

*Disclaimer: This is an indicative syllabus only and may be subject to changes. The final and official syllabus will be distributed by the instructor during the first day of class.*

**The American University of Rome**  
**English Writing, Literature, and Publishing Program**

*Department or degree program mission statement, student learning objectives, as appropriate*

**Course Title:** A Moveable Feast: Writing about Food  
**Course Number:** ENG 321  
**Credits & hours:** 3 credits – 3 hours  
**Pre/Co-Requisites:** ENG 202

**Required Textbook** (*subject to change*)

- Diane Jacob, *Will Write for Food: The Complete Guide to Writing Cookbooks, Restaurant Reviews, Articles, Memoir, and More...* Da Capo, Boston. ISBN: 978738214047
- David Remnick, ed. *Secret Ingredients: The New Yorker Book of Food and Drink.* Modern Library Trade Paperback, New York. ISBN: 970812976410
- Hughes, Holly, ed. *Best Food Writing 2014*, Da Capo, Boston. ISBN: 9780738217918.

**Course description**

Food writing is defined in many ways: cookbooks to non-fiction essays, restaurant reviews to travel and personal narratives. This course will examine food writing in its various professional forms and will instruct students in approaches to writing about food for publications. Students will write a restaurant review, a personal essay, and a food analysis and recipe, as well as short analytical writings that examine the work of professional writers. In part, Rome is our classroom and textbook, so students should be prepared to visit local markets, restaurants, and locales around the city where food plays a role (street vendors, gelaterie, parks, etc).

**Course Learning Objectives**

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the genre of food writing-both as a reader and a writer
2. demonstrate the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively in writing
3. demonstrate the ability to research and write in the food writing genre
4. outline, draft, revise, and polish feature food pieces for newspaper, internet, and editorial queries
5. to write grammatically correct and stylistically interesting essays and articles

### Course Learning Activities

- Weekly readings and lectures: Students will cover the assigned readings and attend class lectures which will provide the specific background knowledge and information in order to contextualize the course's topic and material under study. [1a, 1b, 2b]
- In-class discussions and informal presentations: Students will read critically and become familiar with the various styles and genres of food writing in order to participate in class discussion and effectively express their thoughts and ideas. [2a, 2b, 3b, 3c]
- Frequent in-class writing will require responses to the class readings
- Students will write three professional essays: a personal food memory, a restaurant review, a discussion of an ingredient and a recipe that includes that ingredient

### Entry Fees

Students must pay their own entrance fees when required.

### Assessment tools

Essays (3 – 15% each)	45%
Research Essay	20%
Presentations	15%
In-class writing/quizzes	10%
Class participation	10%

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading & Assignments
Week 1	Introduction	WWFF Ch. 1 "What exactly is Food Writing?"; do exercise 1, p. 20 & bring to class
	Past meals and the personal essay	BFW: "The Man Machine" (Strand), "Bread and Women" (Gopnik, p. 138)
Week 2	The food writer's "voice"	WWFF Ch. 2 "Characteristics of a Food Writer" + SI "Look Back in Hunger" (Lane) SI: "4am" (Stevenson), "Slave" (Prud'homme), "A Sandwich" (Ephron)
		BFW: "The Ghosts of Cakes Past" (Bhide, p. 134), "A Sort of Chicken We Call Fish" (Altman), "Everyman's Fish" (Carson, p.80)
Week 3	Guest Speaker: Editor & writer Paula Darrow on food writing & publishing	WWFF Ch. 9 "Memoir & Nonfiction Food Writing"; SI "The Reporter's Kitchen" (Kramer, 159)
	Workshop	<b>Food Memory DRAFT due</b> (guidelines TBA); bring copies (if you don't have a copy for everyone, you will not receive a workshop and you will be downgraded as a result)
Week 4	Workshop	Read & prepare critiques for remaining Food Memory pieces
	Food & Travel Writing	SI: "A Rat In My Soup" (Hessler, p.303), "The Homesick Restaurant" (Orlean, p. 297)
Week 5	Restaurant Reviews	<b>Revised Food Memory Due</b> WWFF: Ch. 5 "Secrets of Restaurant Reviewing" SI: "Don't Eat Before Reading This" (Bourdain, p. 83), "The Magic Bagel" (Trillin, p. 297)
	Setting the Table (or: Preparing for review Restaurants assigned)	BFW: "Cheapskates" (Henry, p. 224); "The Tao of Bianco" (Mondy, p. 264)
Week 6	The Foodie Profile	SI: "The Fruit Detective" (Seabrook, p. 229), "Raw Faith" (Bilger, p. 309), "On the Bay" (Buford, p. 259)
	On Tap – writing about beverages	SI: "Dry Martini" (Angell, p. 339), "Bock" (Shawn, p. 419),
Week 7	Workshop	<b>Restaurant Review DRAFT due</b> (guidelines TBA): bring copies
	Workshop	
Week 8	Discussion of The Single Ingredient & Recipe essay	<b>Revised Restaurant Review Due</b> ; Discussion Single Ingredient & Recipe essay; WWFF, Ch 7; "The Art of Recipe Writing"; SI, "An Attempt to Compile a Short History of the Buffalo Wing" (Trillin, p. 277), "As the French Do" (Malcolm, p. 441), "The Secret Ingredient" (Fisher, p. 103), "The Trouble with Tripe" (Fisher, p. 109)
	Recipes, Food blogs, and beyond	BFW: "The Science of the Best Chocolate Chip Cookies" (Lopez-Alt), "How to Boil Water" (Lin, p. 108), "How to Cook a Turkey" (Watson, p. 119), "And Baby Makes Free For All" (Sachs, p. 124)
Week 9	The How To	BFW: "How to Cook Chicken Cutlets and Give Yourself a Reason to Keep Living" (Burneko, p. 166), "Because I Can" (Leite, p.286), "Tomato Pie" (Hood, p.296)
	Workshop	<b>Single Ingredient History &amp; Recipe DRAFT due</b> ; bring copies
Week 10	Workshop	Read & prepare critiques for remaining essays
	Presentations	Guidelines TBA
Week 11	Presentations	
	Food & Fiction	SI: "Taste" (Dahl, p. 459) "The Sorrows of Gin" (Cheever, p. 491)
Week 12	Eating at the Movies; Screening TBA	<b>Abstracts for Final Paper Due</b> (guidelines TBA)
	Screening & Discussion	
Week 13	Would You Like that To Go? (or: The other side of the Menu)	BFW: "Last Meals" (Cunningham, p.355) "Fixed Menu" (Pang, p. 341), "The Invasivore's Dilemma" (P. 306)
	Final Papers Due	Analytical Essay Due
Week 14	Final critiques will be held	

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

### 1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;  
Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;  
Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note\* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

### 2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please refer to the Provost's Office list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally not be counted as an absence.

Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

\*Note: No Instructor may penalize a student more than half a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

#### Grade Point Average

A student's grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the quality points achieved by the number of credits for each course. The result is then divided by the total number of credit hours taken. The Cumulative or Career Total Grade Point Average (CGPA) is the grade point average for all credit hours taken at the University and at approved study abroad programs. The GPA and CGPA are calculated by truncating after the second digit after the decimal point. Transfer credits have no effect on the CGPA at The American University of Rome.

#### Grades

Grades are posted on a secure area of the University's official website and are mailed to AUR degree students only upon written request. Grades are mailed to the various study abroad programs. Grades computed in the (GPA) reflect the following grade equivalents:

GRADE		GPA	
A	Excellent	4.00	94 – 100 points
A-		3.70	90 – 93.99 pts
B+	Very Good	3.30	87 – 89.99
B	Good	3.00	83 – 86.99
B-		2.70	80 – 82.99
C+		2.30	77 – 79.99
C	Satisfactory	2.00	73 – 76.99
C-	Less than Satisfactory	1.70	70 – 72.99
D	Poor	1.00	60 – 69.99
F	Failing	0.00	59.99 – 0
WU	Unofficial withdrawal counts as an F	0.00	
P	Applicable to development courses	0.00	
<i>Grades not computed into the grade point average are:</i>			
W	Withdrawal		
AUDIT (AU)	Only possible when the student registers for a course at the beginning of the semester as an audit student		
I	Incomplete work must be completed within the ensuing semester. Failure to do so results in automatically converting the I grade to the default grade, which is then computed into the grade point average		
P	Pass grade is applicable to courses as indicated in the catalog.		
WIP	Work in progress		