NS 2450 Social Science Perspectives on Food and Nutrition
Course Information 2011
Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Instructors: Carole Bisogni, PhD, 183 MVR Hall, cab20@cornell.edu
Appointments: Kenna Snow-Tompkins, kms3@cornell.edu, 184 MVR, 255-1833
Jeffery Sobal, PhD, MPH, 303 MVR Hall, 255-6015, js57@cornell.edu
Appointments: Contact Professor Sobal

Teaching Assistants: Catherine Wiggins, cew229@cornell.edu
Amanda McLain, acm272@cornell.edu

Administrative Assistance: Office of Administrative Support, 119 Savage

Time and Room: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:10-11:25, Room G71 MVR Hall Auditorium

Website: http://www.blackboard.cornell.edu/ Website registration is required.
Office Hours: See staff page on website

Course Description
This course uses theories, concepts, and methods from the social sciences to examine food, eating, and nutrition. The food choice process model is used as a conceptual framework for examining the scope of social science aspects of nutrition.

Learning Outcomes
After completing this course, students will be able to:
- Explain how concepts and theories from the social sciences apply to food and nutrition issues and help to explain the personal, social, cultural, economic, and historical variations in food, eating, and nutrition
- Describe basic social facts about food, eating, and nutrition
- Demonstrate basic principles and procedures for conducting qualitative and survey research to understand food choice, including protection of human participants in social and behavioral research
- Demonstrate appreciation for personal, social, cultural, economic, and historical variations in food, eating, and nutrition

Prerequisites: NS1150 or equivalent. Only transfers and new majors may take NS 1150 and 2450 concurrently. See Dr. Sobal if you do not have the prerequisites for this class or if you have questions about enrollment in the class. Students must be attending by the 3rd class to be enrolled.

Course Requirements
1) Attendance & Preparation: Students are expected to attend all classes, arriving on time and staying for the whole class period. Students are responsible for all material covered in class and in the required readings.

2) Readings: A collection of required readings is available at the Cornell Store. If the course packet is sold out at the bookstore, you must order a reprint in the Cornell Store Book Department. A copy of the collection of readings will be placed on reserve in Mann Library. Some additional required readings will be distributed in class. All readings should be done before attending the class for which the reading is assigned.

3) Human Participant Training: All students are required to complete the on-line Cornell Training Program for Researchers in the Use of Human Participants. The program is accessed at http://www.irb.cornell.edu/training/. This training program offers multiple modules. The only one that
you need to complete is “Students in Research – SBR Quiz.” This is shorter module designed just for students. At the end of the module, there is quiz which you must complete and score at least 80% to pass. After you have passed the quiz, print off the report of your test score to submit with your proposal for Project #1.

For students who have previously completed IRB training: Cornell uses the training program delivered by CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative). If you have an existing account with CITI and the account is affiliated with Cornell, your training records are available through the login below. If you have an existing account with CITI that is not affiliated with Cornell, you will be given the option to make your training information available to Cornell after logging in.

4) Assignments: Students will be required to complete two major projects that provide experience in social science research methods. Project #1 involves qualitative research. Project #2 focuses on survey research. Handouts describing paper topics, formats, and due dates will be distributed in class. Each must be typed or computer printed. Papers will be due at assigned dates and can be handed in up to one week early. Late papers/proposals will be penalized for each day they are late. In the first half of the course, a number of short written assignments based on required readings study questions will be due.

4) Examinations: In the first half of the course, testing will consist of five quizzes given during the regular class meeting time. Students may drop the quiz with the lowest grade. For the second half of the course, a prelim will be given during the university scheduled final exam periods. Quizzes and the prelim will cover lecture material, required readings, and class discussion. There are no scheduled makeup exams or quizzes. Requests for makeup exams due to religious holidays, exam conflicts, illness, and athletic obligations will be considered on a case by case basis, and documentation of circumstances may be required.

5) Participation: Students are expected to participate in class discussions, drawing upon required readings and their own knowledge and experiences. Contributions of insightful questions, examples, experiences, and ideas during discussions will be noted by the professor and teaching assistants.

6) Grading:

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<th>First half of class (50% of grade)</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 Quizzes in class (8-12 MC/short answer) drop lowest grade, 4 @5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project #1: Qualitative interviews</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>5 Short assignments related to readings</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<th>Second half of class (50% of grade)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project #2: Quantitative survey</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Quizzes in class (8-12 MC/short answer) drop lowest grade, 4@5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Final exam quiz (final exam period)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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Students may not retake exams, rewrite papers, or do extra projects for credit. Questions about grades on papers and prelim exams must be submitted in writing to the professor within 10 days after the work is first returned to the class. Only the professors will make grade determinations. Dr. Bisogni will determine the grades for first half of class. Dr. Sobal will determine the grades for the second prelim and paper. They will jointly determine final grades. The TA’s will assist with the grading and may discuss your grade with you, but Drs. Bisogni and Sobal make all grading decisions. Grades are posted on Blackboard. Scores for tests and assignments are converted to weighted scores according to their percent of final grade. Final letter grades are based on the sum of weighted score. See the Course Document folder in Blackboard for the formula for computing final weighted scores.

**Academic Conduct**
Each student is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging Work of Others which is more fully described at [http://www.cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html](http://www.cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html). Any work submitted by a student in NS2450 for academic credit will be the student's own work.

**Class Interactions**
Students are expected to interact honestly, responsibly, and respectfully with each other, the professors, and teaching assistants at all times.

**Student Well-Being**
Learning and academic performance are enhanced when a person has a reasonable load of courses and extracurricular activities along with a healthy diet, adequate sleep, sufficient relaxation and recreation, and connections with others. Students should follow University guidelines to take care of themselves both physically and mentally. Asking for help is a sign of strength. When you have questions or face challenges be sure to use advisors and counselors in residence life, your college, your department, your courses, and Gannett Health Center. See suggestions for stress management at [http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/topics/stress/index.cfm](http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/topics/stress/index.cfm)

**Illness and Other Extenuating Circumstances**
Students should inform the instructor in a timely manner when illness or other circumstances prevent them from taking a quiz or prelim, meeting a deadline for an assignment, attending classes, or meeting other class obligations. Professor Bisogni (cab20) is the contact for the first half of class. Professor Sobal (js57) is the contact for the second half of class.

When informed at the time the situation arises, the instructors will work with the student to arrange a suitable accommodation. It is the student’s responsibility to let the instructors know in a timely manner. If the student cannot contact the professor, then a friend, family member, college counselor, or other advisor should be asked to call or send an e-mail. Students who receive such accommodations are expected to stay in communication with the instructor according to the established agreement. Failure to stay in communication with the instructor as agreed may result in no additional accommodation.

The instructors will not accommodate requests for extended deadlines and makeup tests when the student has failed to notify them at the time the problem has occurred. For example, the instructors will deny requests made at the end of the term to turn in missed assignments by students who claim that they were ill or had other issues at the time the assignment was due. Such requests must be made at the time the problem occurs.

**Study Skills Support**
Students who would like additional support in study skills such as time management, effective reading, exam preparation, note taking, and other abilities can participate in the programs of the Learning Strategies Center that are described at [http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/](http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/)
**Writing Support**
Students can obtain assistance with writing at the Walk-In Services of the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines that are described at [http://www.arts.cornell.edu/Knight_institute/walkin/walkin.htm](http://www.arts.cornell.edu/Knight_institute/walkin/walkin.htm).

**Disabilities**
In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, the instructors are available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made no less than 3 weeks before accommodation is requested, except for extraordinary circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are required to provide a letter from Cornell’s Student Disability Services in 420 CCC [http://sds.cornell.edu/index.html](http://sds.cornell.edu/index.html) to verify their eligibility for requested accommodations.

**Resources for Personal Nutrition Interests and Concerns**
Students seeking advice for personal interests or problems related to food, eating, or nutrition should use Cornell's link to many resources at [http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/topics/nutrition/index.cfm](http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/topics/nutrition/index.cfm).

**Course Organization**
NS2450 is organized according to the Food Choice Process Model, which identifies key factors and processes involved in food behavior.

The first half of the courses covers the bottom half of the model – food behavior and the personal food system. This part of the course takes a constructivist perspective on food choice and emphasizes qualitative research methods. After an introduction to the model and a holistic perspective on food behaviors, the class focuses on the construction of food choice values and the cognitive and social processes through which people manage these values in food behavior. The part of the course concludes with a discussion of the models of individual dietary change.

The second half of the course covers the top half of the Food Choice Process Model that comprises influences and the life course. The topics include an overview of influences, discussion of ten influences on food choices representing ideals (culture and ethnicity), personal factors (roles and identities), resources (human capital and economic capital), relationships (families and networks), and contexts (media and food systems), the life course, and then examination of social changes and food choices.

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