



Comm 323: Food Writing for Consumer Publications

Professor: Elizabeth Fakazis
Contact: CAC 327, lfakazis@uwsp.edu, 715-346-2238
Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 2-3 p.m. and by appointment

About this Course

This course will introduce you to the knowledge and skills needed to write about food in a variety of genres for digital and print consumer publications. These genres may include personal essays, blog posts, news articles and feature stories, how-to magazine pieces, analysis and trend articles, among others. This course will NOT cover recipe or cookbook writing, or restaurant reviews.

While you will be required to fulfill the broad outlines of each writing assignment, you will also have considerable freedom to choose what you wish to write about so that you can tailor each assignment to your own goals and interests. In this way students from a variety of majors, including communication, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, health promotion and wellness, among others, can develop the knowledge and practice the skills most useful for them.

Objectives

- Explore what food means to people in terms of culture, politics, health and more
- Use this insight to write engaging, informative and accurate stories in a variety of genres for consumer publications by developing your ability to:
 - Recognize news values and newsworthy story ideas
 - Identify credible, relevant sources
 - Conduct effective interviews and documentary research
 - Understand how to tailor your writing for target publications and readers
 - Improve grammar, punctuation and AP Style
 - Improve basic editing and copyediting skills
 - Develop time management and other techniques for meeting deadlines despite manageable or unforeseen obstacles

Division of Communication Learning Objectives for Communication Majors

This class will help you achieve the Division's objectives for all Communication majors, especially objectives numbers 1 and 5.

1. Communicate effectively using appropriate technologies for diverse audiences
2. Plan, evaluate and conduct basic (quantitative and qualitative) communication research
3. Use communication theories to understand and solve communication problems
4. Apply historical communication perspectives to contemporary issues and practices
5. Apply principles of ethical decision making in communication contexts

Readings

- Hughes, Holly (ed). *Best Food Writing 2016*. New York: DeCapo Lifelong Books, 2016.
- Kamp, David. *The United States of Arugula: how we became a gourmet nation*. New York: Clarkson Potter, 2006.
- Moore, Judith. *Fat Girl*. New York: Plume, 2005. Recommended: Bruni, Frank. *Born Round*.
- Pollen, Michael. *In Defense of Food*. New York: Penguin, 2009.
- Health News Review, www.healthnewsreview.org
- Additional readings will be distributed throughout the semester on D2L.

Assignments & Grading

Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to produce and revise several major writing assignments. In addition to these projects, you will be required to complete weekly reading, writing and research assignments designed to help you deepen your understanding of the course material and further develop your skills – including weekly written critical responses to assigned readings. Please turn in a hard copy of EVERY assignment on the day it is due, and upload a back-up copy into the appropriate D2L folder.

Major Assignments

- What food means to you: Culinary Memoir
- Developing a personal voice: Blog Posts (2)
- Reporting Food News: Writing a 500-to-700-word news story appropriate for *The Pointer* or other local newspaper
- Writing Features: 800-to-1000- word feature story appropriate for publication in newspaper or magazine
- Freelancing: Writing the pitch

Major writing assignments: 70 percent of final grade

Additional reading, writing and research assignments: 30 percent of final grade

Letter grades will be assigned as follows to all graded assignments and the final grade:

94 – 100 % = A	90-93% = A-	87-89% = B+	84-86% = B
80-83% = B-	77-79% = C+	74-76% = C	70-73% = C-
67-69% = D+	64-66% = D	60-63% = D-	

Revisions

If you receive a grade lower than 85 percent on any of the “major writing assignments” except for the final feature, you will be given a chance to revise them. Your final grade for the assignment will be an average of the grades you received on the first and second drafts.

Deadlines

The ability to meet deadlines in spite of overwhelmingly busy schedules, sources who cancel interviews at the last minute, writer’s block, computer crashes, and other circumstances is critical. If you must miss a deadline due to a documented emergency, I will work with you on a reasonable extension. All other late work will be docked 10 points for each 24 hours that it is late (this includes work turned in late due to outside work obligations, family obligations, or university-sponsored events).

Policies

- Conduct yourself in a professional, respectful manner at all times, both in class and while working on course-related business outside of the classroom. Consequences for unprofessional or disrespectful behavior may include a lower grade or dismissal from the course.
- All work must be yours and must be produced for this class. If you wish to use work you have produced for another class or in another context, please come talk with me first. Any work that is not yours, including material taken from digital sources, must be appropriately used and properly cited. Plagiarism is grounds for a grade of “F” for the assignment; multiple instances is grounds for dismissal from the course. See University policy for more information on academic misconduct and its consequences.
- If you have a documented medical or family emergency, I will work with you on possible deadline extensions for assignments. Otherwise, ALL late work will be docked 10 points for every 24 hours past deadline. This includes work turned in late because of outside work obligations, family obligations, university-sponsored events, sources cancelling interviews at the last minute, computers or printers crashing, car trouble, or other circumstances.
- I will do everything I can to accommodate students who need assistance. Please see me at the beginning of the semester to set up appropriate accommodations.
- No technology is permitted to be used in class, including cell phones, laptops, or tablets, unless it is part of required assistive technology or its use has been approved by me as necessary for meeting the day’s pedagogical goals.

Working Schedule

This schedule includes major readings and assignments. Additional reading, writing and research assignments designed to develop and deepen your understanding of the course material and to improve your writing, researching and interviewing skills will be distributed in class. Changes to the schedule may be adapted to meet the needs of the class. If you miss class, please be sure to consult with a classmate to see if additional assignments were distributed.

Date	Topic	In-Class Media	Reading Due Dates	Assignment Due Dates
9/6	Introducing Food Writing	NPR: Hidden Kitchens Intro & George Foreman Grill		
9/13	Exploring the Meanings of Food Introducing the Culinary Memoir	PBS: <i>The Meaning of Food</i> (excerpts)	"Jellied Consomme" "Night of Lobster" "Dumpling" Hughes: The Family Table	Critical Reflection
9/20	Peer Reviews: The Culinary Memoir Food, Body Image & Identity		<i>Fat Girl/Born Round</i>	Culinary Memoir Critical Reflection
9/27	Exploring the Cultural Meanings of Food Introducing Food Blogs	<i>Soul Food Junkie</i>	Hughes: Foodways Various food blogs	Critical Reflection
10/4	Presentations: Blog Posts		<i>United States of Arugula</i> (first half)	Blog Post Due
10/11	Michelin Stars & Haute Cuisine	<i>Decoding Adria Ferran</i>	<i>United States of Arugula</i> (second half)	Critical Reflection
10/18	Presentations: Blog Posts Writers's Markets, Stylebooks & Submission Guidelines		Hughes: The way we eat now	Blog Post Due Critical Reflection
10/25	Peer Reviews: Feature Ideas	<i>Food, Inc.</i>	<i>In Defense of Food</i>	Final Feature Pitch: Markets & Guidelines Critical Reflection
11/1	Peer Reviews: Final Feature Ideas		Hughes: Down the Hatch	Final Feature Ideas Critical Reflection
11/8	Food & Globalization	<i>Sushi, The Global Catch</i>	Hughes: Dining Around	Critical Reflection
11/15	Peer Reviews: News Story		Hughes: Someone's in the kitchen	Critical Reflection News Story Due
11/22	Manufacturing & Marketing Culinary Identity	<i>The Search for General Tso</i>	Hughes: Life on a Plate	Final Feature Pitch Letter Critical Reflection
11/29	Developing Your Final Feature			
12/6	Food Desserts & Food Justice	<i>A Place at the Table</i>		
12/13	Developing Your Final Features			
12/21	Presentations: Final Feature			Final Feature & Presentation