

# HSS 404: ENG SEM:

## Food Narratives: Dumplings, Gumbo, Burgers & More

Professor: Dr. Risa Gorelick      Office: 426 Cullimore Hall  
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Zoom Meeting: <https://njit-edu.zoom.us/my/gorelick>

### F2F Meeting Times:

- HSS 404-041: Friday 10:00 – 11:20 AM (F2F)—FMH 321—and online via Canvas
- HSS 404-043: Friday 1:00 – 2:20 PM (F2F)—FMH 106—and online via Canvas
- Office Hours: Monday 10:00 – 11:00 AM & by appointment.

NOTE: If we need to meet virtually, please use this link: <https://njit-edu.zoom.us/my/gorelick>

### Prerequisites:

[ENGL102](#) with a grade of C or higher, and 6 credits at the 300-level History and Humanities GER with a grade of C or higher; 3 credits at the 300-level may be taken concurrently as a co-requisite. The capstone seminars allow students the opportunity to work closely with an instructor in a specific area of the instructor's expertise. Students will be required to bring together interests and skills developed in previous courses. Students make in-depth oral and written presentations. A list of capstone seminars is published each semester in the course registration bulletin.

### Course Description:

Food is a basic human need; however, beyond biological functions, food also has rich cultural significance. Taste, preference, ritual, tradition, gender, social class, and nationality all influence food choices and behaviors. In addition, economic and environmental factors, globalization, localization, and social movements all affect our access and attitudes toward food.

In this course, we will examine how food behaviors are shaped by culture, and what that means. We will examine the memories of food and what it means for individuals, our families, and our cultural/geographic origins.

Additionally, we will also examine how COVID-19 has impacted food-issues since the mid-March 2020 quarantine:

- scarcities of items on supermarket shelves due to supply chains and illness,
- the necessity to do more home cooking,
- food insecurities,

- closures of restaurants and the effect on Mom-and-Pop establishments,
- on the importance of feeding those on our front lines in hospitals,
- creating victory gardens, and
- finding ways to eat more locally (including take-out/curbside/delivery options/outside dining).

## Course Goals/Objectives:

Far more than providing sustenance, food defines us. It connects us with people and places. It sets us in relation to others. It calls up important questions of sustainability and production, of ethics and responsibility. For all these reasons, food gives us a variety of rich opportunities for writing and research, and this course is designed to help students read, think, compose, debate, and capture a variety of narratives with all of these considerations and questions in mind. Students in this course will examine not just what they eat, but how they eat—by analyzing written and audio/visual texts (including essays, memoirs, reports, menus, podcasts, and documentaries); by researching food-related issues of their choosing; and by composing analyses and researched arguments based on class discussions, readings, and collaborative work.

## Required Materials

Dr. Gorelick has made an effort to keep the cost of materials low for this course.

- Most course materials (readings, videos, podcasts, images, etc.) will be available via web link or by download from the course Canvas page.
- Some videos will require you to have a subscription to Netflix, Amazon Prime, or another common streaming service. If you don't have access to such a service, please let Dr. Gorelick know.
- A FREE e-subscription to *The New York Times* and *NYT Magazine* (see info below).

**REGISTER:** All users must first register at <https://researchguides.njit.edu/nytimes> using their NJIT email address.

**CONNECT:** Once you have a login you can connect directly to [NYTimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com) on the web from any device.

- You may also download and use *NYTimes* apps on other devices, using this same login.
- To search the archive all the way back to 1851, you must use a browser rather than the mobile app.
- A FREE e-subscription to the *Wall Street Journal*: go to <https://researchguides.njit.edu/wsj> and follow the procedures on that page.

**EXPIRATION:** Your account will expire within a year from initiation and renewal will be required through the same Group Pass URL.

## Helpful Websites

- [Canvas](#)
- [Writing Commons](#)
- [WAC Clearinghouse Writing Resources](#)
- [Purdue OWL](#)

## The Writing Center

- The Writing Center (G17 Central King) is available for 45-minute individual and group appointments with professional writing tutors. This resource is intended to help you improve your communication and writing skills. Tutors can help with planning assignments, improving your writing, refining an essay or multimedia project, or other communication-based needs. To make an appointment: <https://njit.campus.eab.com/>. **Please schedule early to make your deadline. Please ask the consultant to send Dr. Gorelick a report of your appointment. Dr. Gorelick rewards those who use this tool to improve their writing.**

## Assignments & Assessment:

*Table 1: Assignments & Assessment: Your grade breakdown is as follows:*

Assignment	Assessment
Attendance /Participation /HW, including Peer Critique of Oral Presentations	5%
<p>Weekly Online Discussion posts</p> <p>These are worth basically 1 point/week. <b>Not doing these seriously jeopardizes your course grade.</b> Please take the time to carefully consider the prompt (usually based on a short reading or your findings in podcasts/blogs/videos/etc.) and write a few paragraphs (~ 1 page). You are asked to read the responses of other students and respond to at least 3 posts to receive full credit each week. Occasionally, there are 2 posts in a week. This 15% constitutes the online portion of this hybrid course.</p>	15%
<p>Foodoir: (4-6 pages, double-spaced)</p> <p>“A <b>foodoir</b> is an account of someone's personal experiences characterised [sic] by a strong emphasis on food, either through the inclusion of recipes or using food as a mechanism for expression. [ . . . ] The recent popularity of the <b>foodoir</b> has in part been galvanised [sic] by blogging, which seems to act as a natural platform for the format, allowing writers to weave their personal lives into the cooking process and lay the whole thing out on screen. The publishing industry have also capitalised [sic] on the money-making potential of the <b>foodoir</b> as a synthesis of two enduringly successful book categories: autobiography and cookery. [ . . . ] <b>Foodoir</b> is a blend of <i>food</i> and <i>memoir</i> (= an account of someone's personal experiences, usually written by the person themselves)” <a href="https://www.macmillandictionary.com/buzzword/entries/foodoir.html">https://www.macmillandictionary.com/buzzword/entries/foodoir.html</a></p> <p>AI may not be used in writing this project (it won't be very good since machines do not have realistic memories of something they ate . . . ).</p>	20%

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Recipe/Interview—Choose 1:  Paper (5-7 pages) OR Podcast (10-15 minutes) OR Video (10-15 minutes)  If you produce a podcast/video, YOU MUST BE IN THE podcast/video, and AI may not be used in the production.	20%
Major Project Proposal (1 page)	5%
Major Project—Choose 1:  Podcast (12-15 minutes) OR Video (12-15 minutes) OR Another Project of Student’s Design Approved By Professor  Note: Due to the increased use of AI, students are not permitted to write a final paper for this assignment but instead create something that encourages you to do your own work. If you produce a podcast/video, YOU MUST BE IN THE podcast/video, and AI may not be used in the production.	25%
Major Project Oral Presentation with PowerPoint and/or Other Visual	10%
TOTAL:	100%

**Individual and Group Work Grading Scale:**

*Table 2: NJIT's Grading Scale:*

<b>A</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>100-90</b>	<b>89-87</b>	<b>86-80</b>	<b>79-77</b>	<b>76-70</b>	<b>69-60</b>	<b>59-0</b>

**Participation, Punctuality and Attendance**

*You must be present to win—please make every effort to attend synchronous classes.* All students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled weekly F2F classes. Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Participation in in-class activities, discussions, and workshops will contribute to your knowledge, ability, and performance.

Should you need to miss class for a reason that you think should be excused (illness, jury duty, family emergency etc.), please let the Dean of Students know and that office will inform all of your professors

([dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)). If the DoS determines that your absence is excused, I will do my best to work with you to complete the course.

**You may miss up to one week of F2F (in-person) class without penalty.** Please let me know if you cannot attend class prior to the class meeting. **Every subsequent unexcused absence will result in a deduction of participation points. More than 3 unexcused absences (three weeks of the course) will negatively impact your grade. More than 5 unexcused absences (1/3 of the course F2F meetings) will result in a grade of “F.”**

**NOTE: This is a HYBRID course, but you MUST attend F2F (in-person) class meetings. Failure to attend class regularly in accordance with the attendance policy above will result in failure of the course (even if you post all assignments to Canvas).**

See the NJIT attendance policy: <http://www.njit.edu/registrar/policies/attendancepolicy.php>.

Students who expect to **miss classes because of religious observance** must submit to their instructors a written list of dates that will be missed by the end of the second week of classes, Students are expected to make up missed work within a week.

## Accessibility Needs

Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodation(s), and/or contact Student Disability Services at 973-596-3420.

## NJIT University Code on Academic Integrity

The New Jersey Institute of Technology is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through teaching and research. We expect our graduates to assume positions of leadership within their professions and communities. Honesty in your academic work will develop into professional integrity.

The NJIT Code of Academic Integrity embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of the university and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the university community.

All assignments submitted shall be considered “graded work” and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

**A note about Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The work done in the course is expected to be original work completed by each student. Most of the writing assigned in class relates to narratives (STORIES) from the students’ or students’ friends/relatives focusing on food. At this point, AI is not good at expressing personal thoughts or tastes/textures/aromas/memories of the food you will describe in your projects, so use of AI may be easy to detect, especially to someone like Dr. Gorelick who has taught for over 30 years. The use of AI is allowed to help in brainstorming. However, **AI is not to be included in graded material without first discussing it with Dr. Gorelick and receiving her approval. If approval is received, you MUST cite your use of AI material** used in papers, podcasts, videos, and/or multi-media projects. Here’s info on how to cite AI: <https://researchguides.njit.edu/AI/cite>.

**The Provost’s Office requires this statement on all syllabi:**

- *“Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: [NJIT Academic Integrity Code](#).*

*Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)”*

**Course Schedule:** (Subject to change with written notification.)

- **All Discussion Posts must be posted by Midnight on Wednesday night prior to Friday’s class.** This allows everyone 24+ hours to read/respond to posts (responding to posts is part of your Discussion grade). Prompts are up and you are free to read ahead and post your discussion responses early (though you will need to respond to others after they post). *Please remember that Discussion Posts are worth 15% of your total grade (basically 1% per post) and not completing them on time will negatively impact your final grade.*
- **All written/video/podcast assignments must be posted to Canvas by 11:59 PM on the due date.**

*Table 3: Weekly Course Schedule (Subject to change with written notification.)*

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Synchronous (LIVE CLASS)</b>	<b>Asynchronous (On Your Time)</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	F 9/5: Class introductions. Food Memories. Assign Foodoir. NYT Newsletter (9/5/22) on Fall Dining (link in Canvas).	Search Food Blogs, FoodTubers, and Foodoirs. Bring in 2 of your favorites that you find. Start to draft your Foodoir.  <b>By W 9/10: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b>
<b>Week 2</b>	F 9/12: Share Foodoir/Blogs/FoodTubers. Please have items ready to share virtually.	Read: Roahen, <i>Gumbo Tales</i> , “Po-Boys”; Sample Foodoir: Olde Tyme Grocery; NYT Photo Essay on “What a Food Crisis Looks Like” <a href="https://nyti.ms/34U9NAS">https://nyti.ms/34U9NAS</a> .  <b>By W 9/17: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	F 9/19: Discuss readings. Work on Foodoir in class (bring laptop/tablet or a print out to work on). Dr. Gorelick will conference with individual students during class.	<b>OUR FAVORITE CARBS: Bread, Donuts, &amp; Bagels</b>  Read: Buford, “Good Bread”;  Read: Fowers, “America’s Donut Capital: Can We Stop at Just 1?”

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Synchronous (LIVE CLASS)</b>	<b>Asynchronous (On Your Time)</b>
	<p>Please take advantage of the Writing Center by making an appointment with a consultant to review your Foodoir.</p> <p>9/22-9/24: Happy Rosh Hashanah to those who celebrate!</p>	<p><a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/06/02/donut-capital-america/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/06/02/donut-capital-america/</a></p> <p>Read: Sontag, “Why the Best Bagels in the US Aren’t All in NY Anymore” <a href="https://www.bonappetit.com/story/regional-bagel-culture-report">https://www.bonappetit.com/story/regional-bagel-culture-report</a></p> <p><b>By W 9/24: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b></p>
<b>Week 4</b>	<p>F 9/26: <b>Peer review</b> of writing in small groups via Google Docs. <b>Come to class with a complete draft of your Foodoir to share with classmates. Please bring a laptop/tablet to share feedback via Google Docs.</b></p> <p>10/2: Happy Gandhi Jayanti to those who celebrate!</p> <p>10/2: Happy Dussehra to those who celebrate.</p> <p>10/1 -10/2: Wishing those who observe Yom Kippur an easy fast.</p>	<p>Read: “Table for Two” selections from the <i>New Yorker</i>;</p> <p>Read: “How Cooking Videos Took Over the World” <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/08/07/dining/cooking-videos-tiktok.html?smid=nytcare-ios-share&amp;referringSource=articleShare">https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/08/07/dining/cooking-videos-tiktok.html?smid=nytcare-ios-share&amp;referringSource=articleShare</a></p> <p>Finish Foodoir. Bring in some favorite recipes to share next week.</p> <p><b>By W 10/1: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b></p>
<b>Week 5</b>	<p><b>F: 10/3: Due: Foodoirs.</b> Assign <b>Recipe/Interview</b> (&amp; start thinking about final projects.)</p> <p>10/11-10/12: May those of you celebrating Yom Kippur have an easy fast.</p> <p>10/12: Happy Dussehra to those who celebrate!</p>	<p>Watch “Julie &amp; Julia” Director: Nora Ephron, 2009 (available on streaming services); WATCH THE ACTUAL FILM, not clip(s) on YouTube.</p> <p>Read: <b>The Instant Pot and the Miracle Kitchen Devices of Yesteryear</b> <a href="https://www.newyorker.com/news/afterword/the-instant-pot-and-the-miracle-kitchen-devices-of-yesteryear">https://www.newyorker.com/news/afterword/the-instant-pot-and-the-miracle-kitchen-devices-of-yesteryear</a></p> <p><b>By W 10/8: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b></p>
<b>Week 6</b>	<p>F 10/10: Discuss film. Work on Recipe/Interview.</p> <p>Last Day to Register to Vote Deadline for the New Jersey General Election   <a href="https://www.nj.gov/elections/voting/register-to-vote/">10/14/2025</a>   <a href="https://www.nj.gov/elections/voting/register-to-vote/">VOTE.NJ.GOV</a></p>	<p>Watch/Review 2 cooking shows (stream/Food Network/online/etc.). Read: Schlosser, “Why the Fries Taste So Good”;</p> <p><b>By W 10/15: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</b></p>
<b>Week 7</b>	<p>F 10/17: <b>Proposal for Final Project (1 page) due.</b> Discuss cooking shows. Look at the genre of cooking shows. How have they changed from Julia Child? Sign up for podcast to review.</p> <p>10/20-10/21: Happy Diwali to those who celebrate!</p>	<p>Review podcasts at <a href="https://player.fm/series/the-food-chain-1301468/my-quarantine-kitchen">https://player.fm/series/the-food-chain-1301468/my-quarantine-kitchen</a>. We will each pick a different podcast to review.</p> <p>Read: “How High End Restaurants Have Failed Black Female Chefs” <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/dining/black-women-fine-dining-restaurant-kitchens.html?referringSource=articleShare">https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/dining/black-women-fine-dining-restaurant-kitchens.html?referringSource=articleShare</a></p>

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Synchronous (LIVE CLASS)</b>	<b>Asynchronous (On Your Time)</b>
		<p>By W 10/22: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</p> <p><b>October 26 - November 3</b>  <b>Early Voting Period (in-person at home NJ County Offices)</b></p>
<b>Week 8</b>	<p>F 10/24: Share reviews of podcasts. Discuss what makes a good podcast about food.</p> <p>HAPPY HALLOWEEN!</p> <p><b>10/29: Deadline to apply for a NJ Mail-In Ballot by Mail for General Election</b></p> <p><b>If you are mailing an absentee ballot, please mail by today to ensure your vote is counted. Voting in-person? Make a plan for next week (11/4/25).</b></p> <p><b>October 26 - November 3</b>  <b>Early Voting Period (in-person at home NJ County Offices)</b></p>	<p>Complete your recipe/interview project. Find a food culture podcast on your own.</p> <p>By W 10/29: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</p>
<b>Week 9</b>	<p>F 10/31: <b>Due: Recipe/Interview;</b> discuss specific food culture podcasts.</p> <p>HAPPY HALLOWEEN!</p>	<p>Documentary TBA on food culture (we'll vote on what to watch);</p> <p>By W 11/5: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</p>
<b>Week 10</b>	<p>F 11/7 Discuss documentary; time to work on your Final Projects in class groups.</p> <p><b>11/11: VETERANS' DAY—thank you for those who are serving/have served.</b></p>	<p>Galchen, "Complete Trash"</p> <p>By W 11/5: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</p> <p>Work on your final projects. Peer Critique.</p>
<b>Week 11</b>	<p>F11/14: <b>Major Project &amp; Oral Presentation</b> (sign up)</p>	
<b>Week 12</b>	<p>F 11/21 <b>Major Project &amp; Oral Presentation</b> (sign up)</p>	
<b>Week 13</b>	<p><b>Wednesday, 11/26: Friday classes meet.</b></p> <p>Composting and other ways to make sustainable choices.</p>	<p>Wilson, "I Work in Restaurants"; Complete Final Projects</p> <p>By W 12/3: Answer Discussion Post Question and Respond to 3 Classmates.</p>
	<p>F 11/28: <b>Happy Thanksgiving—Enjoy your holiday! Eat and create Foodoirs!</b></p>	<p>Work on your Major Project &amp; Oral Presentation! Peer Critique</p>

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Synchronous (LIVE CLASS)</b>	<b>Asynchronous (On Your Time)</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	<p>F 12/5: <b>Major Project &amp; Oral Presentation</b> (sign up)</p> <p><b>LAST CLASS</b> (class will NOT meet for final exams, unless we do not get through all the student presentations). <b>Good luck on Finals. Congratulations to those of you who are graduating!</b></p>	<p>Peer Critique</p> <p>By F 12/12, please post your Course Reflection</p>
<b>Week 15</b>	F 12/12: READING DAY	