Commitment to Safe Learning Environment: The Rutgers School of Public Health is committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the School as a whole. Free expression in an academic community is essential to the mission of providing the highest caliber of education possible. The School encourages civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and

constructive engagement. Provocative ideas respectfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with responsibility. The School encourages all students to disclose any situations where you may feel unsafe, discriminated against, or harassed. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will be not tolerated and violations may lead to disciplinary actions.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment: If you experience any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. You may report such incidents to the [RBHS Title IX Office](#) or to the School of Public Health's [Office of Student Affairs](#). Rutgers University has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. If you experience any other form of discrimination or harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious, political, or academic, please report any such incidents to the School's [Office of Student Affairs](#). The School strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to the School. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the School and potentially the University. For example, if you tell a faculty or staff member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty or staff member must share that information with the [RBHS Title IX Coordinator](#). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University [Policy 10.3.12](#). For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#).

Graduate Student Computer Policy: Students are required to possess a personal laptop, no older than approximately two years, that must meet minimum requirements which may be found online at: sph.rutgers.edu/student-life/computer-support.html

Policy Concerning Use of Recording Devices and Other Electronic Communications Systems: When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communications or recording devices.

Policy Concerning Use of Turnitin: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

Withdrawal/Refund Schedule: Students who stop attending their course(s) without submitting a completed [Add/Drop Course](#) form will receive a failing grade. Furthermore, students dropping to zero credits for the semester are considered withdrawn and must submit a completed [Leave of Absence](#) form from the School of Public Health's Office of Student Affairs. The School of Public Health refunds tuition only. Administrative and technology fees are non-refundable. You may find the Withdrawal/Refund Schedule on the School of Public Health website at: sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html