

Foodways

Folk Studies 388 / Anthropology 388 (web) • Dr. Antonsen • Western Kentucky University • Autumn, 2017

COURSE RULES AND GUIDELINES

[updated 7:30 PM, 7/25/17]

Greetings to you all. I look forward to teaching this online course. Welcome to all of you.

This is a Blackboard course. You should be able to access the Blackboard site by **Mon., Aug. 21 at 10:00 am** at the official start of class. You must participate on this and every other “class day.” A calendar of readings and activities will be available then. Log in at <http://blackboard.wku.edu>. If you have difficulties accessing the Blackboard site, do not contact me—I can’t resolve login issues—instead, contact Help as shown on the Blackboard login page.

This course introduces students to the study of foodways, a.k.a. the cultural life of food. It involves key concepts such as *culture*, *folklore*, *folk group*, and *foodways* as well as various theories necessary for understanding the complex relationships between food systems and individuals and groups. Readings and class discussions will focus both on how we define the category “food” and study it.

Textbook and other materials

- Pollan, Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation
- Netflix streaming subscription

Videos for free and to purchase You may be required to watch one or more videos online (see Computer Use and Software, below) for free. You may also need to rent or purchase one or more films or TV episodes through iTunes* or another online vendor. More info. on that during the semester should the need arise

Learning outcomes

Students who complete this course in good standing will:

- be familiar with general definitions, concepts, and approaches to the study of the cultural life of food in its many dimensions;
- have a basic understanding of ways that food and food systems carry meaning for individuals and groups;
- be able to recognize the dynamic process by which foodways emerge from cultural contexts and how they express and embody traditional aesthetics, beliefs and values;
- recognize how foodways serve to shape and influence society in ways that give rise to new forms of tradition and cultural expression;
- understand the ways in which foodways shape relationships between people in community and society, both in the present and in the past.

“We the people. . . .”

Please consider this document (and any other comments I may add in announcements or elsewhere) to be your class Constitution. It is our guiding framework in which you can find a clarification of what is expected of you in terms of readings, participation in online discussions, other assignments, and quizzes or exams. It also contains elements of a guide for the kind of conduct and interaction I require. All of this said, don’t let any amount of “clarification” here get you down, for I expect this to be a cool experience and one through

which I hope you—and I—will all learn a great deal about folklore and the media.

General agreement

Read this entire document carefully. If you remain in this course past Day One, I will conclude that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the terms I set. If you have questions, bring them to my attention immediately. This is your opportunity to “know what you’re getting into,” so use it wisely.

“Class days” and how to envision your time commitment

Web classes can be great because you (should) have lots of flexibility to interact with the professor and your classmates at times of your own choosing. Rather than sitting together in a room on certain days at certain times, you can visit the course site whenever you want. So you night owls or those of you with commitments during more conventional class meeting times will find web learning to have many advantages.

Even so, I have found it very useful to establish a predictable weekly cycle around which to organize the work and interactions of my web courses. As you will see in the calendar, I will post discussions, open quizzes and exams, etc. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Visit on each of these days and do so at your convenience. Failure to keep up with this basic schedule could result in your falling behind, missing material, or even missing quizzes, etc.

This course runs on a weekly schedule that begins at 10:00 am on Mondays and goes through Friday nights. For your schedule of readings, discussions, assignments, and quizzes, go read the syllabus and calendar in the Course Documents section of the course web site. It lists the readings and assignments day by day for the whole course.

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
new course happenings	—	new course happenings	discussions close 10 pm	—

We will also observe all WKU holidays

Weekends and holidays are also considered “off days” (though you may certainly access the course site on those days if you wish).

How to reach me and when to expect me to be available

I pledge to work very hard at keeping on top of this course’s activities. It will be necessary and I believe you deserve it. That said, since we don’t have specific “meeting times,” it will be difficult to prevent this from becoming an “all day every day” affair for me. With that in mind, I promise to visit the course discussions every week day and also to check my email every weekday evening between the hours of 6:00 pm and 10:00 pm (CST). That doesn’t mean I’ll be watching for the whole 4 hour period but rather that during that time I will check to see what’s going on. There may be exceptions to this, but I will do my best to notify you in advance.

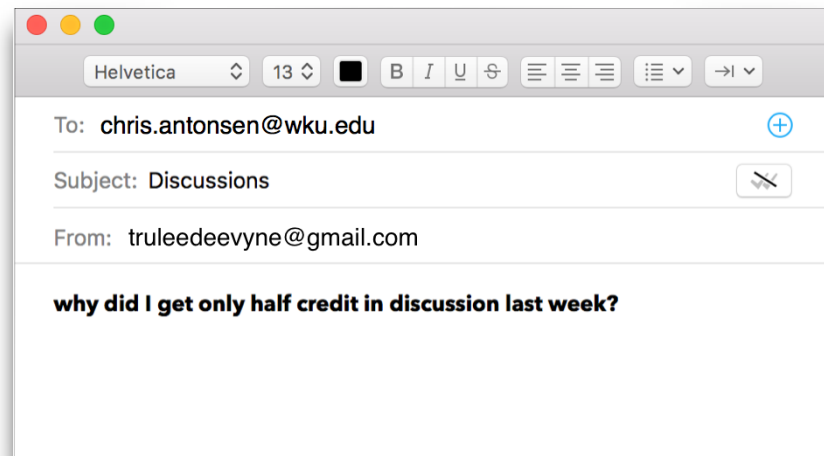
Email me at chris.antonson@wku.edu. Also be advised: my weekends are my own and I do not guarantee that I will respond to or even see email messages sent to me on Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays.

The lecture on why not to confuse and frustrate your professor with rude emails

Practice good email etiquette! *Many of you already have polite email habits. This is not directed at you.* Some others among you, though . . . read up!

If you're contacting me, you probably need something from me—a clarification, advice, to notify me of something going on with you. *You* are reaching out to *me*, and I am very interested in helping you. It's not unlike me being in an office and you visit to take care of something. Let's go with the office analogy for a sec.

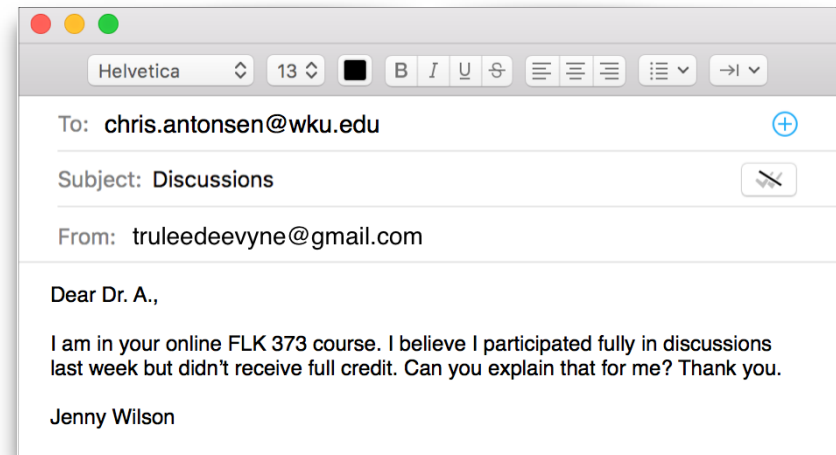
If I am in my office, what would you do when you arrive? You'd knock, right? Say hi, right? You might tell me your name and remind me which of my classes you're in. Then we may or may not exchange a few sentences of small talk before taking more time to address your need or concern. That's normal. That's obvious. That's expected. Consider, however, this email of the sort I often receive:



This is the emailed form of showing up at my office and shouting “I need X!” before running away, maybe before I figure out who you are. That would be rude, outrageous, and it wouldn't address your need. You wouldn't do that at my office, so don't do it in email.

I immediately have to ask Who are you? In what class are you? Why are you shouting at me? Why do you expect me to take the time to figure all of this out and help you when you can't be bothered to provide the information I need or show me common courtesy? (You can imagine that your need immediately falls down to the bottom of my priorities list.)

Check out this much better version:



Recall that like other professors:

1. at any given time, I have up to 130 students and get dozens of emails every day from students who need things;
2. I can't necessarily tell who you are based on your email address;
3. my time is valuable to my students and me;
4. I want to help. I care about your learning;
5. I am human and sometimes can't help feeling unhappy when someone makes my work more difficult or behaves rudely or thoughtlessly toward me.

Do us both a favor. Communicate clearly and with normal manners. We'll understand each other better, get to know each other better, and support your learning better.

To be in this class you must read

We don't meet face to face, so the readings, my comments and instructions, and the commentaries of your classmates constitute 100% of this course's content. Failure to read all of it will risk your receiving a grade lower than you might want. I am a nice person who really wants you all to succeed and also to enjoy this course, but I will be unsympathetic in the event that you demonstrate a failure to read everything carefully and think critically about what you read. That also includes my announcements, discussion comments, and the syllabus and all course materials.

Computer use and software

You must have daily access to the Internet for the sake of accessing the course web site. Failure to visit the course site regularly could adversely affect your final grade.

You will need a high-speed internet connection in order to view or download certain required materials. If you do not have high-speed internet at home, use a friend's computer or a public computer (like at a library) that does.

You may use a Macintosh or Windows computer so long as your browser is compatible and you have other software as recommended below. If at any point you find that you are unable to access something for the course or whatever you're supposed to access doesn't look or behave right, use a different browser or move to a different computer. The responsibility for this is entirely on you, even if it means you will have to visit a friend, a cafe, or a public library at great inconvenience to access the course.

You should use only a certified, compatible browser as indicated in the "Browser Compatibility" area [here](http://goo.gl/aZgHK) (<http://goo.gl/aZgHK>).

You must have [Adobe Acrobat](#) or another PDF file reader in order to view or print some files in this course.

You may need to download and use free programs such as Quick-Time or Windows Media Player for some audio content, but it will be minimal if at all and a link will be provided.

Course announcements and visiting the web site

Reading thoroughly and, in fact, doing well in this course begin with keeping active with the web site. This means that I expect the following:

- You must visit the course web site every "class day"
- You must read all announcements. I reserve the right to place announcements on the course site at any time, and I will expect you to have read them within one day of my placing them online. Should you miss a deadline or important information because you did not read an announcement about it within one day, it is your own responsibility.

Netiquette and matters of behavior

Netiquette—what a great term—is probably an idea familiar to most of you. Even though we are communicating online and do not have the pleasure (or pressure, if you think of it that way) of seeing each other in person, we must all take care to behave toward one another in a way that demonstrates manners, respect for the perspectives and feelings of others, and generally the same basic rules for positive social interaction in person. In other words, be kind, speak your mind but do so with care, and be considerate of others.

For more on Netiquette, visit this site:

Netiquette home page: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>
Be sure you read the [Core Rules of Netiquette](#) (the first link on the page above)

How we're going to accomplish the "work" of this course

- **Readings:** have the readings **done by start of your interaction** on the dates listed on the calendar so you can work with them in discussions beginning that same day.
- **Discussions:** open by 10:00 am on the days listed and close at 10:00 pm on Thursday of that week. In other words, the discussions open sequentially to coordinate with your readings schedule

but remain open collectively until Thursday evening so that you can move freely between all open discussions. IMPORTANT: once discussions close, you may no longer contribute to them, so be sure you interact while there is time. You may still read all existing discussions for the rest of the semester, even when they have been locked.

- **Quizzes:** We'll have quizzes. They will be conducted online, have time limits (stated on each quiz), and you will have just one attempt at each. Therefore, it is very important that you have the readings done before you begin each quiz. You most likely will not have time to search for answers in your readings while you complete your quizzes. If you go over your time limit, I will deduct 1 point per minute or part thereof over the limit from the total points available for the quiz automatically. (Look for a link to each quiz on the day each quiz is held. Quizzes will be available at 10:00 am on the days listed and will be available until 10:00 pm the next night.)
- **Assignments:** You may have a few simple assignments. Stay tuned for instructions on how and when to submit each.
- **Foodways blog:** You will create your own live foodways blog, populating it with entries that respond to different topics and challenges.
- **Final exam:** Your final exam will be brief. I may ask questions about the readings, about comments or statements I have made, and even about matters that arise during online discussions. **A link to the final exam will be available on Mon., Dec. 4, from 10:00 am until 11:59 pm on that day only.** No makeups or alternate times will be allowed. Make sure you are available to take the exam and that you have a reliable computer at which to take it.

More specifics about Discussion Boards

This is where we will process, so to speak, the readings and assignments you do. In discussions you will get a chance to ask questions, offer comments, debate, and generally have a conversation very much like you would in a traditional face-to-face setting. Therefore, it is very important that you read all discussions and participate productively as much as possible.

I will open at least one Discussion Board discussion every week of this course, and on some days you might get to choose among more than one. Although I will not offer letter grades for your statements in discussions, I will make the following requirements in order to encourage your regular and productive participation.

- You must provide a **unique and descriptive subject line** for every single post. Do not post comments of any kind whose subject line says, "Re: [previous post's subject line]". It is frustrating and useless to see a discussion board full of threaded discussions all with the same repeated subject lines. We will have dozens and even hundreds of posts in each discussion, and you and I will need descriptive subject lines to help us find and revisit specific posts and subthreads. I will give warnings on the first discussion day but will then immediately and without further notice delete posts that fail to have custom subject lines. You will not, of course, receive discussion credit for posts deleted for this reason. (The good news is that although lots of people make mistakes early on, almost everyone gets into the groove very quickly.)
- You must offer a **minimum of one substantive post** per discussion unless otherwise indicated. You don't have to respond to every subthread (although it would be great) but you do need to participate at least up to this minimum. I will read everything everyone writes in the Discussions and will keep a tally to ensure that each of you contributes at least the minimum.
- Don't wait until the last minute on Thursday night to fish for discussions.

Scoring for discussions:

- You will earn 2 points for every substantive post (up to one per discussion). You are welcome to post more, but you will receive points for only the first two. For more than that, you will earn wisdom and increased brain size.
- At the end of each week you may earn up to 2 points per discussion; failure to do so will hurt your average for the course (see How your grade will be determined, below)

Understand what **substantive posts** are:

- **Substantive posts:** You add an observation or commentary concerning a reading or other matter relevant to the subject of the discussion; or you may pose an informed question that demonstrates that you have read the material. Substantive posts will generally be longer than one or two sentences and will seek to offer insight, personal response, or promote thoughtful responses from others. An example of a substantive post might be:

"I think 'Body Ritual Among the Nacirema' shows how we approach the study of other people as though they are very different from us. This is evident in the language anthropologists like Miner use to describe the practices of other people as 'rituals.' Such terms seem to make those practices look even more different from our own activities."

- **Judgement calls:** Obviously there is no mathematical measure for determining if posts rise to the "substantive" level, but I will let you know if your posts aren't working. Continued failure to improve your posting (if you're warned) may result in a diminished Discussions score (see below). As a rule of thumb, just do your best and participate in earnest and this will probably take care of itself.
- **What definitely won't count:** You will not get credit for posts that consist of nothing more than a subject line or just a few words in the body of the post. Also, posts that comment on completely extraneous things (like how cool it is that you and another poster went to the same elementary school) are great but obviously won't count as content-oriented discussion posts. Posts to the Support discussion do not count either.
- **Misconduct in discussion or other communications:** If you add posts to the board that offend or harass other students or me or otherwise attack other people, if you are argumentative, or if you provide distractions in any other way, I reserve the right to summarily (a) delete the offending posts and those of others who have

replied to you and (b) ban offending posters from discussions without notice. There may be no warning and no recourse and students with posts deleted will, of course, receive no credit for the deleted posts or for failing to contribute while banned from discussions. Understand, however, that I will retain copies of any such deleted posts for my records as I do for all communications whatsoever concerning my online courses. Repeat offenders will be reported to authorities.

How your grade will be determined

You will earn points for quizzes, exams, participation in discussion boards, and (possibly) short assignments. Your final grade for the course will be determined by dividing the total number of points you have earned by the total number of points possible in the course.

Quizzes: 3-10 points each (approx.)

Discussions: 2 points/discussion

Midterm exam: 50 points (approx.)

Foodways blog entries (total no. TBD): 10 points ea.

Final exam: 50 points (approx.)

Course grades will be assigned as follows¹:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

D = 60-69.9%

F = 0-59.9%

Course Rating: PG-13

You should be aware that because we are exploring folklore and culture, we will occasionally consider, read about, write about, or even discuss matters that you may find to be offensive or contrary to your own personal beliefs. Bear in mind that discussions of such topics are intended neither to offend anyone nor necessarily to promote the specific ideas under consideration; rather, we must be free to dis-

¹ If you miss a higher course grade on this scale by as little as 0.1%, review your coursework and see where you could have earned that 1 point that would have made the difference.

cuss them frankly and critically in order to understand them as real features of American life and cultural diversity.

The best way I have found to deal with a subject that is uncomfortable is to express your feelings in class in a constructive way so that we can explore them as a community and/or to contact me directly via email to discuss it constructively in private.

Disability Policy

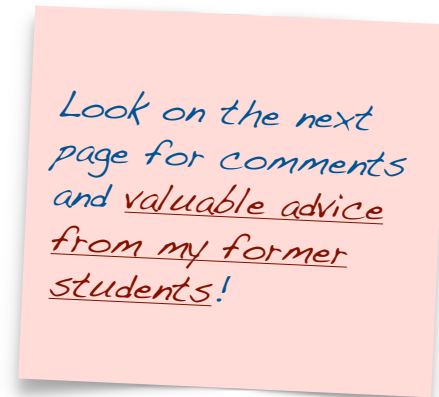
Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 445, Potter Hall. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD.

Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Cheating and academic misconduct

Academic integrity is of utmost importance to me and this university, and I will not tolerate cheating or academic misconduct. I will respond swiftly and firmly should I suspect or detect cheating or academic misconduct.

See the *WKU Student Handbook* for more information.



I reserve the right to make changes in this course plan if necessary.

COMMENTS AND ADVICE FROM MY PREVIOUS ONLINE STUDENTS

I administered an anonymous survey of students who had just completed my online courses and got the following comments.

Here you can see what some of your predecessors have to say about the course and to you directly in the form of advice. (Comments appear unedited unless otherwise indicated.)

Q: After taking this course, what is your opinion of **online courses in general**?

- I like them get to stay home and wear whatever I want. Don't have to worry about finding a parking spot or having to walk a mile to class in crazy weather.
- they are harder than I anticipated
- I still have reservations but that's because of the other two classes I took online this semester. If they had all been run like your class, I would have liked them much better. I really like the 'classroom' interaction in the discussion boards! They were well run and really encouraged class participation.
- i still like them and am taking another one for winter term. It definitely improves time management skills.
- Honestly, I thought it was going to be the same as every other class I had taken. Read some online articles or something from a book, and take quizzes or write essays about it. That's about it.
- Im signed up for another one. If the teacher is super involved it is very valuable
- You have definitely made it easier and more exciting than other online courses that I have had in the past. If they were all like yours, then I think WKU would be better off and be able to expand it's online learning program!

Q: After taking this course, what is your opinion of **this course**?

- I really enjoyed it. I learned alot more than I thought I would.
- I enjoyed the course and I'm even keeping 2/3 textbooks because I enjoyed the material.
- I enjoyed it because it helped expand my worldview
- It was great! It should be required by all colleges and taught just like this! I loved it and got so much out of it -- I hope it made me a better person. I also think being online made it better because we didn't see each other, we could talk more freely.
- I'm still not a fan of the some of the ideas that we addressed but, I am truly impressed with the way they were handled.
- I thought it was a good class and very eye opening.
- I did not think people would actually participate as much as they did. Really surprised to see the intense discussions sometimes.
- This class was great. I had a rough start but once I got the concept of how the class works it went pretty easy.
- It's awesome, and I would recommend it to EVERYONE!
- This course is one of the best I have ever taken.
- My life will never be the same. I learned things I've had in my brain since i was a little girl, but had never thought they held any meaning other than what society has told me about them. . . . I look at my environment and all my surroundings in a totally different and more meaningful way.
- Liked it alot.
- You have been one of the absolute best teachers I've ever had, and I say that with all honesty. You pushed us to learn and we all need that. You were honest with us about everything from the beginning and were always more than willing to help answer questions when we had them. You are extremely knowledgeable in your field and you care about what your students learn and wanting them to take an interest. You were awesome!

- Loved the course, and especially the material.

Q: At the beginning of this course, you may have liked to have had advice from previous students. Now is your turn. Please offer some **constructive advice to future students in this course.**

- Make sure you check the site every day and post when new things are up
- Read everything and stay up to date on posting. You get so much more out of it if you post soon enough to let others respond and then check back so if you need to clarify or expound you can.
- i would just let them know that you have to stay on pace and be sure to participate everyday.
- Check your browser to see if it is approved. Don't assume it is, even if you have been using it and haven't had problems. I didn't check and I lost a quiz that I couldn't get back. The help person showed me that I was using a browser version that causes problems. I kick myself because I should have done what Dr. A. said and checked in the first week.
- be sure you use the right browser. If you get screwed up, you might not be able to do anything about it.
- This is not a cake class!!!! it is time consuming, but in the end worth it! Just stick to it and read what is to be read and DISCUSS.
- Read the freakin assignments the day your supposed to. waiting to do the work at the end of the week sucks. Many times i went back to read the posts and would have had something to say if i had just read it when it was occurring.
- To print out each days post that are important or esp. ones you comment on. To read every single piece of information and read every single post. To stay current with all their assignments and do NOT get behind because there's a lot of material.
- I think right up front the students need to be aware that their lives will be easier if they copy the important materials. I did

not do this until someone suggested it later and having those materials in hand made all the difference in my grade.

- Participation is key to learning!!! It's very important to pay attention to what the instructor points out when in discussions. If he says that something is right, or to remember it, then you NEED to remember and understand it. Not only did I get a better understanding of a specific topic by seeing it discussed by many different people, but I learned about different views and ideas that I may not have otherwise thought of. In addition, it's always important to go into this class with an OPEN MIND. You may not always agree with everything that people post or the content, but you need to be open minded to other people's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.
- Participate! Participate! Participate!