**Eating Your Words: Talking About Food**

**Arts & Sciences 1138.\*\*, Freshman Seminar**

**Semester, 1 Credit Hour**

**Weds, 11am PS XXX**

**Instructor Info**

Laura Wagner, Psychology

Office: 241 PS

Email: wagner.602@osu.edu

Office hours: By Appointment

# Course Description

What can we learn about our history, our attitudes, our waistline, and our place in the world by looking at how people talk about food? This class centers on a recent book that asks these questions and we will do hands-on exploration of the central themes. Students will learn about how food descriptions are used to influence our attitudes in fancy expensive restaurants as well as in family diners; how to *really* read what’s on food packaging; why we talk about food and sex the same way; and what’s the deal with ketchup (or is it catsup?). There will be in-class activities and out-of-class homework assignments.

# Texts

Jurafsky, D. (2014). *The Language of Food: A Linguist Reads the Menu.* NY: Norton.

**Course Policies**

* Attendance: Students are expected to attend ALL classes. If you need to miss a class, please be sure to email me ahead of time.
* Class participation: Students are expected to engage in all in-class activities and to provide constructive feedback to their classmates as needed.
* Written assignments: There will be 3 hands-on activities conducted over the semester: Each one will involve some out-of-class investigation and in-class discussion. Each one will be completed by a brief written report. Details about each report will be provided, but they will range in length from 100 – 500 words.

# Grading

Final grades will be either Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U) with an S grade requiring at least 70% of the possible points.

Attendance and Class Participation: 40 points

Written Assignments (20 points each) 60 points

**Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf>).

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; [slds.osu.edu](https://email.osu.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=pgvxJbKMx8xyYUw7_ckGCJU48p5JSRK1qesaaqpVffQNWD1FjxHVCA..&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.ods.ohio-state.edu%2f).

**Weekly Schedule**

### **Week 1 – Why Talk about Food?**

Nothing to read – introduction to class topics, assignments, and activities

### **Week 2 – How to Read a Menu**

READ: Ch 1 (pp 7 – 20)

### **Week 3 – Reading a Menu: Generating Questions**

BEFORE CLASS: Get a menu from a local restaurant and be prepared to discuss it in class

### **Week 4 – Reading a Menu: Testing our Theories**

BEFORE CLASS: Talk to 3 people using questions from Week 3. Be prepared to discuss.

### **Week 5 – Food and History: Ketchup**

DUE: Writing Assignment #1: Menu Writeup

READ: Ch. 4 (pp. 49 - 63)

### **Week 6 – Try Something New**

BEFORE CLASS: Try a food mentioned in the book you’ve never had before

READ: Ch 3 (pp. 35 – 48) OR Ch 9 (pp. 117 – 129) OR Ch 10 (pp. 130 – 143)

### **Week 7 – What’s in the Bag?**

READ: Ch. 8 (pp. 107 – 116)

### **Week 8 – What’s in the Bag: Generating Questions**

BEFORE CLASS: pick a packaged food and bring it in. Be prepared to discuss it.

READ: Ch. 12 (pp 159 – 170)

### **Week 9 – What’s in the Bag: Testing our Theories**

BEFORE CLASS: Talk to 3 people using questions from Week 8. Be prepared to discuss.

### **Week 10 – Food Across Time and Space**

DUE: Writing Assignment #2: Packaging Writeup

READ: Ch. 2 (pp. 21 – 34)

### **Week 11 – Food Across Time and Space**

READ: Ch. 6 (pp. 78 – 91)

### **Week 12 – Food and Sex**

READ: Ch. 7 (pp. 92 – 107)

### **Week 13 – Selling Food**

BEFORE CLASS: Identify a restaurant to review and be prepared to discuss it

**Week 14 – Class Evaluation and pitching you favorite Columbus restaurant**

DUE: Writing Assignment 3: Review of your favorite restaurant.