

SST 105: Introduction to the South and Food

Spring 2023, Tues/Thurs 2:30-3:45pm, Lamar 130

Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Catarina Passidomo, she/her/hers. (You may call me Catarina or Professor/Dr. Passidomo)

Office: Barnard Observatory, 111 (Barnard Observatory is the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, located at the corner of Grove Loop and Sorority Row.)

Student Hours: Tuesdays, 11am-1pm and by appointment

Email: passidomo@olemiss.edu *I respond to emails on weekdays, and in a typical week you can expect a reply from me within 24-48 hours.*

Teaching Assistant: Elise Denoulet, edenoule@go.olemiss.edu, *Elise will assist with grading, and will also keep track of extra credit submissions.*

Course Description

This course will explore Southern culture, history, and identity through the study of food. For our purposes, food culture includes what people eat (or do not eat), why and how they eat what they eat, and what it means. Studying food culture 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 food within the context of “The South,” we can better understand (and, perhaps, complicate) what, if anything, makes that place unique. Because the study of food 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 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to...

1. Understand food as a useful tool for studying places.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which food and food labor practices have shaped (and continue to shape) the South.
3. Utilize critical thinking to analyze several powerful “imaginaries” that circulate around southern food.
4. Demonstrate an ability to articulate observations about the south in writing, speaking, and through critical analysis of how southern food shows up in pop culture.

Course Texts and Materials

Required readings, podcasts, and other materials 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. It is available through the [UM library as an e-book](#). (Each week, I also list “source reading” in Blackboard for those of you interested in learning more about a particular topic. My lectures will often draw on these source readings. Most books are available at the UM library, many as ebooks.)

Major Assignments and Course Grading

Assessment item	% of grade	Due Date
Weekly(ish) writings and assignments	15%	Weekly (or so)
Introductory Survey	5%	Feb. 3
Test 1	15%	Feb. 16
Test 2	15%	Mar. 23
Pop Culture Group Project	30% (total)	
- Proposal	(5%)	Mar. 10
- Presentation (in-class and submitted)	(10%)	Apr. 18/20/25
- Evaluation	(5%)	Apr. 18/20/25
- Individual reflection paper	(10%)	Apr. 28
Final Exam	20%	May 9, 4pm

You may access the Introductory Survey by clicking on this link:

https://uofmississippi.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0UqHVMzUfNKgoR0; it is also posted to the assignments folder and week 2 content folder in Blackboard. A detailed assignment description for the *pop culture group project and proposal* are attached to this syllabus and posted in Blackboard.

Weekly writings will be posted to Blackboard or announced in class, and will draw from the week’s readings and lecture. These will be sometimes happen in class and other times submitted as homework via Blackboard. They 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 assigned materials 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.

Grading scale: 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

Class Participation/Borderline Grades:

If your grade is, say, 89.7, hanging between a B+ and an A-, I will grant you the higher grade *only if* you meet ALL of the following requirements:

- You have actively participated in class discussions throughout the semester,
- You have turned in all assigned material on time and in its complete form,
- You have taken advantage of extra-credit opportunities,
- You have fewer than two absences,
- and you have generally been an enthusiastic and engaged student.

If you do not meet the above requirements, *do not request a higher grade*.

See “a qualitative description” of grades below for more on how to get the best possible grade in this class.

A qualitative description of grades:

A	An A student has active and regular participation in class discussions, an excellent working knowledge of all assigned materials, 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	A B student usually participates in class discussions, has working knowledge of the assigned material, obtains 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	A C student has infrequent participation in class discussions, partial knowledge of assigned material, obtains around 70% of the points on the in-class exercises and exams and turns in incomplete and/or poorly written assignments.
D	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)

A Note on Extra Credit:

A few extra credit opportunities will be available, and will be announced in class or on Blackboard/email. If you attend an event that I’ve announced as an extra credit opportunity, you’ll need to document your attendance with a *one-page summary of the event and proof of attendance* (ticket stub, program, photo, etc.). In exchange for said essay and documentation, you’ll receive **.5 percentage points of extra credit** (added to your final grade at the end of the semester) for each opportunity. If you are aware of an

informative and relevant campus activity or event that you think warrants extra credit, please inform me a week ahead of time so I may announce it to the class. *You may earn up to 2 points of extra credit, by completing up to four extra credit opportunities.* You may email your extra-credit essay(s) to Elise (edenoule@go.olemiss.edu) within one week of the event.

Course Policies

Attendance

The activities we do during class are essential to your learning in this course, so you should make every effort to attend all class meetings and to arrive to class on time. I recognize, however, that illness, personal emergencies, university obligations, religious observances, and other circumstances may sometimes cause you to be late to class or prevent your attendance entirely.

I have the following expectations for attendance: students are expected to attend every class period, arriving on time, and staying for the duration, unless they have a legitimate reason for missing class, such as those enumerated above. During class, students are encouraged to think aloud, ask questions of each other, and respond to one another's comments and work.

I build flexibility into the attendance requirement by permitting up to four (4) absences. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. These four absences are entirely at your discretion. If you know you will need to miss class for one of the reasons listed above, or for another reason, I appreciate your letting me know this in advance.

Your attendance will be evaluated in the following ways: (1) the use of classroom attendance scanners and (2) random use of sign-in sheets. Attempts to deceive the instructor by scanning in to class and then leaving will be treated as academic dishonesty; see the policy on academic integrity below for a discussion of consequences.

Excessive absences will naturally impact your grade. In other words, in over a decade of teaching, I have yet to have a student miss more than four classes and earn an A in the class. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate or otherwise making up that day's learning on your own or by coming to Dr. Passidomo's student hours. Any graded work that you may miss in class cannot be made up. If you anticipate problems with your attendance, please contact me so we can make a plan to support your learning.

Please be aware that the university requires students to attend the first meeting of every course for which they are registered, unless they obtain prior departmental approval. Without such approval, a student who is absent from the first class meeting may be dropped from that class.

The university also requires instructors to verify the attendance of each student during the first two weeks of the term. I will conduct attendance verification by calling roll on the first day of class, and through the use of attendance scanners and random sign-in sheets every day thereafter.

If you have concerns about your attendance and course enrollment in the first weeks of class, I encourage you to contact me as soon as possible.

Disability Access and Inclusion Policy

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 registered with SDS, you must log in to your Rebel Access portal at [rebel-access-portal](#) to request approved accommodations. If you are NOT registered with SDS, you must complete the process to become registered. To begin that process, please visit the SDS website at [apply-for-services](#). SDS will:

1. Complete a comprehensive review to determine your eligibility for accommodations,
2. If approved, 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.

If you have questions, contact SDS at 662-915-7128 or sds@olemiss.edu.

Class Participation / Engagement

Because active participation in the course is one of the most important ways to learn, you will be assessed on your class engagement. Engagement looks a little different for everyone, but in general, an engaged student will come to class prepared, contribute regularly to class activities or discussions, listen attentively to peers and the instructor, stay on-task during class, complete their work in a timely manner, and reach out to the instructor if they have questions or start to fall behind. If you anticipate any barriers to your full engagement in the course, I encourage you to contact me so we can strategize about how you can best fulfill the course requirements.

Academic Integrity

According to institutional policy, '[t]he University is conducted on a basis of common honesty. Dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are regarded as particularly serious offenses.' We share a responsibility to maintain academic integrity in

our work and will follow the procedures outlined in the [Academic Conduct and Discipline Policy](#) and the [M Book](#) for any instance of academic misconduct.

You can act with academic integrity in this class by treating your instructor and classmates with respect, by completing work that represents your own best efforts, and by never falsifying your own or a classmate's work. A student who plagiarizes, cheats, disabuses the attendance policy, or otherwise engages in academic dishonesty may automatically fail the course and an Academic Discipline Case may be opened. If you have questions about academic integrity, I encourage you to contact me or to consult the [UM Academic Conduct and Discipline Policy](#).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The University of Mississippi embraces its public flagship mission of inspiring and educating our diverse and vibrant community where all individuals are able to intellectually, socially, and culturally thrive through transformative experiences on our campus and beyond. In line with the [Pathways to Equity Strategic Plan](#), I make the following commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our classroom:

- Diversity is an affirmation of the intersecting individual, social, and organizational identities that make our community vibrant and transformational. I commit to embracing the full spectrum of diversity in this class, recognizing it as a resource, strength, and benefit to our shared learning experience.
- Equity is directly addressing the social, institutional, organizational and systemic barriers that prevent members of marginalized groups from thriving in our community. I commit to be both proactive and responsive in mitigating barriers to learning so that all members of our classroom community can reach their full potential.
- Inclusion is actively and intentionally creating a welcoming campus where all individuals feel they have a supportive and affirming space to learn, grow and engage. I commit to fostering a classroom environment that fully supports, values, and engages the intersectional identities of every student.

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are aspects of this course that inhibit your belonging, and therefore your learning, I encourage you to contact me so we can develop strategies that support you as you work toward the course requirements. I also encourage you to explore campus resources related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. These are provided in the "Student Resources" section, below.

Classroom Environment

In line with the [Pathways to Equity Strategic Plan](#) and [The Creed](#), it is our responsibility to cultivate an environment that respects the dignity of each person, promotes fairness and civility, and welcomes diverse identities and perspectives. The classroom should be an inclusive space in which every student feels supported, challenged, and welcome to contribute to our collective learning. We will work to

create this environment by treating one another with kindness and respect while also allowing and encouraging a variety of opinions. Any student who engages in hostile behavior may be asked to leave the class.

Student Wellbeing

Many college students struggle with physical and mental health issues as they navigate busy schedules, academic pressures, and difficult life transitions. Your wellbeing is important to me, and I encourage you to prioritize it. If a health issue or life circumstance of any kind is impacting your ability to succeed in this class, please don't hesitate to contact me so we can make a plan to support your learning. I also encourage you to take advantage of campus and community resources that can help. To that end, please see the "student resources" section below.

Technology in the Classroom

Laptops and cell phones can be effective learning aids but can also distract you and your classmates from the task at hand. At some points in class, we may make use of these technologies as learning resources, and at some points I may request that you put them away to give the class activity your undivided attention. I encourage you to take responsibility for your use of personal devices and to employ them in ways most likely to enhance your own learning. If inappropriate use of technology becomes a persistent problem, I may ask you to refrain from using these devices in class for the duration of the semester or speak with me individually to resolve the issue.

Student Resources

Academic Support

- [Writing Centers](#): Aside from one-on-one meetings with teachers during office hours, a great way to improve your writing is to work with writing consultants at one of the University's writing centers. Writing consultants will work with any student writer working on any project in any discipline. To learn more about the writing center locations, hours, scheduling and services, please go to writingcenter.olemiss.edu. The undergraduate writing center is located in Lamar Hall, 3rd floor, suite C. In addition to the general services provided by campus writing centers, undergraduate students in Southern Studies classes have access to a **writing tutor who works exclusively with southern studies students**. This person is **Max Conrad**. You may contact him at mxconrad@go.olemiss.edu to schedule an appointment.
- [The Speaking Center](#): The University of Mississippi Speaking Center offers free public speaking consultation services for UM students. Their highly trained peer consultants work alongside UM students on projects in all disciplines. They provide free access to one-on-one consultations, group workshops, and other speech communication-focused resources. If

you need to create a presentation for a class or for a university-related activity, you can get feedback and advice from consultants in the Speaking Center. Their services are delivered face-to-face and online. Their goal is to cultivate individualized strategies with UM students to help them become independent, effective, and confident speakers.

To learn more about the Speaking Center, [check out their website](#). Or use [this link schedule an appointment for a consultation](#). This link will prompt you to complete a registration form before scheduling your appointment.

- [CSSFYE Academic Support Programs](#): The Center for Student Success and First Year Experience is located on the first floor of the Johnson Commons East and can assist students with time management, organization, study skills, note-taking, and more.
- [UM Library Services](#): Our class will be assisted by one of the University's reference librarians, as we prepare and work on the annotated bibliography project. The library and its librarians are tremendous resources. Take advantage of them!
- [Intensive English Program](#): offers academic English classes from basic to advanced levels with a curriculum designed to prepare students to interact in the English-speaking academic, social, and professional world.

Wellbeing and Community

- [UMatter](#)—Students and Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact UMMatter: Student Support and Advocacy at 662-915-7248 or kforster@olemiss.edu. Students who struggle to afford groceries or access sufficient food to eat are especially encouraged to visit the [Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry](#) in 213 Kinard Hall or email grovegrocery@go.olemiss.edu. Students who are struggling to meet their basic needs may also find the following website helpful: <https://www.findhelpplafayettecounty.org/>.
- [UMatter](#)—Students Support and Advocacy: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources in the Title IX Office in 120 Lester Hall or at 662-915-7735. UMMatter Student Support Services and Advocacy provides free and confidential information, consultation, support, advocacy to University of Mississippi students and graduate students who have experienced a traumatic, disturbing or life disruptive event. UMMatter is not a part of the police department, or the Equal Opportunity and Regulatory Compliance office, and is a confidential resource for students. UMMatter provides targeted support and resources for students that are responding to Title IX or conduct matters at the university. These services include academic and housing accommodations for Title IX concerns, individual case management for responding students, support in Title IX investigations and conduct matters, connecting students with advisors for adjudication processes, and referrals to services on

campus and in the community. Contact U Matter, umatter@olemiss.edu, 662-915-7248, 301 Student Union with questions or for support.

- **VIP: Survivor Support**: Students who may have experienced any type of gender-based violence including sexual assault, relationship abuse, or stalking are encouraged to reach out to VIP: Survivor Support by calling 662-915-1059 or emailing sapoole@olemiss.edu for confidential emotional support and resources. Students may need support with their academics, non-emergency medical care, forensic exams, STI testing, reporting options, safe rooms/safety planning, and/or referrals for psychological support. Students will receive nonjudgmental emotional support and create an individualized plan to meet their needs.
- **University Counseling Center**: The University Counseling Center is a professional facility offered by the University of Mississippi to assist students, faculty, and staff with many types of life stressors that interrupt day-to-day functioning, including the stressors associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. They offer individual counseling, couple's counseling, group counseling, stress management, crisis intervention, assessments and referrals, outreach programs, consultations, and substance abuse services. There is no fee for currently enrolled University students and everything you say to your counselor is confidential. You can contact the Counseling Center for information about mental health issues at <https://counseling.olemiss.edu>, counselg@olemiss.edu, 662- 915-3784, 320 Lester Hall, and <https://www.facebook.com/universitycounselingcenterolemiss/>. You can schedule an appointment or get information about appointments by calling the UCC at 662-915-3784.
- **UMSafe**: provides resources and information for individuals who are alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, individuals who have been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, and other members of the University community.
- **Bias Education and Response Team**: for reporting bias-related incidents, such as threats or acts of harassment or intimidation, which are motivated by a bias against a person because of that person's identity.
- **Diversity and Community Engagement**: supports the mission of UM by transforming people, institutions, and communities through partnership, access, and engagement that fosters belonging, enriches learning and development, enhances research, and creates equitable opportunities for all.
- **Center for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Engagement**: develops programs and services that support UM's core value of inclusiveness.
- **Sarah Isom Center**: for Women and Gender Studies educates about issues of gender and sexuality, promotes interdisciplinary research, and advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **LGBTQIA+ Programming and Initiatives**

Course 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?

Jan. 24: (in class) Lewis, "[What is southern?](#)"

Jan. 26: (in class) Skloot, "[Two Americas, Two Restaurants, One Town](#)"

Wk. 2: Food, Place, and Pop Culture

Jan. 31: Lee and Lee, "[The Taste of Right Here](#)"; (in class): **syllabus quiz**

Feb. 2: Wilson, "[Southern Food and Pop Culture](#)"

Introductory Survey DUE: Feb. 3

Wk. 3: Southern Food History Crash Course

Feb. 7: Gravy podcast, "[Adaptation, Survival, Gratitude](#)"

Feb. 9: Cooley, "Southern Food Studies: An Overview of Debates in the Field"

Wk. 4: [Film/Review/Test]

Feb. 14: *High on the Hog*, episode 1; review for test; **Assign groups for pop culture project**

Feb. 16: **Test 1**

Part II: Food Is Work

Wk. 5: Farms and Fields

Feb. 21: Go over test; meet in groups to discuss pop culture project

Feb. 23: Estabrook, "[The Price of Tomatoes](#)" Arrellano, "Harvest of Paternalism"

(in class) film, [Harvest of Shame](#)

Wk. 6: Factories

Feb. 28: (in class) film: *Food Chains*

Mar. 2: Stuesse, "Low-wage Legacies, Race, and the Golden Chicken in Mississippi"

Wk. 7: Kitchens

Mar. 7: Gravy podcast: "[Memphis restaurant workers unite!](#)"

Mar. 9: (In class): finalize pop culture proposal

Submit proposal to Blackboard by Friday, Mar. 10 at 5pm

[Mar. 13-17: Spring Break, no classes]

Wk. 8: [Film/Review/Test]

Mar. 21: SFA film block; Review for test

Mar. 23: **Test 2**

Part III: Southern Food Imaginaries

Wk. 9: Nostalgia

Mar. 28: Gravy podcast: "[The New Old Country Store](#)"; Catte, "[What a Way to Make a Living](#)"

Mar. 30: [Oxford Conference for the Book; more information TBD]

Wk. 10: Hospitality

Apr 4: *Gravy* podcast: "The Bare Minimum"

Apr. 6: **NO CLASS: work on pop culture projects**

Wk. 11: Multiculturalism

Apr. 11: *Gravy* podcast: "[Dinner at the Patel Motel](#)";

Apr. 13: (in class): SFA short films: [Phát Tài](#), [Tang's Asian Market](#), [Siler City: Bienvenido a Trabajar](#); [Little Kurdistan](#)

Part IV: Southern Food Futures/Southern Food Pasts

Wk. 12: Pop Culture Group Presentations

Apr 18: Groups 1-4 present; Groups 9-12 evaluate

Apr 20: Groups 5-8 present; Groups 1-4 evaluate

Wk. 13: Pop Culture Presentations and Discussion

Apr. 25: Groups 9-12 present; Groups 5-8 evaluate

Apr. 27: Pop Culture project reflections and discussion

Pop Culture Projects DUE: Apr. 28 (Box)

Wk. 14: Conclusions

Apr. 26: Readings TBD

Apr. 28: Wrap-up and exam review

**** Final Exam** Tuesday, May 9, 4-7pm**