

SOUTHERN STUDIES 105: Introduction to the South and Food

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Office hours: By appointment

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Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:45am
Bryant Hall 209

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Course Description

This course will explore Southern culture, history, and identity through the lens of foodways. For our purposes, foodways are what people eat (or do not eat), why and how they eat what they eat, and what it means. Studying foodways is interesting, because it offers insight into everyday life, ritual, social interactions, and other cultural phenomena. By studying food (and eating, and agriculture) as *systems*, we can also gain insight into broader patterns of power, identity formation and maintenance, and the meaning and importance of particular places. By placing the study of foodways within the context of “The South,” we can better understand (and, perhaps, complicate) what, if anything, makes that place unique. Because the study of foodways is highly interdisciplinary, we will read and consider works spanning several disciplines and methodological approaches. In addition to weekly reading, we will listen to podcasts, read and listen to oral histories, and watch films.

Course Objectives

In Southern Studies 105, we will strive to accomplish these objectives:

1. Understand food as a useful lens through which to study places;
2. Consider the ways in which food and food labor practices have shaped (and continue to shape) the South;
3. Consider and critique several powerful “imaginaries” that circulate around Southern food;
4. Provide students with opportunities to discuss--orally, in writing, and through other artistic expression--their observations about the South that surrounds them

Course materials

Readings and podcasts will be posted to the course Blackboard page. All reading and other assignments are to be completed by the day in which they appear in the syllabus. While you are not required to purchase any books, I highly recommend picking up a copy of *The Edible South* (Ferris 2014) as a reference text. (Each week, I also list “additional recommended reading” for those of you interested in learning more about a particular topic.)

Graded Work

Assessment will be based on the following:

	Percent of Grade	Date
In-class writings	15%	Weekly (or so)
Letter of introduction	10%	Sept. 5
Test 1	15%	Sept. 19
Recipe Collection Proposal	5%	Oct. 10
Test 2	15%	Oct. 17
Recipe Collection Project	20%	Nov. 21
Final Examination	20%	Dec. 12 (8am)

(*More detailed assignment descriptions for the *letter of introduction* and *recipe collection project and proposal* are attached to this syllabus, and are subject to change.)

In-class writings will be regular but unannounced, and will draw from the week's readings and other assignments. We will drop your two lowest weekly writing grades and so will not be offering make-up writings. These will be graded on a 1-10 scale.

Both *tests* and the *final examination* will include short answer and multiple-choice questions. The final exam will be comprehensive.

We will evaluate your writing and your exams for evidence of these qualities:

- clear understanding and logical application of ideas as they are presented in reading material and in related classroom activities;
- thoughtful engagement with the subject matter and awareness of an issue's complexity;
- ability to interpret class material and express your own ideas clearly.

Extra Credit

Students may submit *extra credit assignments* twice during the term. To receive extra credit, a student must attend a public event on campus or in town that relates in some way to the U.S. South or to class material. A partial list of possibilities appears on your syllabus, including a weekly Southtalks lecture series on Wednesdays at noon in Barnard Observatory. (Unless otherwise noted, all Southern Studies events take place in Barnard 105.) *Within one week of the event*, students will submit a 1-2 page account of what they saw, including their reaction to it as a member of the audience. For each satisfactory report submitted, we will add one percentage point to a student's final grade. The maximum number of points a student may receive is two.

At the end of the semester, we will calculate your final weighted average numerically and then convert it, without rounding, according to the following scale:

A	93 – 100	B	83 – 86.99	C	73 – 76.99	D	63 – 66.99
A-	90 – 92.99	B-	80 – 82.99	C-	70 – 72.99	D-	60 – 62.99
B+	87 – 89.99	C+	77 – 79.99	D+	67 – 69.99	F	<60

A qualitative description of grades:

A range	An A student has active and regular participation in class discussions, an excellent working knowledge of the readings, obtains 90% or more of the possible points on the in-class exercises and exams, and hands in complete, well written and creative assignments.
B range	A B student usually participates in class discussions, has working knowledge of the readings, obtains around 80% of the points on the in-class exercises and exams, and turns in well-written, but partially complete and/or grammatically problematic assignments.
C range	A C student has infrequent participation in class discussions, partial knowledge of the readings, obtains around 70% of the points on the in-class exercises and exams and turns in incomplete and/or poorly written assignments.
D range	A D student has little to no participation in class discussions, little or no knowledge of readings, obtains around 60% of the points on the in-class exercises and exams and turns in incomplete and poorly written assignments.
F	A failing student has failed to deliver on two or more aspects of evaluation in the class (attendance, assignments, discussions, quizzes, exams)

Course Policies:

Attendance

We will lower by one letter grade the final score of students who miss more than four classes. Attendance will be checked daily by way of classroom attendance scanners. ***Any student who abuses this policy in any way will be held accountable. Please see our policy on academic honesty in the plagiarism section below.*** We do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.

Discussion Etiquette

Discussion may often take us into controversial issues. Students should listen respectfully to the opinions of their classmates and engage them civilly on the complicated issues we will undoubtedly encounter. We ask students to express themselves in ways that will facilitate conversation, rather than shut it down, and we will strive to do the same.

Blackboard Postings

We will use Blackboard to make available readings, assignments, etc., so we ask that students check it regularly.

Computer Use

We *actively discourage* the use of laptops during class, as studies consistently show that students who take notes in writing retain more information and remain more focused on classroom activities. If, however, you choose to use a laptop, please do so only for notes, and sit in the designated area. Instructors reserve the right to ask students to close their computers if they are using them to engage in outside activities (surfing the web, etc.).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is academic dishonesty and ignorance of what plagiarism entails is not accepted as an excuse. Each student should complete all academic work with the standard of personal integrity that the University of Mississippi demands. Please consult the M Book for detailed information about the University's view of plagiarism. According to A Writer's Reference (Diana Hacker), "To borrow another writer's words and ideas without proper acknowledgment is a form of dishonesty known as plagiarism. To avoid plagiarism, you must cite all quotations, summaries, and paraphrases as well as any facts or ideas that are not common knowledge. In addition, you must be careful to put paraphrases and summaries in your own words" (214-215). Students unclear about the precise definition of plagiarism should see us early in the semester to clarify their understanding of this term. Students practicing academic dishonesty will fail this course.

***Students with particular learning needs or with physical disabilities should notify the instructor early in the semester so that I may know how best to help you.

Access and Inclusion: The University of Mississippi is committed to the creation of inclusive learning environments for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your full inclusion and participation, or to accurate assessment of your achievement, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. Barriers may include, but are not necessarily limited to, timed exams and in-class assignments, difficulty with the acquisition of lecture content, inaccessible web content, and the use of non-captioned or non-transcribed video and audio files. If you are approved through SDS, you must log in to your Rebel Access portal at <https://sds.olemiss.edu> to request approved accommodations. If you are NOT approved through SDS, you must contact Student Disability Services at [662-915-7128](tel:662-915-7128) so the office can: 1. determine your eligibility for accommodations, 2. disseminate to your

instructors a Faculty Notification Letter, 3. facilitate the removal of barriers, and 4. ensure you have equal access to the same opportunities for success that are available to all students.

Honor System Statement

All students must refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing as well as from engaging in conduct that significantly impairs the welfare or educational opportunities of others in the university community. This includes refraining from all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected at all times.

Writing Help for Southern Studies Students

Hilary Word is a writing and study tutor who works exclusively with students in Southern Studies courses. She is available to meet with students **by appointment** in Barnard Observatory. This resource will be most helpful if you reach out for help at least 2 weeks before your assignment is due. You can reach Hilary at hmword@go.olemiss.edu to schedule an appointment or ask questions about how she might be able to help.

Class Schedule:

* This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Your patience, good humor, and attentiveness are appreciated.

Part I: Southern Food Foundations

Wk. 1: Introduction: Why Study (Southern) Food?

Aug. 27: Lewis, "[What is southern?](#)"

Aug. 29: Skloot, "[Two Americas, Two Restaurants, One Town](#)"
Miller and Deutsch, "Food Studies" (Chapter 1)

Wk. 2: Food and Place

Sept. 3: Joassart-Marcelli and Bosco, "A Place Perspective on Food"
Lee and Lee, "[The Taste of Right Here](#)"

Sept. 5: Joassart-Marcelli, Salim, and Vu, "Food, Ethnicity, and Place"
Letter of Introduction DUE

[Southtalks lecture, "Gastrodiplomacy in Two Souths." Sept. 4, 12pm, Barnard 105]

Wk. 3: Southern Food Studies Crash Course

Sept. 10: Green, "Mother Corn and the Dixie Pig: Native Food in the Native South
Gravy podcast, "[Adaptation, Survival, Gratitude](#)"

Sept. 12: Lefler, "Introduction to Southern Foodways and Culture"
Cooley, "Southern Food Studies: An Overview of Debates in the Field"

*Additional reading: Ferris, Marcie Cohen. *The Edible South: The Power of Food and the Making of an American Region*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

[Southtalks lecture, "Hidden Spaces." Sept. 11, 12pm, Barnard 105]

Southtalks lecture, "Exploring the Racial Geography of UT-Austin." Sept. 12, 4pm.]

Wk. 4: Research Methods

Sept. 17: Engelhardt, "Redrawing the Grocery: Practices and Methods for Studying
Southern Food"; Ownby, "Conclusion: Go Forth With Method"

Sept. 19 **Test 1**

*Additional reading: Edge, John T, Elizabeth Engelhardt, and Ted Ownby, eds. *The Larder: Food Studies Methods from the American South*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013.

[Southtalks lecture, "Square Books at Forty." Sept. 18, 12pm.]

Part II: Food Is Work

Wk. 5: Migrant Agricultural Labor

Sept. 24: Hahamovich, Introduction to *The Fruits of Their Labor*

Sept. 26: Estabrook, "[The Price of Tomatoes](#)"
Film, [Harvest of Shame](#)

*Additional reading: Hahamovich, Cindy. *The Fruits of Their Labor: Atlantic Coast Farmworkers and the Making of Migrant Poverty, 1870-1945*. 1st edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

[Southtalks, "Satan and Adam: A Conversation and Film Screening." Sept. 26, 4pm.]

Wk. 6: 20th c. Black Agriculture

Oct. 1: White, "Freedom's Seeds"

Newkirk, "[The great land robbery](#)"

Oct. 3: Rosenberg and Stucki, "[How USDA distorted data to conceal decades of discrimination against black farmers](#)"

Gravy Podcast: "[Fighting for the Promised Land](#)"

*Additional reading: White, Monica M. *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

[Southtalks lecture, "Art and Activism at Tougaloo College." Oct. 2, 12pm]

Wk. 7: Industrial Labor

Oct. 8: Stuesse, "Low-wage Legacies, Race, and the Golden Chicken in Mississippi"

Oct. 10: Mississippi ICE raid readings, TBD

Film, [Mississippi Chicken](#)

Recipe Collection Proposal DUE

*Additional reading: Stuesse, Angela. *Scratching Out a Living: Latinos, Race, and Work in the Deep South*. First edition. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016.

[Southtalks lecture, "Italian American Country." Oct. 8, 4pm]

Southtalks lecture, "Historic Preservation in Mississippi from an Advocacy and Local Government Perspective." Oct. 9, 12pm]

Southtalks lecture, "Superhero Comics and the U.S. South." Oct. 11, 12pm]

Wk. 8: Black Food Geographies

Oct. 15: Reese, "We Will Not Perish, We're Going to Keep Flourishing"

Laymon, "[Greens](#)"

*Additional reading: Reese, Ashanté M. *Black Food Geographies: Race, Self-Reliance, and Food Access in Washington, D.C.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Oct. 17: **Test 2**

Part III: Southern Food Imaginaries

Wk. 9: Hospitality

Oct. 22: Szczesiul, "Introduction: What Can One Mean by Southern Hospitality?"

Oct. 24: McCutcheon, "The Radical Welcome Table"

[Southtalks visiting documentarian, "Radical Reimaginings in Documentary Filmmaking." Malco Oxford Commons Cinema, Oct. 22, 6pm.

Southtalks lecture, "Black Food Geographies: Race, Self-Reliance, and Food Access." Oct. 23, 12pm]

* SFA Fall Symposium Oct. 24-26*

Wk. 10: Nostalgia

Oct. 29: Atkins-Sayre and Stokes, "Crafting the Cornbread Nation"

Gravy podcast: "[The New Old Country Store](#)"

Oct. 31: Kelting, "The Entanglement of Nostalgia and Utopia in Contemporary Southern Food Cookbooks"

[Southtalks visiting documentarian, "A Strike and an Uprising in Texas." Nov. 1, 12pm]

Wk. 11: Multiculturalism

Nov. 5: Arellano, "[How Southern Food Has Finally Embraced Its Multicultural Soul](#)"

Gravy podcast: "[Dinner at the Patel Motel](#)"

Nov. 7: Passidomo, "Our' Culinary Heritage"

SFA Films: [Viet Cajun](#) and [Little Kurdistan](#)

[Southtalks lecture, "The Positive Duty to Aid Them." Nov. 6, 12pm]

Part IV: Southern Food Futures

Wk. 12: Southern Food Activism

Nov. 12: Readings, TBD

Nov. 14: Film, [Food Chains](#)

[Southtalks lecture, "Jewish Radicals in New South Cities." Nov. 13, 12pm]

Wk. 13: Culinary Mestizaje

Nov. 19: Readings, TBD

Nov. 21: ***Recipe Collection Project DUE***

[Nov. 25-29: Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes]

Wk. 14: Conclusions

Dec. 3: Readings TBD

Dec. 5: Wrap-up and exam review

**** Final Exam** Thursday, Dec. 12, 8-11am.**

Written Assignments, SST 105, Fall 2019

Letter of Introduction (10%)

Due: Sept. 5

Write a letter to your instructor, introducing yourself. This should actually look like a letter. In your letter, please address the following questions:

1. Why did you select this class?
2. Have you taken other Southern Studies classes? If so, which one(s), and what did you think of it or them?
3. What are you hoping to learn or experience?
4. What is your relationship to the South?
5. What do you think "Southern food" is? What does it mean to you?
6. Is there anything else you think I should know about you?

Your letter should be typed, double-spaced, and between two and three pages in length. Only hard copies will be accepted.

Recipe Collection Project (20%) Due: Nov. 21
Proposal (5%) Due: Oct. 10

This assignment is part documentary project, part creative interpretation of class readings and other material. Your project should include three “recipes.” Two of these are actual recipes that would yield edible products. The third is your “recipe” for a Southern “dish” from and about the future (details below). Your final project should include the three typed recipes and any visual material (original photographs or artwork) that complements them. All recipes should have the following format:

Title: What is the dish (or “dish”) called?

Narrative: A story about the dish. How did it come to be? Why is it special? Does it have an origin that is interesting? Are there any memories or anecdotes associated with it?

Ingredients: Include measurements, and as much detail as possible. For example, if you are writing up your grandfather’s biscuit recipe, what kind of flour does he use?

Instructions: Step-by-step directions on how to make the dish. Again, include as much detail and specificity as possible!

1. One recipe should come from *someone you know*. This will probably be a dish that is familiar to you, that someone in your family or circle of friends is fond of and perhaps famous for making. Obtaining this recipe will require you to have a conversation with this person, and, ideally, to watch them as they prepare the dish.
2. The second recipe should represent a *surprising or “non-traditional” Southern food* and should come from someone outside your family or circle of friends. This may feel daunting at first, but you’ll need to interview this person about their dish and, ideally, watch them make it, take photographs, etc.
3. The third recipe is metaphorical. Drawing on concepts and themes from course readings and lectures, devise a “recipe” for a utopian Southern dish from 2050. What stories, dreams, ideals, values, etc. might such a dish contain and convey? Feel free to be very creative here!

For your **proposal** (due Oct. 10), you should demonstrate intentional progress toward completing the recipe project. The proposal should include:

1. Names of the people you plan to interview for recipes 1 and 2.
2. Explanation. Why have you chosen these individuals?
3. Timeline. When and where do you plan to interview them?
4. Some initial ideas for recipe #3. What thoughts or questions do you have as you contemplate this portion of the assignment? What are you excited about creating?

The **proposal** should be at least one page, typed, double-spaced.

The final **recipe project** should be between 4 and 7 pages in length, including all elements listed above for each recipe. (Artistic material can take any form and is not counted in the project length.) The first two recipes should be about a page each, and the third—which will naturally include more narrative detail—should run between 2 and 4 pages.