

Psychology of Food

Draft syllabus



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| Semester & Location: | Summer 2020 Session 2- DIS Stockholm |
| Type & Credits: | Core Course - 3credits |
| Core Course Study Tours: | Paris, France |
| Major Disciplines: | Sociology, Philosophy |
| Faculty Members: | TBA |
| Program Director: | Lars Rossen – lro@dis.dk |
| Time | TBA |

Description of Course

We all have a relationship to food and it is much more than physiology. This course will explore the neurological, psychological, cultural and social aspects of our relationship with food. Food's historical and current meaning will be considered: From SoMe Food Pornographers and ethically-inspired vegans to the paradox of growing obesity amidst malnourishment and eating disorders. Food can be used as means of social connectedness, be a mechanism of exclusion or a theme in mental illnesses. Food is indeed psychology.

Learning Objectives

The course provides will leave the decontextualized physiological explanation of food and eating and will enable you to see the relationship between psychological process and the meaning and food in its wider context in terms of everyday life and real routines. With a focus on social and cognitive scientific approaches, we will explore the meaning of food and eating through a psychological lens drawing on biopsychosocial, psychological-anthropological, structural, feminist and psychodynamic approaches.

By the end of this course you will

- Have in depth understandings of what psychological factors influence our eating behavior
- How cultural, social, economic factors affects cognitions of food and health
- How mental illness and food can be linked and hoe eating disorders can be treated
- How food trends – historical and current - correspond to shifts and changes in society in general and how these in return are utilized in the construction of the self.
- Also examined are problems such as malnutrition, eating disorders, and the global obesity epidemic; the impact of food advertising aimed at children; poverty and food; and how each individual's eating is affected by the modern environment.

Readings

Barrett, D.L. and Fine, H. J. (1990) *The Gnostic Syndrome: Anorexia Nervosa*. In: Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, 1990, Vol. 4, p. 245-252.

Block, J., Scribner, R., & DeSalvo, K. (2004). Fast food, race/ethnicity, and income: a geographic analysis. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 27(3), 211-17.

Brillat-Savarin, J. A. (1825) *The physiology of taste; or, transcendental gastronomy*. Online edition.

Chamberlain, K. (2004). Food and health: Expanding the agenda for health psychology. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 9, 467-481.

Duram, L. (2005). *Good growing: Why organic farming works*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Forster, E., & Forster, R. (Eds.) (1975). *The European diet from pre-industrial to modern times*. New York: Harper & Row.

Jacobson, H. (2013). *Whole: Rethinking the science of nutritionism*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books.

Rappaport, L. (2003). *How we eat: Appetite, culture, and the psychology of food*. Ontario, Canada: ECW Press.

Sonnenfeld, A., ed. (1999). *Food: A culinary history from antiquity to the present*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wansink, B. (2004). Environmental factors that increase the food intake and consumption volume of unknowing consumers. *Annual Review of Nutrition*, 24, 455-479.

Wansink, B. & Kim, J. (2005). Bad popcorn in big buckets: Portion size can influence intake as much as taste. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 37(5), 242-245.

Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2008.

Possible Field Studies

Meyers Madhus (Meyers Food House) Food Design Workshop

Meyers Madhus provides gastronomic inspiration and business development for professionals. Meyers Madhus arranges workshops for large companies in the food industry with a high professional content. Their Food Design Workshops is particularly aimed at food professionals who are involved in product and concept development.

Here we will hear about the processes that takes places from the initial idea to the final product and how knowledge about current taste trends and consumer behavior plays a high role in the process.

Guided tour at Östermalms Saluhall

On their website. Östermalms Saluhall states that food market is “a beautiful and well preserved historical document of urban residents interest in good food and for 130 years it’s been a veritable oasis for gourmets and gastronomes”. We will visit the food market and have a guided tour with a focus on Östermalms Saluhalls historic importance as an institution in Stockholm, where food is in a historic setting, which since 1888 provides ingredients and food from Swedish and international cuisines. Östermalms Saluhall also has the highest level in the Stockholm City Museum’s cultural classification. Östermalms Saluhall cultural and historical heritage is stored inside the walls, and makes the building extremely special.

Possible Guest Lecturers

Food Blogger Niki Jennisch

Food Blogger Niki Jennisch is a Swedish food blogger who lives in Stockholm and spends most of his spare time exploring Stockholm’s culinary jungle and searching for the best for stories. For his guest lecture he will talk about what inspired him to open his blog and what role he thinks his works plays in other peoples life and the power he has over the choice people make.

Cecilia Bergh, co-founder and CEO of Mando Group AB

The Mandometer treatment has been developed in co-operation with the Karolinska Institute and the results have been extensively published. More than 1,500 patients have been successfully treated during a 25-year period. Patients, parents and their relatives like the treatment, a large number of media reports and newspaper articles testify to its effectiveness is restoring eating behaviour, body weight, and the physical and mental health of the patients.

Approach to Teaching

I strive for an open, interactive learning environment: that means that I ask questions, expect discussion and encourage you to think for yourself. Interactive learning presupposes active participation from the students. For this reason, I will ask you to critically reflect on the theory, research and practice presented in class. Sometimes such a critical examination uncovers inconsistencies or lack of elaboration. However, being critical of basic assumptions in a theory does not negate the theory altogether. Therefore, we will try to integrate, rather than dismiss, the different approaches presented in the course

The schedule will list reading materials for each class meeting. Please be prepared by having read and thought about the material before coming to class. By reading the material beforehand, you will better understand the points I make, you will be better prepared for discussion, and you will be able to ask thoughtful and productive questions.

Classes will consider a few specific topics in depth and will typically not repeat the assigned readings, but will serve as a foundation for the lectures and it will be expected that they are included in class discussions. Thus, most of the materials in the text you will learn on your own outside of class. It is imperative that you keep up with the readings, because you can

- 1) ask questions about reading material you find confusing or unclear, and
- 2) continuously prepare for the exam.

Expectations of the Students

In this course each and every one of us has the equal and unique responsibility to facilitate the most optimal learning outcomes.

Students are expected to:

- Complete all reading assignments prior to class and be attentive in class
- Make reference to the readings to support the points you are making when responding to questions in class
- Contribute to class discussions and group activities
- Draw upon your interactions and observations from daily life in Denmark to compliment theory, research, and practice
- Work independently and be active in group work
- Read guidelines for assignments posted on Canvas
- Be punctual and attend all classes; missing classes without a legitimate reason will result in a lower final grade

Evaluation

Participation and Attendance (15%)

You must attend every class. Excused absence includes serious illness and participation in religious holidays. All other absences are unexcused. If you must miss a class, please contact me as soon as possible. After 2 unexplained absences, the DIS Teaching and Learning office will be notified.

Active participation in class will include writing academic and personal reflections on Canvas, reading ahead of each class and contributing to class discussions.

Short Study Tour Reflection Paper (15%)

In the study tour reflection paper you choose a visit from the short and a visit from the long study tour and hold these up against each other in order to analyze the content and take home points of the visit and relate these to relevant papers and lectures from the syllabus.

The paper must be 3-4 pages and refer to/discuss/cite at least 4 academic sources.

More detailed information will be given in class and on Canvas.

Midterm Exam (15%)

The midterm will consist of around 20 multiple choice and 5 short answer questions, and consist of information from the semester up to the

date of the exam – including all assigned readings, field studies and study tour visits.

The multiple choice questions will be based primarily on general theoretical concepts, schools of thought and the most prominent figures in psychology. The short answer questions will be based on personal academic reflection on relevant topics rooted in the readings from the class.

More detailed information will be given in class and on Canvas.

Long Study Tour Field report (15 %)

Write a paper that discusses your field research on a food production, distribution, or consumption center and the local, national, or global trends or ideologies affecting the center you visit and how this might have psychological impact on individual and group levels. You should explore at length how particular food trends or ideologies influence the way food is made, distributed, or eaten. You could choose to visit, for instance, a farmer’s market and talk to some of the farmers about their work; a local grocery store and evaluate the healthfulness and affordability of its options.

The paper must be 3-4 pages and refer to/discuss/cite at least 4 academic sources.

More detailed information will be given in class and on Canvas.

Final Exam (25%)

The final exam will be around 20 multiple choice questions, 4 short essay questions and a 2-page case for case analysis focused on the interplay between food, psychology and ethics. Multiple choice questions will be based on information from *after* the midterm, including assigned readings, guest lectures and field studies. You will be asked to analyze the case study, using different psychological perspectives and frameworks. Furthermore, you are required to include and critically reflect on references and experiences from study tour visits.

More detailed information will be given in class and on Canvas.

To be eligible for a passing grade in this class you must complete all of the assigned work.

General formatting guidelines

All written assignments must apply these formats:

- double-spaced
- Times New Roman
- 12-point font
- 1-inch margins.
- Front-page/headline and reference list does not count towards sum

Papers not adhering to these guidelines will be deducted points.

Disability and resource statement: Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Academic Support (acadsupp@dis.dk) to coordinate this. In order to receive accommodations, students should inform the instructor of approved DIS accommodations within the first two weeks of classes.

Grading

| Assignment | Percent |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Participation and engagement | 15% |
| Short Study Tour Reflection Paper | 20% |
| Midterm examn | 20% |

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| Long study tour field report | 20% |
| Final examn | 25% |

Course Summary: Possible Topics

| Date | Details |
|----------|--|
| xx.xx.xx | Basic needs, food and psychological development Maslow, Psychodynamic theory Attachment theory |
| xx.xx.xx | Culture, history and food From Socrates to Cognitive Behaviourism From the Frankfurt Kitchen to the New Nordic kitchen |
| xx.xx.xx | Brain mechanisms, taste, reward and punishment Neuropsychology of taste Primary and secondary mechanisms in learning Brain mechanisms for reward and punishment |

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