



SENIOR SEMINAR

English 4384-02W

FALL 2019

**Tue/Thu 9:30-
10:45am**

PAFF 309

**“SAVAGE DELIGHT”: FOOD AND EATING IN
LITERATURE AND POPULAR CULTURE**

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Course Description: If the adage that “We are what we eat” is true, then food reflects and determines our identity, our subjectivity, and our very being. Food can epitomize cultural refinement; industrial production and genetic manipulation today highlight our increasing separation from food sources; and yet, eating still links us to our own brutish nature. When he “caught a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across [his] path,” Henry David Thoreau reported in *Walden*, he “felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize and devour him raw; not that I was hungry then, except for that wildness which he represented.” We eat so we may live, but more intriguingly, we desire what food represents—fullness and fulfillment, sensory stimulation, love and sex, family and community, tradition and cultural authenticity, diversion and excitement, a return to our primal selves, a remembrance of things past, and even a communion with the divine. And yet, our superabundance and excess consumption of food contrasts sharply with food scarcity at home and across the world.

Literature (as well as music, film, visual art) abounds in images of food and the actions of producing (growing, killing, or engineering), preparing, craving, eating, sharing, wasting, and digesting it. This seminar unpacks and digs into the many intersections—both real and metaphorical—between food and language which writers and artists have prepared for us. We will study a smorgasbord of texts, films, and images to whet our appetites for theoretical and critical interrogation. Like true foodies, we will together sample and critique these works, and collaboratively create an anthology of essays demonstrating that, as English majors, you have become true connoisseurs of arts and letters.



As the capstone course to the English major, the Senior Seminar allows you to shine. This course is designed as a chance for our soon-to-be minted graduates to demonstrate their intellectual curiosity, their mastery of critical vocabulary, their analytical and rhetorical skills, and—above all—their joy for pursuing original and challenging projects of literary and cultural inquiry. We will work collaboratively in vetting each other’s ideas and projects as well as reviewing, editing, and meticulously proof-reading drafts. Your final projects will be collected in a seminar anthology, with a cover we will design together. The anthology will showcase your achievement, and you can share additional copies with family and friends.

Departmental Course Goals:

- Students will understand and apply select theoretical and practical issues in the discipline of literary studies.
- Students will become conversant with representative texts and a selected issue in literary history that allows for integration of the aims of the discipline.

- Students will develop the ability to work both independently and collaboratively toward the publication of an anthology of essays by class members.
- Students will propose, research, and execute a substantive literary argument appropriate to the seminar topic.
- Students will be able to make effective oral presentations, both individual and collaborative.
- Students will complete an end-of-semester questionnaire to assess how the course and the major have served their professional goals.
- Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work a discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well-supported analysis of related material.
- Students will demonstrate their command of academic English and the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

Program Goals

- This course fulfills one of the departmental requirements for the completion of the English major.
- Students will develop the analytical, oral and written skills to pursue graduate study or careers in teaching, writing, business and a variety of other fields.
- Students will be able to define and pursue independent research agendas.
- This course contributes to the program goal of equipping students with a foundation in literary history and the issues surrounding literary study in contemporary culture.
- This course broadens students' desire and ability to take pleasure in their encounter with literature.

Required Materials and Texts:

- All primary and secondary texts (e.g. literary criticism, historical background etc.) will be provided on CourseDen *free of charge*.
- The assigned films are available through common streaming services (such as Netflix, Amazon video, etc.).
- You are required to either bring printed copies or electronic reading devices (NOT phones!) to class so you can work closely with the texts and contribute to class discussion, group work, and so forth.
- Please bring to every class meeting note-taking equipment such as old-fashioned pen and paper/notebook, yellow Post-it notes to mark pages/passages in the texts OR your laptop. If I catch you using your laptop for any purpose other than our classwork, you'll lose your privilege to use the device for the rest of the semester and will be expelled from class for that day (counting as an unexcused absence).

Course Fee: The course fee assessed for this course pays for the production and distribution of the course anthologies at the end of the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

READINGS, PARTICIPATION, AND ONLINE JOURNALING: For the precise reading assignments for each class meeting, please see the designated folder in the “Content” area on CourseDen. All primary (i.e. the literary texts) and secondary (criticism, etc.) readings posted in these folders are *required*. Active participation is the essence of a lively and productive course. I thus encourage you to cultivate an engaged reading style, using underlining, marginalia, and note taking. Classroom discussion will usually involve close readings, and I may ask you to support your comments with evidence from the text. I evaluate both the quality and quantity of your contributions; thus, less vocal students may excel through fewer but thoughtful comments. To prepare for and to augment oral participation and discussion in class, we will do **two different types of online journal writing** (see CourseDen discussion tool):

- 1) For **each class meeting** that reading assignments are due, I will ask you to respond to a number of questions in order to demonstrate your comprehension and individual interpretations of the texts. This type of journaling will stay the same throughout the semester and replaces the reading quizzes that I have formerly used in other classes. The questions will include specific directions for the amount of writing I expect and whether I am looking for textual evidence or not. *Please note that readings and the comprehension/interpretation journaling are usually due for our Tuesday meetings.*
- 2) In addition, we will use the online journal as a **discussion forum**. I will ask you—in or out of class—to post your own question(s) and respond coherently and productively to a minimum of two peer questions. This portion will variously emphasize critical reading (sometimes by applying lit crit to the primary texts), discussion/debate (i.e. asking for opinion and soliciting argument), synthesis/comparison (reading across texts, authors, and periods), creativity, interdisciplinarity (e.g. applying visual art or music to the readings), and transhistorical thinking (connecting historical texts to current issues).

Please note that the discussion forum questions and responses are usually due for our Thursday meetings. In other words, we will normally use the Tuesday meeting for textual (incl. film) analysis & discussion, and the Thursday meetings for critical interpretation, debate, research, and connective thinking.

My grading for the oral participation and journaling requirement will be cumulative, because both elements are inherently connected: strong journaling and strong oral participation demonstrate your careful reading and engagement with the texts and topics, your critical thinking, and your thoughtful collaboration with your peers in and out of class. Thus, don't put all of your eggs in one basket: if you are a strong writer, we also need to hear you contribute your ideas during class discussion; and if you are usually vocal in class, we also need to see that your contributions are based thoughtful and diligent preparation—reflected in your journal.

SHORT CRITICAL PAPER ON A LITERARY OR VISUAL TEXT (DETAILED ASSIGNMENT

DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW minimum 4 full pages, double-spaced): This assignment asks you to analyze one literary text/film or a portion of a text closely. However, in this paper you also need to engage **two (2)** critical essays from journals or critical essay collections that directly analyze the primary text of your choice. Thus, you must make your own argument about the primary text *while* considering the research you found in the critical essays.

ORAL PRESENTATION (DETAILED ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW; no longer than 15

minutes): For your oral presentation, I would like you to connect one or more of the readings to researching an actual, real-life group, institution, or individual who/that works with one or more of the aspects of food we have studied—such as food and community, food and hunger/scarcity, food and environment, food and memory/spirituality, etc. The point of the assignment is to link our readings/viewings to the ways in which we interact with, produce, consume, and oftentimes discard food. For example, you could study a foodbank (such as the Carroll County Soup Kitchen or Open Hands), a farmer’s market (e.g. the Cotton Mill Farmer’s Market), a community health program (e.g. through the Tanner Health System), a community gardening project, a local food co-op, a farm-to-table restaurant (e.g. 4 AM Roasters), a local organic farm (e.g. Crager-Hager or Frolona Farms), etc. Your presentation should identify one or more critical concerns from our reading(s), research the group/institution/business/individual (including a site visit, an interview, etc.), and then analyze the connections you found. Your oral presentation topic and research may become part of or the foundation for your anthology paper; if you prefer, however, your anthology paper may also be completely unconnected to your oral presentation topic. Though the oral presentations are scheduled for mid to late October, please already start thinking now about a focus and a group/institution, business, or individual you would like to research.

FINAL PROJECT/ANTHOLOGY ESSAY (DETAILED ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION TO FOLLOW):

The senior seminar focuses more than other classes on the production of a well-developed, theoretically and analytically informed, and polished research paper. Thus, we will dedicate a good 7 weeks of the semester producing such a piece to be collected in a course. In the **Research Proposal**, you should present a preliminary argument, describe the evidence you have and/or will be researching, and the methodology/theory you will use in interpreting your material. In the **Annotated Bibliography**, you should list (alphabetically by author) all sources (primary and secondary) that you *intend* to use for your final project. You should describe each source in one or two sentences, focusing on how it relates to your argument/questions. We will work on portions of your project (introduction, paragraphs) in class; your **Draft** will be read by peers as well as myself. Your **Final Paper** should be as well-developed, coherent, and as free of errors as possible. **NB: You have to receive a grade of C or better on the final project to have it included in the anthology.** You will develop your final project by scaffolding these assignment stages:

- Project Proposal
- Annotated Bibliography
- Mandatory Conference
- Detailed Outline
- Introduction and First Full Body Paragraph
- Draft
- Final Version

PEER EDITING AND EDITORIAL COLLABORATION (DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS AND GRADING CRITERIA TO FOLLOW): At each stage, you will review and comment on your peers' anthology projects. You must take this work seriously; the success of the seminar anthology depends on your collaboration and dedication to the quality of each other's work. I will assess your peer review and collaboration in a separate grade, as it constitutes a different skill and effort than oral and written participation.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

• Participation and Online Journaling	20%	
• Critical Source Paper	15%	
• Oral Presentation	15%	
• Peer Editing and Editorial Collaboration	10%	
• Final Project	40%	
Incl.	Proposal	5%
	Annotated Bibliography	5%
	Mandatory Conferences (minus 5% for unexcused absences)	
	Draft	10%
	Final Essay	20%

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

All changes are at the discretion of the instructor and will be announced appropriately. All assignments, including readings, are to be completed for the date listed in the schedule!

DATES	READINGS AND COURSE TOPICS/CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
THU 8/15	Introduction to course, syllabus. Handout: 10 Critical Questions about Food & Lit.	
TUE 8/20	Food and Community/Communion View (at home): <i>Babette's Feast</i> (Dir. Gabriel Axel, 1987).	Reading/Viewing journal
THU 8/22	Cont. viewing and discussion Read: critical selections.	Discussion journal
TUE 8/27	Food, Sexual Desire, Gender Read: Laura Esquivel, <i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> (complete novel, which is short and easy to read...)	Reading journal
THU 8/29	Cont.: discussion of <i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> Read: critical selections	Discussion journal

TUE 9/3	Food and Savagery/Violence Read: Hans Staden, selections from <i>The True History</i> ; Mary Rowlandson, selections from <i>Narrative of the Captivity</i> ; Henry D. Thoreau, selections from <i>Walden</i> .	Reading journal
THU 9/5	Read: critical essays; selection from Paul and Terra Feather, <i>Sacred Violence</i> . View in class: selections from <i>Hunger Games</i> trilogy.	Discussion journal
TUE 9/10	Food and “Reality” TV Read: Brian Wood, <i>Starve</i> . View (at home): selected clips from <i>Hell’s Kitchen</i> (Gordon Ramsey); <i>No Reservations</i> and <i>Parts Unknown</i> (Anthony Bourdain).	Reading/viewing journal
THU 9/12	Read: critical essays.	Discussion journal
TUE 9/17	Food and Memory of Place and Time Read: Marcel Proust, selections from <i>Remembrance of Things Past</i> ; Ernest Hemingway, selections from <i>A Moveable Feast</i> . View in class: clips from <i>The Sopranos</i> .	Reading journal
THU 9/19	Read: critical essays.	Discussion journal
TUE 9/24	Food and Health/Environment View (in-class): <i>Food Inc.</i>	Short Critical Paper due.
THU 9/26	Cont. watching <i>Food Inc.</i>	In-class discussion journal
TUE 10/1	View films at home: <i>The Biggest Little Farm</i> and <i>Eating Alabama</i>	Reading/viewing journal
THU 10/3	FALL BREAK (no class meeting)	
	FYI: 10/9 LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A GRADE OF W	
TUE 10/8	Guest speakers	
THU 10/10	Guest speaker debrief/discussion. Read: critical essays.	Discussion journal
TUE 10/15	Intro to final paper/anthology paper; topic brainstorming	
THU 10/17	Oral Presentations 1	Presentations 1-5 due.
TUE 10/22	Oral Presentations 2	Presentations 6-10 due.

THU 10/24	Department of English & Philosophy Undergraduate Research Conference: no class meeting; conference attendance mandatory (you will be required to sign in at the conference).	Discussion journal due (on at least one conference panel you attended)
TUE 10/29	Oral Presentations 3	Presentations 11-14 due.
THU 10/31	Final Paper: proposal and bibliography workshop	
TUE 11/5	Final project: Proposal and bibliography workshop	Proposal and Bibliography due by 5pm in CourseDen.
THU 11/7	Final Project: Drafting workshop	
TUE 11/12	Draft workshop	<u>Introduction and first full body paragraph due in class (bring two printed copies)</u>
THU 11/14	Draft workshop	
TUE 11/19	Anthology design meeting: Bring your suggestions for cover design and other production features to class.	
THU 11/21	Draft peer review	<u>Full-length Final Project Draft due (bring two printed copies AND submit in CourseDen).</u>
TUE 11/26	Thanksgiving Break (no classes)	
THU 11/28	Thanksgiving Break (no classes)	
TUE 12/3	Proof-reading session.	FINAL VERSION OF PAPER DUE. Bring two printed copies of your paper to class. Please note that this is the version of your paper that I will grade.
THU 12/5	LAST DAY OF CLASS. FINAL PROOFREADING SESSION; WE WILL ELECTRONICALLY MAKE FINAL CORRECTIONS/CHANGES.	Anthology version of the paper due (with proofreading changes incorporated) by 5pm in CourseDen.

SUPPORT (QUICK LINKS):

Accessibility Services: <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php>

Center for Academic Success: <http://www.westga.edu/cas/>

CourseDen D2L Home Page: <https://westga.view.usg.edu/>

Counseling Center: <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/>

Ingram Library Services: <http://www.westga.edu/library/>

University Bookstore: <http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/>

University Writing Center (UWC): <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/index.php>

UWG Cares: <http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>

COURSE POLICIES:

- **Attendance and Deadlines:** Regular and timely attendance is **MANDATORY**. You have **four (4) allowed absences** for the semester. Each additional absence will result in a full letter grade deduction from your *final* course grade (A to B, B to C, etc.). All absences will be treated the same (i.e. no distinction between excused and unexcused absences). Classes missed for official UWG business, such as debate team or athletics), jury duty, or military service will be excused (please provide documentation). Everyone is responsible for signing an attendance list circulated at the beginning of every class meeting. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to request the attendance list at the end of class (do not interrupt class by asking for the list if you arrive late!). Failure to sign up on the attendance list may be counted as an absence for that day. In case of absence, you are responsible for keeping up with all assignments, readings, and in-class work. I can only accept late work if you discussed the issue with me ahead of time. All exceptions and acceptance of excuses are completely at my discretion.
- **Tardiness:** A roll book will circulate at the BEGINNING of class. Everyone who is late will be noted as tardy. **Three (3) “tardies” will result in one (1) absence!**
- **Plagiarism:** There are different forms of plagiarism, from blatant theft of entire papers to negligence in acknowledging a source in your writing. However, you will be held responsible for any form of plagiarism—whether intentional or not. Consequences and responses to plagiarism are at the discretion of the instructor. Please pay specific attention to the English Department’s site on plagiarism: www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/plagiarism.php. I expect all out-of-class work to abide by MLA Format (See: *MLA Handbook for the Writers of Research Papers*) for proper documentation of sources (primary and secondary).
- **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE NB:** *Before you read the following, keep in mind that I wouldn’t have to address these issues if they hadn’t caused problems in the past.* I expect everyone to be ready to work at the beginning of class. This means in particular having ALL reading materials assigned for that day as well as any tools for note-taking on hand and ready to use. You MAY bring drinks and/or non-smelly or non-noisy food to class. Most importantly: Be respectful toward the opinions, ideas, and personal identity of all

members of our class! **The following actions will result in an immediate dismissal from class and result in an absence for that day (and may result in the administrative withdrawal from the course):**

- Using the internet, email, or social media on a personal laptop (you may use a laptop for note-taking)
 - using any other electronic devices, such as smart phones, etc. In particular, I am allergic to students text-messaging etc. during class. Please turn off any of these devices *before* class.
 - sleeping or even acting like you're sleeping (e.g. putting your head on your desk)
 - disruptive behavior, such as interrupting other students or the instructor while they're speaking, insulting or disparaging the opinions of other students, etc.
- **UWG Email Policy:** University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.
 - **Dr. Erben's E-Mail Etiquette:**
 - All messages must include a subject line.
 - All messages must include an address line (e.g. "Dear Dr. Erben" or "Dr. Erben").
 - Use polite and appropriate language, as well as reasonably edited prose.
 - No text-messaging language and abbreviations.
 - Always sign your name.
 - **ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact Accessibility Services.
 - **CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS:** The Center for Academic Success provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu
 - **UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER** (www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/): The University Writing Center assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu. Please also consult the very useful page of student writing resources compiled by the University Writing Center: www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/writing-resources-undergrad.php.

- **CREDIT HOUR POLICY:** The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).
- **UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA HONOR CODE:** At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG. Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the Student Handbook.

- **HB 280 (Campus Carry):** UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#. You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>.