

# The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

## Subject Description Form

*Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.*

<b>Subject Code</b>	APSS1B10
<b>Subject Title</b>	Eating Up the Society – From a Society “for” Food to a Society “of” Food
<b>Credit Value</b>	3
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>GUR Requirements Intended to Fulfill</b>	<p>This subject intends to fulfill the following requirement(s) :</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Healthy Lifestyle</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Freshman Seminar</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Languages and Communication Requirement (LCR)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Leadership and Intra-Personal Development</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Service-Learning</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Cluster-Area Requirement (CAR)</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community, Organization and Globalization</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> History, Cultures and World Views</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>China-Study Requirement</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing and Reading Requirements</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> English or <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese</p>
<b>Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion</b>	Nil
<b>Objectives</b>	Adapting a sociological angle, this subject aims at helping students understand and appreciate the social aspect of human food production and consumption. It also attempts to equip students with the ability to pinpoint the social structures behind human collective behaviors.
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes</b>  <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <p>(a) Understand the interplay between gastronomic behaviors and social settings;</p> <p>(b) Appreciate the interaction between local and global food culture;</p> <p>(c) Analyze gastronomic phenomena using sociological vocabularies.</p>

## Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

(Note 2)

### 1. Food production

- a) **Food edibility and social construction;** - The definition of food edibility is often not founded on biological ground. Rather, it is more related to how individual or the collective posit human being in the social world. This topic introduces Peter Berger's concept of "social construction of reality", which helps understand that human are social being on top of physical being.
- b) **Food production and instrumental rationality;** - With close examination of the workflow in the kitchen, this topic explore how instrumental rationality finds its practical meanings in the culinary world. Discussion will also be made on the possibility to introduce value rationality into kitchen work as well. The discussion will be further extended to applying rationality (in both formats) in the workplace.
- c) **Kitchen, gender and social division of labor;** - As a workplace, the kitchen is often accused to be male worker-friendly only. This topic explores the related facets of the accusation with special reference to the gender issue. The discussion adopts a framework on the social division of labor by Emile Durkheim. Discussion will also be made on the arguments of the feministic points of view.

### 2. Food consumption

- a) **Feast, culinary experience and experiential consumption;** - Through the discussion on consumption and food, this topic introduce the concept of "consumption society" put forward by sociologists of the Frankfurt School.
- b) **Religious and liturgical food consumption;** - This topic explores the relationships between food and religion, and, by doing so, introduces the "societal functions" of religion. Classical pieces of work on sociological investigation on religion, such as those done by Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Robert Bellah will be introduced.
- c) **Food critiques, guides and "mass society";** - While food critiques and guides are supposedly "the" lighthouse of consumers, they simultaneously limit the choices available to consumers. Meanwhile, they also help construct the taste of the mainstream which, in turn, forms an important part of "mass society". This topic will offer an in-depth discussion on the possibility of a society for the "minority" and the "alternatives", apart from that for the "mass". Concepts of the Frankfurt School sociologists will be further elaborated.
- d) **Food consumption and social class;** - Borrowing Pierre Bourdieu's research on food and social class, this topic analyzes the role of food as a professing tool of social-economic status. The concept of "cultural capital" will also be introduced as an important facet of modern society as far as social closure is concerned.

### 3. Food and the collective

- a) **Food and collective identity;** - While food consumption of a society relates very much to ingredients available, the preparation method and

	<p>the serving convention are <i>de facto</i> representation of the collective identity. This topic explores how food is adopted as a tool to convey collective identity.</p> <p>b) <b>Food taboos</b>; - Food taboos denote the real life experiences of a particular culture. At the same time, food restrictions also contribute to the understanding of the history of a people. This topic reinforces the discussion on food and collective identity on the basis founded in the previous topic.</p> <p>c) <b>“Urban” Food and “Rural” food</b>; - Through a comparison on the production and consumption of food in urban and rural settings, this topic draws attention to the appreciation of urbanization as an element of social development. The price of urbanization as reflected in the re-scheduling of daily lives, re-shuffling of values, and re-planning on sustainability will be highlighted.</p> <p><b>4. Food and the globe</b></p> <p>a) <b>Food additive and “risk society”</b>; - Borrowing Ulrich Beck’s analytical framework, this topic diagnoses the notion of “risk society” as reflected by the reported cases on fake food and food additives. Further discussion is to be made on how valid the concept of “risk society” is on the understanding of the nature of modern society.</p> <p>b) <b>Food and globalization</b>; - This topic discusses the political economy of food production, transportation and consumption. It also connects the development of culinary culture with the notion of cultural globalization.</p>
--	--

<p><b>Teaching/Learning Methodology</b></p> <p>(Note 3)</p>	<p>The lectures highlight the essence of the interplay between food and society, and offer opportunities to try put into real terms students understanding of such interplay. It is also expected that students would also benefit from the guided fieldwork in collecting information from the community related to the discussion topics.</p>
---	---

<p><b>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>(Note 4)</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Individual take-home assignment</td> <td>40%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Group research project presentation</td> <td>40%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Group research project report</td> <td>20%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</p> <p>For 1) students are required to finish 2 out of 5 questions. These questions aims at assessing students understanding of the key concepts covered in class.</p>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c				1. Individual take-home assignment	40%	✓	✓	✓				2. Group research project presentation	40%	✓	✓					3. Group research project report	20%	✓		✓				Total	100%						
Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting			Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)																																											
		a	b	c																																											
1. Individual take-home assignment	40%	✓	✓	✓																																											
2. Group research project presentation	40%	✓	✓																																												
3. Group research project report	20%	✓		✓																																											
Total	100%																																														

	<p>Meantime, the questions also invite students to apply these concepts in the context of their personal gastronomic experience.</p> <p>For 2) students are formed into groups (normally groups of 6 depending on the size of the class) to research on assigned topics related to the local food scene. these research topics covers a wide range of areas: dynamics between genders as presented in movies related to cooking, strategy in reducing food waste, food as medium of personal and social history, food taboo as a reflection of cultural identity, the role of “social reality” in the construction of edibility of food.... Students are invited to conduct the research by using the sociological concepts covered in class. Meantime, they are also encourage to utilize the expertise of their group members who are drawn from different disciplines. A 30 minute presentation will be done by each group in front of the whole class at the end of the semester. Members of the class are invited to give comments on the presentation.</p> <p>For 3) students are required to, after absorbing the comments from the class at the presentation, submit a research report to the instructor. The report should summarize their research findings and, taking into account the comment received, lead to an educated conclusion on the relevant topic.</p>	
<p><b>Student Study Effort Expected</b></p>	Class contact:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lecture</li> </ul>	39 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-studies</li> </ul>	20 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preparation for assignment</li> </ul>	20 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group Discussion</li> </ul>	20 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Field- work for research project</li> </ul>	20Hrs.
Total student study effort	119 Hrs.	
<p><b>Reading List and References</b></p>	<p>Ashkenazi, Michael and Jeanne Jacob. (2000) <i>The essence of Japanese cuisine : an essay on food and culture</i> England : Curzon</p> <p>Ashley, Bob [et al.] (2004) <i>Food and cultural studies</i> New York : Routledge</p> <p>Carolan, M. (2016) <i>The sociology of food and agriculture</i>, London ; New York : Routledge</p> <p>Evans, D. (eds.) (2013) <i>Waste matters : new perspectives on food and society</i>, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell</p> <p>Notaker, H. (2009) <i>Food culture in Scandinavia</i>, Westport, Conn : Greenwood Press</p> <p>Strong, Roy C. (2002) <i>Feast : a history of grand eating</i> Florida : Harcourt</p> <p>Woolgar, C.M. (2016) <i>The culture of food in England 1200-1500</i>, New</p>	

	<p>Haven : Yale University Press</p> <p>Lydia Martens (2000) <i>Eating out : social differentiation, consumption and pleasure</i> Cambridge [England] : Cambridge University Press</p>
--	--

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.