

Piedmont Project Reflections

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I have been interested in incorporating sustainability in the Chinese language and culture courses I teach for a number of years. I participated in the workshop Sustainability and Languages: Strategies for Course Development and Creative Engagement in Feb. 2013. The workshop heightened my awareness of the link between sustainable practices in the local context and the Chinese cultural traditions. I taught a directed studies course on the scholarly garden traditions in China, incorporating a service learning project in a local middle school on vegetable gardens and sustainable food practices. I also designed student projects focusing on Emory's sustainable practices in my CHN202 course.

Participating in the Piedmont Project last month has further broadened my thinking about new possibilities of engaging sustainability in my teaching. The talk by Alice Rolls on food, justice, sustainability and health in Georgia was particularly inspiring and eye-opening. I began to contemplating on how to link the concept of place in my freshmen seminar on noodle cultures in China and Italy, Noodles on the Silk Road: A Cultural Exploration of China and Italy through Noodles. The course introduces students to a theoretical framework that looks at food cultural practices, forms of cooking, and cultural variations of shared ingredients as important and often undervalued vehicles of cultural memory and communal identification. By focusing on a microcosmic view of each culture as reflected in the production and consumption of the noodle, the course considers how food influences and even changes the trajectory of a nation or culture ("Noodle Narratives"). This cross-cultural analysis of food practices aligns well with the theme of sustainability and the concept of place. While revisiting the course design, I decided that instead of creating one specific unit on sustainability, I will attempt to engage with the theme of sustainable food practices throughout the course content, especially in units two to four (see syllabus). Through the redesigned curriculum, students will learn how local environments define and invent noodle dishes in various regions in China and Italy in history and in contemporary society. Students will also interview Chinese and Italian immigrants to explore how the noodle holds onto the culture of the mother country and then breaks away into new forms in the local setting. Lastly, students will create their own noodle recipes based on seasonal and local ingredients.

Emory University
CHN/ITAL190

Noodle Narratives on the Silk Road: A Cultural Exploration of China and Italy through Noodles
Instructors: Dr. Hong Li and Dr. Christine Ristaino

PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Meeting days and times: M, W 10:00-11:15am
Location: TBA

READINGS:

You will be required to read selections from the following sources:

1. *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* by Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil.
2. *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food* by Gillian Crowther.
3. *Pasta: The Story of a Universal Food*, by Silvano Serventi, and Françoise Sabban, and translated by Antony Shugaar.
4. *On the Noodle Road: From Beijing to Rome with Love and Pasta*, by Jen Lin-Liu.
5. *Chinese Food* by Junru Liu.
6. *From Canton Restaurant to Panda Express: A History of Chinese Food in the United States* by Haiming Liu.
7. *The Cultural Revolution Cookbook*, by Sasha Gong and Scott D. Seligman
8. *Slippery Noodles: a Culinary History of China*, by Hsiang Ju Lin
9. *The Importance of Living* by Lin Yutang
10. *My Country and My People* by Lin Yutang
11. *Garlic and Oil: Food and Politics in Italy* by Carol Helstosky.
12. *Delizia!: The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food* by John Dickie.
13. *Porta Palazzo: The Anthropology of an Italian Market* by Rachel E. Black.
14. *Al Dente: A History of Food in Italy* by Fabio Parasecoli.
15. *Encyclopedia of Pasta* by Oretta Zanini de Vita

16. *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History* by Alberto Capatti & Massimo Montanari.
17. *Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well* by Pellegrino Artusi.
18. *Cookery and Dining in Imperial Rome* by Apicius.
19. *The Futurist Cookbook* by F.T. Marinetti and Fillia.
20. *Cooking with Italian Grandmothers* by Jessica Theroux.
21. *How Italian Food Conquered the World* by John F. Mariani.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The noodle has a rich tradition and it has traveled longer and further than Marco Polo himself. However, contrary to popular myth, Marco Polo was not the person who first brought the noodle from China to Italy. There is an array of conflicting theories regarding the invention of the noodle, crediting the Chinese, the Italians, and the Arabs.

So how does China and Italy's connection to the noodle extend beyond a profound love for the noodle and a rich history of culinary dishes historically and presently? In reality, the noodle has affected China and Italy in different yet intersecting ways, and is closely linked to the two cultures and traditions. This course will explore and relationship between nature and how the noodle originated and developed into daily staples in both countries. We will go deep into the noodle's cultural significance to see how it has integrated itself into the myth, symbolism, storytelling, cycle of life, social context, class structure, history, art, historical changes, and cultural DNA of China and Italy.

It is rare that Chinese and Italian studies are paired in this manner. The subject regarding how the same food source has impacted two cultures in such diverse and meaningful ways bears exploring. It is our hope that we will not only explore how Italy and China have embraced the noodle in both similar and diverse ways, but also how the introduction of the noodle into both cultures has perhaps changed the course of the history and culture of each in profound and important ways. In both countries, it is impossible to separate the culture from the noodle. This discussion is necessary because it will show how food both influences and changes the trajectory of a nation. By focusing on the microcosms of each culture through the microscope of the noodle, we will be able to come to conclusions about both countries that are specific to this medium. We are honored to have you on the noodle road with us during this exploration.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) In this course, you will increase your knowledge of Italian and Chinese cultures through the study of noodles;
- 2) you will listen to and read translated narrative archives associated with the noodle from China, Italy and the United States;
- 3) you will interact with local immigrants from China and Italy and learn how the noodle transforms itself in the local environment;
- 4) you will begin to see artifacts such as noodles as a jumping off point for multicultural exploration;

- 5) you will learn about the relationship between nature and the noodle; and create new noodle dishes that incorporate sustainable food practices in local settings.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to do the following through discussions, writings, presentations and projects:

- 1) describe how the noodle has integrated itself into Chinese, Italian and American cultures and environments;
- 2) identify primary characteristics of noodle narratives from China, Italy, and the United States;
- 3) demonstrate your understanding of how the noodle interacts with nature and the environment of a place. Specifically, how the noodle holds onto the tradition of its mother country while at the same time breaks away into new forms to fit into the local environment;

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS:

- 1) **Environment of Respect:** Different opinions during our discussions should be viewed through a lens of respect and an appreciation of cultural differences.
- 2) **Cooperative learning:** This course will be a cooperative opportunity to help each other generate meaning and go deep into the study of noodles and culture.
- 3) **Personal Responsibility:** Students are expected to engage fully and come each day prepared to discuss class material.
- 4) **Readiness to learn without computers, cell phones:** We expect students and instructors to arrive in class ready to focus. Please turn off cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices prior to entrance and keep them off for the duration of the class.

FIELD TRIPS:

Storico Fresco: 3210 Roswell Road NW, Suite F, Atlanta, GA <http://storicofresco.com/contact/>
Pasta da Pulcinella: 1123 Peachtree Walk Atlanta, GA <http://www.pastadapulcinella.com/>
Chef Liu: 5283 Bufford Highway, Atlanta, GA 30340 <http://www.yelp.com/biz/chef-liu-atlanta>
Noodle: Pan Asian Noodle House: 205 E Ponce De Leon Avenue, Decatur, GA, 30030, <http://www.noodlehouse.net/aboutus.htm>

EVALUATION:

The grade for this course will be based on the following percentages:

Class participation	10%
Domain of One's Own Blog Entries	20%
Group/pair Projects/Oral Presentations	15%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Interview Project & Noodle Narrative	15%

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:

You must be an active on-line participant of the class and attend all sessions. Failure to do so will affect your final grade in the class.

DOMAIN OF ONE'S OWN BLOG ENTRIES:

You will be asked to create blog entries on assigned topics through your own domain website, to be housed at Emory's A Domain of One's Own Project at <https://emorydomains.org/>.

GROUP/PAIR PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

There is a Power Point presentation on anthropological fieldwork methods. A virtual noodle exhibit (pair project) will also be assigned. Detailed information will be distributed soon.

MID-TERM EXAM

This will be an oral exam with your instructors, focusing on the information in your readings and your critical analysis of issues in food studies. A study guide will be distributed two weeks prior to the exam.

FINAL PAPER:

You will conduct research and write a final research paper on a topic of your interest relevant to noodle/food cultures. The paper may analyze primary sources (such as literary works), discuss the cultural and social significance of noodles, evaluate the impact of social changes on dietary choices, and research immigrant experiences in regard to foods, etc. It should apply sociological or anthropological theories to food studies or use fieldwork methods if appropriate. Your paper should be between 8-10 pages, double spaced, and typed in size 12 font.

For all writing assignments in this course, please note that the following resources exist:

1. writing handbooks (e.g., Lunsford & Connors, *The New St. Martins Handbook* or Watkins & Dillingham, *The Practical English Handbook*);
2. *The Artful Edit: On the Practice of Editing Yourself*, by Susan Bell
3. the [Emory Writing Center website](#);
4. conferences with a Writing Center Tutor (404-727-0886).

The Emory Writing Center is now offering summer distance tutoring. Anyone interested in distance tutoring should email writingcenter@emory.edu. For more information about our distance tutoring option, please visit

[http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/appointments/policies.html#Distance Tutoring](http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/appointments/policies.html#Distance_Tutoring).

INTERVIEW PROJECT:

You will be required to interview an Italian or Chinese American to discover his/her history with noodles. Your interview will become part of our Noodle Narratives archive located at the following website: noodlenarratives.com (currently <http://christineristaino.com/noodlenarratives/>). The interview project focuses on the consideration of place in a cross cultural context. Specifically, your aim is to find out how the noodle holds onto the tradition of its mother country while at the same time breaks away into new forms to fit into the local environment and how to integrate sustainable food practices through the medium of the noodle.

Based on the interview you conducted, please write a noodle narrative of the person you interviewed. The narrative should be 3-5 pages and outline how noodles have influenced your interviewee culturally; how the noodle has brought Italian or Chinese culture into the interviewee's life in America; and they ways local food practices and geographical conditions manifested themselves into the noodle's culture DNA. Please post your Noodle Narrative to your Domain website.

ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT:

Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, Voice (404) 727-9877, TDD (404) 712-2049, or fax (404) 727-1126, or visit <http://www.ods.emory.edu/about.htm> as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT:

Emory University supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within Emory will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.

ACADEMIC ADVISING AND CLASS DEANS:

If you have any academic concerns or questions about Emory College Arts and Sciences policies, you should first meet with an OUE Academic Adviser. If an Academic Adviser is unavailable to meet with you, you may meet with an OUE Dean during open hours.

OUE Academic Adviser appointments:

Visit White Hall 300 or call 404.727.6069

Deans' Open Hours:

<http://college.emory.edu/home/administration/office/undergraduate/hours.html>

HONOR CODE:

The honor code, a list of offenses, and the honor council process may be found at the following web address: <http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/students/honor.html>.

Upon every individual who is part of Emory University falls the responsibility for maintaining in the life of Emory a standard of unimpeachable honor in all academic work. The Honor Code of Emory College is based on the fundamental assumption that every loyal person of the University not only will conduct his or her own life according to the dictates of the highest honor, but will also refuse to tolerate in others action which would sully the good name of the institution. Academic misconduct is an offense generally defined as any action or inaction which is offensive to the integrity and honesty of the members of the academic community.

SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

Below is a tentative schedule. Detailed plan for each unit will be posted on the Canvas site for the course.

Unit	Weeks	Units
Unit 1	Weeks 1-4	Sociological and anthropological perspectives on food studies
Unit 2	Weeks 5-8	Introduction to Chinese and Italian food (focusing on the relationship between local environment and characteristics and varieties of Chinese food)
Unit 3	Weeks 9 to 12	Exploration of the noodle – Geography, agriculture, and noodle varieties. Field trips to local noodle restaurants
Unit 4	Weeks 13-15	Sustainable food practices and noodle narratives (in Georgia and interview project of local Chinese and Italian immigrants)