



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,668: Kulturen/Cultures: Food Politics in the Asian Context

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (60%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (40%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,668,1.00 Kulturen/Cultures: Food Politics in the Asian Context](#) -- English -- [Chou Meng-Hsuan](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

The course on Food Politics in Asia will take place at the St Gallen Institute of Management in Singapore. Registration for the course is done through a Special Bidding Process (SBV): Between January 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m. CET, and January 31, 2025, 11:59 p.m. CET, please apply by emailing meng-hsuan.chou@unisg.ch with your resume and a half-page motivation letter.

Learning objectives

Learning Objective

By taking this course, you should be able to achieve the following learning objectives:

- Describe and explain the roles of identity in shaping food politics and determining policy outcomes.
- Describe and explain how globalisation and localisation forces interact to shape food politics and policies.
- Describe and explain the politics of food security and sustainability, especially how issues are framed and contested.
- Synthesise knowledge on food politics and policies, and articulate them in a cogent and accessible way, both orally and in writing.

Course content

This course on food politics will take place in Singapore and includes fieldwork and site visits throughout the City State. This course will introduce you to the contemporary politics of identity and sustainability through the lens of food. Food is fundamentally essential to our physical existence, but it is also intensely cultural, with socially constructed behaviour and preferences that are change-resistant even in the presence of new knowledge, policies, and practices. In recent decades, sustainability has emerged as a key issue for the very survival of the human race, with food taking centre stage in sustainability debates.

Singapore is an especially interesting site for examining the politics of food identity and sustainability. As a highly multicultural society with four official languages (English, Chinese, Malay, and Tamil) and multiple dialects, food is the lingua franca in Singapore used to communicate similarities and reconcile differences. At the same time, Singapore is also a country with limited natural resources: More than 90% of the food supply in the City State is imported. Food security is a salient issue, and the Singapore Government has set out to achieve the "30 by 30" goal: To sustainably produce food by 2030 to satisfy 30% of domestic nutritional needs. By taking this course, you will learn how food is a powerful lens to understand the contemporary politics of identity and sustainability beyond consumption and nutrition.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design



Course Structure

The course on Food Politics in Asia will take place at the St Gallen Institute of Management in Singapore. Over one intensive week, students will engage in the following topics and activities:

Politics of Food Identity

- Introduce the analytical framework for studying food politics in Asia.
- Apply the concept of gastronationalism to the case of Singapore: monocultural or multicultural?

Globalisation or Glocalisation?

- Unpack globalisation and localisation dynamics through the case of fast food.
- Explore authenticity.

Food Journey Fieldwork (I): Heritage Foods

- Compare and contrast Heritage Foods in Singapore.

Food Journey Fieldwork (II): Hawker Centres

- Compare and contrast dishes at Singapore's hawker centres: Origin and evolution.

Politics of Food Security and Sustainability

- Introduce Singapore's approach to the challenges and opportunities of food sovereignty and sustainability.

Food Politics in Asia: Presentations

- Students present their food journeys in the final sessions of this course.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

Course literature

Indicative literature:

- Abbots, Emma-Jayne and Benjamin Coles (2013) 'Horsemeat-gate', *Food, Culture & Society* 16(4): 535-550.
- DeSoucey, Michaela (2010) 'Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union', *American Sociological Review* 75(3): 432-455.
- Hall, Derek (2010) 'Food with a visible face: Traceability and the public promotion of private governance in the Japanese food system', *Geoforum* 41: 826-835.
- Herring, Ronald (2015) 'How is Food Political? Market, State, and Knowledge' in Ronald J Herring (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Food, Politics, and Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-42.
- Lee, Seow Ting and Hun Shik Kim (2021) 'Food fight: gastrodiploamacy and nation branding in Singapore's UNESCO bid to recognize Hawker culture', *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 17: 205-217.
- Leer, Jonatan (2019) 'Monocultural and multicultural gastronationalism: National narratives in European food shows', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 22(5-6): 817-834.
- Montefrio, Marvin Joseph F, Jeremy C De Chavez, Antonio P Contreras and Dennis S Erasga (2020) 'Hybridities and awkward constructions in Philippine locavorism: reframing global-local dynamics through assemblage thinking', *Food, Culture & Society* 23(2): 117-136.
- Tarulevicz, Nicole (2016) 'Food Safety as Culinary Infrastructure in Singapore, 1920-1990', *Global Food History* 2(2): 132-156.
- Watson, James L (2000) 'China's Big Mac Attack', *Foreign Affairs* 79(3): 120-135.

Additional course information

Information about Prof. Meng-Hsuan Chou can be found at www.menghsuanchou.com.



Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	60%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	40%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

1. Presentation (40%, group grade)

Group presentation based on experiences from the two Food Journeys. The instructor will provide guiding questions for the Food Journeys during the first session of the course. Students who are presenting at their allotted time-slots (estimated to be 30 minutes maximum, to be confirmed) should moderate and answer class questions.

2. Written work (60%, individual grade)

Individually, students will write a reflection/discussion paper on their experiences from the two Food Journeys. The reflection paper should address the guiding questions the instructors have posed (e.g., the origin and evolution of the dishes) backed by interviews conducted and pictures taken in the field, as well as existing literature on the dishes. Students should describe and explain what their analyses tell us about food identity, globalisation, and/or glocalisation in the Singapore and/or Asian contexts. Requirements: minimum length is 12,000 characters (including spaces) and maximum length is 16,000 characters (including spaces).

Further details will be provided on StudyNet prior to the course.

Examination relevant literature

See course literature. Independent research is part of the examination performance.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).



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