

TERM: Fall 2025
COURSE NUMBER: ENGL 5000.07
COURSE TITLE: Food and Literature
SECTION TIMES/DAYS: R 6:00-9:20 pm
INSTRUCTOR: JULIA LEE

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

Do you like to read? Do you like to eat? Do you like to read and eat?

Combine two of the most pleasurable forms of consumption in this course, where we will devour both works of literature and food. Through novels, cookbooks, memoirs, food criticism, poetry, and essays, students will analyze how food reflects histories of migration, colonialism, and resistance, while also serving as a means of cultural preservation and self-expression. Readings may include works by authors such as Jamaica Kincaid, Grace M. Cho, Rudolfo Anaya, and more. Students will engage in critical discussions, analytical writing, and creative projects that explore how food in literature shapes individual and collective identities across different cultures. Since this class meets at dinner time, we will obviously need physical as well as intellectual sustenance, so everyone will pitch in to bring their favorite snacks once during the semester. At the end of the semester, students will cook/bake something for a holiday feast open to the entire English Department. Maybe we can even put together a department cookbook!

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Examine how food functions as a symbol, theme, and narrative device in various literary genres, including fiction, memoir, poetry, and essays.
- Understand how food in literature reflects cultural identity, social structures, migration, and historical change.
- Investigate themes of power, class, race, gender, and colonialism through literary depictions of food production, consumption, and scarcity.
- Compare different cultural and historical perspectives on food in literature, considering how various traditions and communities use food to construct meaning.
- Explore personal relationships with food through creative and reflective writing, connecting individual experiences to broader cultural and literary themes.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Graduate Only

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES: COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

- Critical Methodology
- Contemporary Critical Theory
- Major Writer / Genre / Literary Period
- Literature Elective
- Theory Elective
- Creative Writing Seminar
- Rhetoric / Composition Theory and Practice
- Linguistics OR Reading Theory