UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Faculty of Economics, Management & Accountancy

Department of Tourism Studies

DIPLOMA IN GASTRONOMY

COURSE CATALOGUE
2010 - 2012
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
Faculty of Economics, Management & Accountancy
Department of Tourism Studies

in collaboration with the

Institute of Tourism Studies

Diploma in Gastronomy

The objectives of this course are:
1. to pay special attention to the history and anthropology of food and gastronomy and their cultural aspects;
2. the communication and interdisciplinary aspects of sociological, psychological and ecological theories linked to food consumption, including the latest methods of product communication and marketing strategies as well as some of the best food and wine journalism;
3. to teach some basic concepts of nutrition, diet and health, healthy menu planning, food technology and current techniques in sensory analysis
4. To become familiar with nutrition education as a health promotion vehicle and the various strategies used in different settings.

In order to achieve these objectives, the course programme will include:
1. a fundamental knowledge of the anthropology, culture, communication, nutrition and sustainability of quality food;
2. sensory and nutritional knowledge of food, and practical application with tasting sessions and workshops;
3. promotion and communication of food products (oil, wine, honey, dried tomatoes, capers, fava beans bigilla, Maltese bread, etc) and healthy diets
4. field trips to areas where specific food products are produced - like jams, honey, olive oil, fruit, etc; these will focus particularly on marketing functions and communicative/promotional strategies.

The course programme will focus on the following areas:
A. History of Food
B. Anthropology of Food
C. The Semiotics of Food
D. Food Science and Technology
E. Food Culture
F. Sociological and Psychological Aspects of Food Consumption
G. Information and Communication Technology and the Media in Gastronomy
H. Nutrition

Coordinator: Prof Carmel Cassar
TRS 1301 History of Food
Coordinator: Mr Noel Buttigieg
Year: Year 1, Semester 1
Credits: 8 ECTS
Assessment: Project Report (3000 words) - 50%
Examination (2 hrs) - 50%

1. Food and Cuisine – From Prehistory to the Middle Ages (2 credits)

2. Characteristics of French cookery: evolution and change from the 16th century to the present. (3 credits)
   a. Table manners and the organization of the meal. 4 hour session] Noel Buttigieg
   b. Regional and national cuisine in France: the art of cooking and cooking as art with an emphasis on the history of local produce and local dishes
   c. How resources and traditions evolved in space and time.
   d. The role of the chef in defining a French national cuisine
   e. The impact of new foods and foreign tastes and their integration into national and regional French cuisines. This will include an analysis of the impact of new foods like sugar and spices from the Far East and the new foods from the Americas like potatoes, tomatoes, chocolate, red peppers, and a large variety of beans.

3. Continuity and Change in European Food History - From the 18th to the 20th Century (3 credits)
   a. Food consumption between routine and innovation
   b. Patterns of consumption, 19th-20th centuries
   c. Cooking, Cuisine and Class: Trends in food consumption
   d. The uses of industry in food production
   e. The uses and misuses of science
   f. Times of Feast and Times of Famine: Eating in times of prosperity, depression and war.
   g. The post war age of consumerism and fast foods.
   h. Mediterranean cuisine and the invention of tradition.
   i. Changing patterns of food consumption in Malta.

Selected Readings:
P. Scholliers (ed. by), Food, Drink and Identity. Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe Since the Middle Ages (Oxford, Berg, 2001)
**TRS 1302 Anthropology of Food**

Coordinator: Prof. Carmel Cassar  
Year: Year 1, Semester 1  
Credits: 8 ECTS  
Assessment: Field Report (5000 words) – 50%  
3 Essays x 1,000 words each, each 10% (30%)  
Presentation: 20%

I - Theory and Method  
This course will explore anthropological theories about food and methods related to the study of beliefs and behaviours surrounding food production, distribution and consumption, with case material from specific areas. The course will deal with the Mediterranean region, with special reference to island societies that have adopted the food culture imported from the mainland to their needs. Malta, with influences from the two sides of the Mediterranean, will be considered. The course will also take account of a selection of islands from Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Islands, Crete, the Cyclades, and Cyprus, with reference to other parts of the mainland.

Objectives:  
1. Students will learn about theories and methods used by anthropologists to study foodways.  
2. They will learn the methods used in anthropological fieldwork and writing by conducting a study on food, culture, and a specific case-study on Malta or elsewhere.  
3. They will learn about the various Mediterranean cuisines; their roots in specific environments; their role in social relations and ideology; and their evolution, especially when exported by emigrants to the country of adoption.  
4. They will be able to appreciate the role of food as a form of communication across cultures.

**Food, Culture, and Place Project**  
Participant-observation study: Students will choose a site where food is prepared, sold, bought, or consumed. It should be a public space or place where people produce, store, transform, prepare, and/or consume food. This can be a food market; food store; factory; a farm; a garden; or food stand at a festival. Ideally one should be in a position to be able sit comfortably, observe, and possibly take pictures.

Research should address the question of how the food place and space constitute a cultural setting that contributes to or detracts from the goals of Slow Food. Students should carry out at least two observations of at least one hour each at different times of the day or week in the place to gather data. Some topics to cover are:  
- Detailed description of appearance, colour, noise, smell, temperature, etc.  
- Location and set-up (take pictures, draw sketches, or maps)  
- What material and social functions are performed in the chosen site?  
- Detailed description of people and their roles - who does what?  
- Analyse the relationships that exist between space, place, location and function;  
- Observe how design and location affect people’s relationships to food and towards each other.
II - The Culinary Implications of Globalization

This section of the course will look at some of the main factors leading to a globalization of food and aims to classify the changes and notes their concrete and specific impacts on everyday eating. The course is bound to rely heavily on historical factors, but will also look at relatively recent food-related events especially at the way cooking methods transformed traditional food over time and the changing patterns of eating behaviour taking specific regions, and particular foods as case-studies.

It will look at the cultural technical achievement; domestication; core-fringe-legume patterning; “flavour principles”; culture & technical achievement; the influence of new foods from the Americas and elsewhere into Europe and their developments; globalization and food history

Selected Readings:
Anderson, E., Strangely, Plants, Man and Life
Grow, Raymond, (ed.), Food in Global History, 1999
Heiser, C., Seed to Civilization 1981
Mintz, S. “Food and culture”. In Hirschoff, P.M., and N.G. Kotler, eds. *Completing the Food Chain*. 1989, p. 17
The main objective of the course is to develop theoretical and methodological instruments for the semiotic analysis of gastronomic texts (journalism/advertising). The course will therefore review basic concepts of semiotics, and apply them to contexts related to the study of food.

Three broad themes will be discussed

1. Semiotics and narrative. This section aims to provide some basic evaluation of the main concepts of narrative theory through the application of narrative models to text analysis of advertising productions with the intention to recognise narrative programmes, manipulation strategies, etc.

2. Semiotics and gastronomy: Food and Taste. This section is meant to provide an analysis of basic oppositions in the categorization of food (sweet/salty, sweet/bitter, etc.). This will be carried out through the application of categories as perceived by specific regional, or national, gastronomies. The objective is to recognise gastronomic categories in particular cultural systems.

3. Semiotics and gastronomy: Wine and Taste. This section is intended to provide some notions of basic oppositions and narrative programmes in wine appreciation through the application of narrative models to text analysis of wine evaluations. Objective: to recognise narrative programs, categories, etc.

**Selected Readings:**


1. **The Science of Taste and Smell**
   a. Basic taste; the history of taste and smell; recent discoveries; the biology of the tongue; the five basic tastes: Bitterness, Salinity, Sourness, Sweetness, Umami;
   b. Genetically marked tastes such as: fattiness & calcium; dryness, metaliness, pungency, coolness, numbness; supertasters; aftertastes; acquired tastes; factors affecting taste perception;
   c. Aging; colour/vision impairments; hormonal influences; genetic variations; oral temperature; drugs and chemicals; CNS tumors (especially temporal lobe lesions) and other neurological causes; blocked noses; and zinc deficiency;
   d. Taste Disorders: ageusia (complete loss of taste); dysgeusia (persistent abnormal taste);
   e. Taste Modulators: basic smell – olfaction and its history; how do we smell? – analysis of the functions of the olfactory system; the relation between smell and taste; relation between memory and smell; smell disorders;
   f. Anosmia - lack of ability to smell; hyposmia - decreased ability to smell; phantosmia - "hallucinated smell", often unpleasant in nature; dysosmia - things smell differently than they should; hyperosmia - an abnormally acute sense of smell.

2. **Quality and Sensory Analysis of Food**
   a. An introduction to sensory analysis and the fundamental sensory tastes; the laboratory for sensory analysis; analytical determination and the senses;
   b. An analysis of appearance; colour and its measurement; textural factors; flavour factors and flavour profile; Additional Quality Factors of proteins, fats, carbohydrates and vitamins; chemical and microbiological characteristics and its effect on food quality; quality standards; grading & certification; quality control; consumer sensory testing; simple sensory analysis of food;

3. **Differences between sensory and other analytical investigation methods:**
   Requirements of a sensory laboratory; the panel of assessors; Sensory analysis and the consumer choice; the umami taste; the sensory taste and odour thresholds and their determinations; the selection of a panel of assessors; the planning of a sensory laboratory.

4. **Factors influencing sensory responses:**
   a. Simple contrast and adaptation, order of presentation, fatigue, halo effect, suggestions, expectations; aroma compounds and sensory properties: aromagrams and odour units; element of statistic applied to sensory data: the regression analysis, the t-test; analysis of variance (ANOVA);
   b. The fundamental sensory test: duo-trio, 2 of 5, difference test, A not A, triangle, ranking; acceptance and preference testing; the shelf life of foods: methods of sensory determination; basic scaling technique: the use of numbers and scales in sensory analysis.
c. The Quantitative Descriptive Analysis (QDA): uses of language, methods, training and techniques, development of terminology; determination of descriptors and attributes for some food products; time-intensity technique; elements of consumer science: ranking, determination of preference drivers by slope analysis; colour and appearance of foods: generalities and measurement methods.

d. Laboratory exercises.

5. Food Chemistry:

I - Basic Food Chemistry
a. Nutrition and energy in food
b. Carbohydrates: mono, di and polysaccharides; sugars in food; caramelization; crystallization; starch; cellulose
c. Proteins: functions of proteins in foods; colour, texture and flavour
d. Fats: role of fats in food; fatty acids; triglycerides; phospholipids; cholesterol
e. Other Elements: vitamins; minerals; water; phytochemicals

II - Nutrition and Digestion:
Nutrient needs; the food pyramid; digestive processes; components of the human digestive system; vegetarian diets; bioavailability and stability of nutrients; diet and chronic disease.

III- Food Composition:
a. Determining the composition of food: spectrophotometry & chromatography
b. Energy in food
c. Food composition tables

6. Quality Factors in Food:
a. Appearance factors: colour & geometric attributes;
b. Other factors: colour and its measurement; size and shape; textural factors; flavour factors; taste panels; additional quality factors of proteins, fats, carbohydrates and vitamins; chemical and microbiological characteristics and its effect on food quality; quality standards; grading and certification; quality control.

7. Food Processing:
a. Heat Processing: continuous agitating retort; the hydrostatic cooker; the high-temperature-short-time (HTST) process; aseptic fill method; pressure cooking; the sous-vide process; the modified-atmosphere & controlled atmosphere packaging.
b. Various other methods: pretreatment of food; the importance of vacuum; liquid in cans; microwave processing; containers; storage; EU regulations; drying; pretreatment; methods of drying; effects of drying; drying & spoilage; low-temperature preservation; effect of low-temperature; types of refrigeration; freezing & its effects; freezing methods; packaging; thawing; shelf-life.

8. Food Additives:
Anti-oxidants; nutrient additives; flavourings; flavour enhancers; acidulants; sweeteners; starches; gums; enzymes; sequestrants; polyhydric alcohols; surfactants; leavening agents; radiation; chemical preservatives; colourants.
9. Microbial Activity:
Types of microbes; characteristics of microbial activity; microbial growth; food spoliage; food poisoning; food infections; the positive effect of microbes on food.

Selected Readings
Food cultures are influenced by many physical and cultural factors and for this reason they interact and change according to circumstances. But they also preserve and transmit values and status to foods which are passed from one generation to another long after their original significance has been forgotten.

This course aims to assess the definitions of culture in relation to food; examine the elements which contribute to food cultures; consider how these interact; to know where to look for relevant information and how to evaluate the sources of information.

1. Elements
This part will briefly consider definitions of culture, before moving on to the elements which underlie food culture, including terroir, trade patterns, preservation and preparation methods, meal times and patterns. This should help students to formalise knowledge they may already possess about the factors that underlie the concept of food culture.

2: Evidence
A session on looking for and interpreting evidences relating to food culture. A wide range of sources will be considered, including documents, pictures and artefacts, oral history, the foods themselves, and the internet. Students will be encouraged to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence.

3: Evaluating the evidence
For this part of the course, students will be asked to prepare, individually, a short presentation on some aspect of a food culture, probably a dish or a product from the Mediterranean basin. The aim is not to provide a full presentation on the dish, but rather to discuss how much each individual has learned, given the time and resources available, the sources they used, and how accurate and how these sources were evaluated.

Selected Readings:
L. Mason, (ed) *Food and the Rites of Passage*, Prospect Books (2002), Totnes.
J. Burnett, *Plenty and Want: a social history of diet in England from 1815 to the present day*. Methuen (1979), London.
TRS 1306 Sociological and Psychological Aspects of Food Consumption

Coordinator: Dr George Cassar
Year: Year 2, Semester 1
Credits: 8 ECTS
Assessment: 3 Assignments (1500 words each): 75%
Fieldwork: 10%
Presentations: 15%

The course will evaluate the cultural and psychoanalytical meanings associated with food and its consumption from childhood to adulthood and the development of socially constructed influences developed by the role of the mass media. It will look at the symbology linked to food consumption and will explore the role of the social sciences in interpreting food consumption as a communicative act. It will also try to analyse the emergence of recent food consumption trends like the fashion of using organic food, light products, and the popularity of restaurants that serve traditional foods. The course aims at transferring a useful methodology for the identification of cultural and symbolic factors that influence the psychology of today’s consumer, in order to be able to predict future behaviours and develop effective communication.

I Sociology of Food Consumption
a. Psychoanalytical symbolism of food and nutrition;
b. Relationship between food and identity;
c. Social symbolism in food consumption;
d. Food as a means of cultural exchange
e. Gender differences and food choice
f. Analysis of empirical data on social representations of modern rituals of ‘food consumption’
g. Empirical evidence about the relationship between body, food and identity and its effects on today’s consumption

II Food Branding
a. Consumption as an act of communication for self-expression (social-psychological aspect)
b. The impact of mass communication
c. The role of the choice of food in the construction of modern social identity
d. Social change and future trends in food consumption

III. Psychology of Food Consumption: Symbolic Aspects and Social Construction of Meaning
a. Relationships between mass communication, risk perception and food consumption
b. Effects of food risk awareness on modern consumption choices
c. The phenomena of “Organic” “Light” ”Natural” and health claims on products
d. Trust, reputation and social accountability of food marketing
e. Social and psychological causes of changes in consumption contexts. From out-of-home consumption to the fashion of restaurants
**Selected Readings:**


The Rise of Information and Communication Technology and the new Media

We are living in the Information Age, where the Information Society provides for our daily lives that are more and more dependent on technology for proper functioning. This module will account for the rise of the Information Society, starting from the very first tangible steps towards the creation of a computing machine, to the first electronic computing machine, the rise of the electronic chip, the spread of Internet, and the integration of Information and Communication Technology in the fabric of society and the daily lives of its members.

The rise of Internet as the fourth mass medium will be analysed within a context of convergence of the three traditional mass media, i.e. Television, Radio and Print. Present and future trends will also be discussed.

At the end of the module the participants will have a good understanding of what is ICT and its impact on our lives.

Basic multimedia skills that are applied to the creation and promotion of gastronomy-related media content: writing, photography, video

1. Method

One will find it hard to write unless one plans in advance and is well-informed about the subject matter. It is not possible to be accurate and to provide precise knowledge on the theme under discussion without having first carried out extensive research. Research is not simply a library exercise and should include visits to specific sites related to the theme under scrutiny and live interviews which are always preferable to e-mails or telephone conversations, because places have their own stories to tell and interviewees communicate (consciously or not) by body-language and other means besides speech. It is important to be well informed beforehand about the people one plans to interview. Not only will the interviewed respect their interviewer but it is furthermore advantageous to the interviewer who is free to concentrate on significant or valuable details as this will make listeners or viewers more interested in the theme. It will also enable the interviewer to ask the right questions - an issue of vital importance for a valid article or programme.

2. Structure

One can never over-emphasize the importance of structure. Unless an article is clearly structured, it will be impossible for its author to convey the message effectively to the readers. An article may be written in various forms. It can be treated as a narrative, or as an argument, or start off with a summary of what the author plans to discuss later on in the article. Diagrams illustrating different structures make the article look less boring and often help to make the article more readable.
3. **Style**
Everybody has his/her own personal style which evolves through time and becomes more distinctive with practice. There are, however, certain general points that should be kept in mind. A fundamental issue is to keep sentences short and to use simple words. If a short word expresses what the author intends to say that word should be preferred to a longer, more complicated word. This will ensure that the work is much more accessible and direct.

4. **Writing for different publications**
Keeping it simple is especially desirable if one is writing for the popular press. One may also have to consider how much background knowledge the readers are likely to have. Different styles for the different media, including websites and online content, will be explored and skills training applied.

5. **Descriptions of taste**
Describing the taste of food or drink is often a problem. In describing wine or cheese in particular, writers often sound pretentious and at times ridiculous. The ideal would be to hold a taste workshop in class at which everyone will write down and then read out personal descriptions. This may provoke discussion not only of the method of writing about taste but also about the wide varying perceptions of different individuals. As the saying goes: no two people’s perception of taste will ever be quite the same!

6. **Visit to a producer**
A visit to a food producer will be followed by the preparation of a report which bears in mind on-going discussions conducted during the course.

7. **Recipe writing**
The idea here is for each candidate to prepare a dish and then make a pain-staking detailed and exhaustive report as the dish is being prepared, cooked etc. This should include comments on anything that might go wrong during the process.

8. **Restaurant reviews**
Much of the art of writing successful reviews is to balance entertainment and information. Students will appreciate different styles of restaurant reviews, criticise them in a wide sense, and then come up with their own style to target particular target audiences.

9. **Travel Writing**
This section will attempt to answer some pertinent questions: How do travel writers negotiate food as a crucial and intimate sign of social and cultural difference? How has food been represented historically and in the contemporary world in terms of sensuous pleasure? How has food been understood in terms of 'civilised' and 'savage' societies and the exotic? To what extent does the etiquette of dining act as a prime theme within travel texts? In what ways is writing about food a commentary on class difference and also shaped by class?
10. Culinary Techniques
This will look at the evolution of the relationship between cooking, culinary techniques, and communication. The idea is to show how to communicate cooking and culinary techniques through the use of television and other forms of media.

Photography
This module will introduce professional photography at a very basic level, but which will be sufficient for the participants to explore and exploit photographic opportunities in a multimedia environment, e.g. taking a good set of photographs to accompany an article or to upload on a website.

This module will provide skills training on:
- Basic aesthetics of photography
- Elements of basic photographic techniques
- Using and handling of equipment
- Elements of history and evolution of the photography relating with communication
- Food Photography (especially photography related with the food world)
- Application of food photography within the communication world.

Videography
Video is one of the most important elements of multimedia as it is the best way to portray a person, object or situation without physical contact and presence. Like in the previous module on photography, which is closely related, the skills-based module will focus on:

- Basic aesthetics of videography
- Elements of basic videographic techniques (filming and editing)
- Using and handling of equipment
- Elements of history and evolution of the videography relating with communication
- Food-related videography
- Application of food videography within the communication world.

Participants will be exposed to theory and then will have time to do practise in real-life scenarios, e.g. recording of wine tasting, visiting wine estate, doing a restaurant review etc. This module will tackle basic editing only and not full post-production.

Exploiting the Media to Promote Gastronomy-related Content
Building on the previous modules, this module will expose participants to the intricacies of the mass media and how these can be exploited to their advantage. Writing a good article may be not enough to get it published, so there is a need to plan and seek/create opportunities in the mass media.

Participants will be exposed to basic marketing planning techniques, how to approach the media professionals and strike deals to get food-related creative work published/broadcast.

New media, especially Web 2.0 technologies, provide immense new avenues at the disposal of the budding producer. Participants will be asked to used Web 2.0 tools such as blogs and social networking to promote and share their creative work.

The Slow Food Movement will swerve as a case study through analysis of the web strategies of an eco-gastronomic international association

The Role of ICT in Gastronomy
ICT plays an important part in the delivery of gastronomic services at commercial level. This section exposes students to the basic components of ICT in the hospitality industry, such as information systems, property management systems, customer reservations systems, e-commerce platforms and e-business practises.

Particular attention will be paid to e-commerce, especially the online marketing aspect and the personal experience in Internet-related gastronomic exploration as part of the lifestyle of the patron.

Selected Readings:
Erick Wolf, *Culinary Tourism: The Hidden Harvest* (Spiral-bound).
TRS 1308 Nutrition, Diet and Health
Coordinator: Dr Suzanne Piscopo
Year: Year 2, Semester 2
Credits: 8 ECTS
Assessment: Component 1: Essay (1500 words) (15%)
Components 2, 3, 4, 5: Seminar (presentation and complementary materials) (60%)
Component 6: Practical (25%)

1. Food choice and food consumption:
Factors influencing food choice (a socio-ecological approach): Influence of psychological, economic, physical, cultural factors; dietary habits; food fads & fallacies; the role of the mass media and food marketing
- Food and sustainability: Food supply/sourcing, distribution and waste; food miles and carbon footprint; the Slow food movement

2. Nutrition and health:
- Nutrition throughout the lifecycle – nutritional needs of healthy infants and preschoolers, pregnant and lactating mothers, schoolchildren, adults, the elderly, persons with different abilities.
- Nutrition and food policies, dietary guidelines, food labelling
- The traditional Mediterranean diet

3. Nutrition for special dietary needs:
Nutrition and meal planning for people with special dietary needs – overweight/obesity, hypertension, CVD, diabetes; anaemia, osteoporosis, coeliacs, vegetarians/vegans

4. The importance of safe food:
- From farm to fork; regulations and legislation, agrochemicals, food additives, adulteration, HACCP (principles for safe food handling, storage, preparation, packaging, serving)
- Food production and environmental impact; organic food

5. Nutrition education:
- Nutrition education as lifelong learning
- Nutrition education provision and sources
- Formal and informal methods of nutrition education
- Community nutrition.

6. Food production and preservation (incl practical component):
- Menu and meal planning for different occasions; communal cooking
- Methods of food preservation: traditional and modern technology, jam-making, pickling, curing, drying etc.

Selected Readings:
- Techniques of healthy cooking: the Culinary Institute of America, Culinary Institute of America, 2008.