

ANTH 491 / ENVS 450
Archaeology of Food
Spring 2021
Online (100%)



Professor: Dr. Dana Bardolph
Office hours: Wednesdays 2 – 4 pm
or by appointment (MS Teams)
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Terracotta votive food offering (including open and closed pomegranates, grapes, figs, honeycombs, cheeses, and breads) found in a tomb in Paestum, Italy, 360 BCE.

I. Course Description

Food is a universal requirement for humans to survive, yet different cultures across the globe have developed radically divergent cuisines. In this course, we will use archaeology to explore the diversity of human food systems and the various roles food and drink have played around the world through deep time. With topics like the ‘real’ paleo diet to the origins of alcohol to hunger and food scarcity, we will consider the theoretical and methodological approaches that archaeologists use to study food and eating from a global anthropological perspective. Case studies will include archaeological and environmental data as well as traditional ecological knowledge and other Indigenous perspectives.

This online course will be delivered asynchronously and will consist of self-paced online lectures (available for on-demand viewing), discussion boards, quizzes, and critical and creative assignments.

II. Learning Outcomes

Throughout the completion of this course, students will:

- Gain an appreciation for the deep history of diverse food systems around the world
- Garner a broad understanding of the major trends and theoretical foundations related to food-related research in archaeology and anthropology
- Become familiar with the range of methodological tools/techniques that archaeologists apply to food-related research questions
- Critically evaluate contemporary food systems and their relationships with Indigenous and other traditional ecological knowledge systems

III. Online Course Access

The course will be delivered asynchronously via Blackboard. All video lectures will be recorded and posted weekly for students to view on demand Blackboard. You will need a computer, tablet, or smartphone with reliable Internet connection to download or stream content for this course. A limited number of laptops are available for checkout from Founders Library for the entire semester. **Email Lib-Admin@niu.edu to confirm laptop availability;** you will need a valid OneCard for check out and return. WiFi is usually recommended over cellular data for anyone using a smartphone or tablet due to the high bandwidth required. Check out the [State of Illinois' drive up WiFi map tool](#), which provides geographic locations for public drive-up WiFi hotspots in Illinois.

Your profile in Blackboard lets you add a profile photo, adjust your notification settings, and link a cloud storage account. Please add a [profile image](#)! This could be a photo of yourself or an image of something that symbolizes you. Profile images will be visible throughout Blackboard, including on your Discussion Board posts. This will help you and your classmates get to know one another and form a community.

IV. Online Learning Principles

Both the pandemic and social justice issues this year took an emotional toll on everyone. I recognize that the future is unpredictable, and my goal is to promote an online classroom environment that offers flexibility and prioritizes individual well-being. Even in an asynchronous online class, students are expected to foster an inclusive and caring classroom that respects a diversity of opinions and experiences, reflective of our commitment to the [Northern Pact](#). First and foremost, we need to respect each other as individuals and as a group, which includes communication in discussion boards and with the instructor.

V. Required Materials

Out of interest in keeping this course low-cost, all readings will be posted as web links or PDFs to the course Blackboard site in weekly content folders. Readings include journal articles and scholarly book chapters as well as news articles and videos that address social justice issues. You can expect to read approximately 1-2 readings per course module each week.

VI. Assessment

Grading Components:

- Syllabus Quiz: 2 pts
- Learning Contract: 3 pts
- Discussion Board: 15 pts
- Weekly Reading Responses: 15 pts
- Quizzes (3 total, 10 pts each): 30 pts
- Writing Assignments (3 total, 10 pts each): 30 pts
- Native ethnobotany project: 5 pts

TOTAL: 100 pts

Grading Scale:

Total numerical scores will be converted into a letter grade at the end of the semester using the +/- system.

≥ 94:	A	87-89.9: B+	77-79.9: C+	60-69: D	<59: F
90-93.9:	A-	84-86.9: B	70-76.9: C		
		80-83.9: B-			

Please note that numerical scores that do not meet the minimum threshold for the above categories will **not** be rounded up when converting to letter grades (e.g., a final numerical score of 89.9 will receive a “B+”).

Syllabus Quiz: This quiz is designed to help students make sure they understand important policies of the course. Students will be given unlimited attempts to complete the syllabus quiz on Blackboard during the first week of classes.

Learning Contract: By the end of the second week of classes, each student is to upload a learning contract to Blackboard. Each contract should include the following: learning goals for the class; self-responsibilities in meeting these goals; and expectations of the instructor and the TA in helping to fulfill these goals. This contract will be used to help students evaluate individual progress towards goals and can be reviewed throughout the semester alongside your exam and assignment grades and final course grade. This contract serves as a baseline for communication and accountability; students will receive full credit if it is turned in with satisfactory effort.

Discussion Board: The Discussion Board on Blackboard is an opportunity to engage with the course readings and interact asynchronously with everyone in the course. Students will follow the model of “Answer a question, ask a question,” i.e., they should read previous posts and respond directly to other students’ questions in addition to posing their own, and address the following:

- What question(s) do you have about the material from this week?
- What answer/thoughts/ideas can you provide in response to another student’s question?

Responses should be short (**50-100 words**) but should show engagement with the material specific to each week. Discussion board posts should be written in complete sentences with accurate grammar and spelling. **One** missed discussion post will be **dropped** at the end of the semester.

Weekly Reading Responses: Students are expected to keep up with the weekly readings listed on the course syllabus. Weekly reading responses are an opportunity to process the readings through writing and demonstrate to the instructor that you have completed them.

In each weekly reading response, you should respond to the following prompt:

- What is the most interesting or problematic thing that you learned in this week’s readings?

Responses should be short (**50-100 words**) but should show evidence that you have read the readings and/or viewed the videos) and demonstrate critical thinking and original thought. Weekly reading responses should be written in complete sentences with accurate grammar and spelling. **One** missed weekly reading response will be **dropped** at the end of the semester.

Quizzes: There will be three quizzes throughout the semester worth 10 points each. Quizzes will be based on lectures and readings and will consist of multiple choice and questions that are designed to test your application of course concepts. The quizzes will not be cumulative and will focus on the content covered in the weeks leading up to each quiz, although some general knowledge should carry throughout the course.

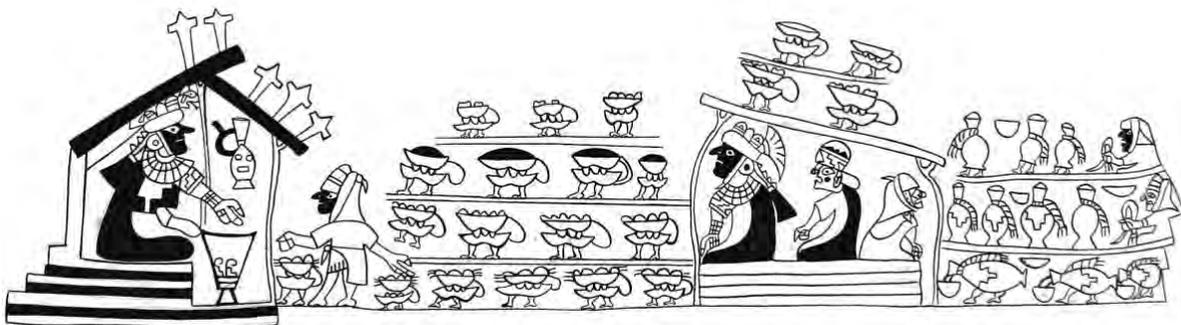
Quizzes will be open from 12:00 am – 11:59 pm Thursday through Sunday of the week they are due, listed on the schedule below. You will be given a time limit of **one hour** to complete each quiz after you start it. Please plan accordingly and contact your instructor or TA as soon as possible if you have a valid reason for needing a quiz makeup, including if you have internet connectivity issues.

Writing Assignments: Students will complete three assignments throughout the semester worth 10 points each. These assignments are designed to engage students in course content and readings in critical ways. Specific guidelines and grading rubrics for each assignment will be announced in class and posted to Blackboard. All assignments should be submitted **electronically to Blackboard by 11:59 pm** on the day they are due (dates listed on the Course Schedule). Papers will primarily be graded based on content but also on clarity and grammar.

Guidelines for submission of written work:

- Double-space all papers
- Use Times New Roman 12-pt font
- Set standard 1-inch margins
- Include page numbers at the bottom of each page
- At the top of the first page, include your name, assignment number, date, and essay title
- Do not include a separate title page or a separate page for the bibliography
- Proofread and spellcheck

Native Ethnobotany Project: You will have the opportunity to learn more about the ethnobotanical uses of a plant of your choice that is native to Illinois (note that is native with a little “n”!). You will select a native plant from a list provided and prepare a detailed flier with images and information about the plant, including common and taxonomic name, information on plant habits and habitat, and information on anthropogenic uses past and present (e.g., food, medicinal, spiritual, etc. uses). This project is worth 10 points towards your final grade.



Moche fineline scene showing jars pouring themselves into waiting cups and bowls of food walking towards the Moche lord. North coastal Peru, 600-800 CE.

Note that all assignments must originate with you in form and content, and all the work you submit in this course must have been written **for this course and not another**. Please consult the full policy on academic integrity below.

If you experience any **technical difficulties** submitting assignments, reading responses, or discussion board posts to Blackboard, please email as soon as you encounter the issue and include a copy of your assignment if possible. You can attach a file or screenshot or include a link (e.g., to Google docs, Box, etc.). If you are unable to attach files or include links, please specify that in your email. I recognize that technical issues come up and are happy to accept alternate formats if needed! For persistent issues with Blackboard, see below.

VII. Blackboard, Email, and Office Hours Policies

Blackboard: Students can access all course materials online on Blackboard, including video lectures, the course syllabus, assignments, readings links and PDFs, quizzes, discussion board, and other materials posted throughout the semester. Blackboard will be the primary means of communication about the course. Please **check the site and your email daily** for announcements, updates, and due dates.

If you have problems accessing Blackboard or submitting assignments, please contact the Division of Information Technology by phone (815-753-8100) or submit a [ticket](#) to the service desk.

Email: Feel free to contact me via email with questions or concerns about the course. Before sending an email, check the syllabus to see if the answer to your question is there.

Please note that I generally do not respond to student emails after 5 pm or on weekends, although I strive to respond promptly during business hours. You are welcome to send an email at any time, but please plan accordingly (e.g., if you send an email after 5 pm on Friday, you can expect to receive a response on Monday morning). Note that most assignments are due Sundays. Please practice good email etiquette when contacting me!

- Put “**ANTH 491**” or “**ENVS 450**” in the subject line
- Include a salutation (e.g., Hi Prof. Bardolph) and a signature with your full name
- Present your concerns clearly and succinctly
- Avoid text-message abbreviations, slang, emojis, etc.

If you have detailed questions, especially in regard to exams or assignments, please see me in office hours.

Office hours: Please feel free to drop into our virtual office hours (schedule listed at the top of the syllabus) to discuss anything related to the course, anthropology, NIU, any concerns, etc. Office hours will be held via **MS Teams** (available to all NIU students through Office 365). Meetings can be conducted over video, audio, or chat.

If you are joining my scheduled office hours, then there is no need to alert me ahead of time; simply sign into MS Teams and send me a chat message to start the meeting.

To request a meeting outside of scheduled office hours, please email me (dbardolph@niu.edu) to set up a time. **Please specify your availability in blocks of days/times** and try to give **at least 24 hours advance notice** of your request for a virtual meeting. Once I know your availability, I will send a scheduled meeting invitation via MS Teams. Note that while I have a lot of availability during the week, I generally am not available for office hours before 9 am or after 5 pm Monday through Friday, or on weekends. If you are unable to schedule meetings between weekday business hours, please let me know and I can make an exception to this policy.

VIII. Additional Things to Note

Reach Out! If you are having trouble accessing any course materials (e.g., lecture videos, Blackboard assignments, textbook, etc.), having internet connectivity issues, or if you need flexibility on assignment due dates, let us know! Please email me or Maria to or schedule an appointment to meet virtually, especially if you need extensions on assignment deadlines. You do not need to provide specific reasons for requesting accommodations. As a professor here at NIU I always strive to be flexible, accessible, approachable, and understanding. I know how important it is to support [health and wellness](#), which are crucial factors to student success—particularly in these challenging times we are all facing! Please reach out, I am happy to help in any way that I can!

Preferred Names and Pronouns: Class rosters and university data systems are provided to faculty with the student’s legal name and legal gender marker. As an NIU student, you are able to change how [your preferred/proper name](#) shows up on class rosters. This option is helpful for various student populations, including but not limited to students who abbreviate their first name; students who use their middle name; international students; and transgender students. We will take time during our first Collaborate session to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in way that is safe for you.



Vincent Medina (Chochenyo Ohlone) and Louis Trevino (Rumsen Ohlone) prepare traditional California Indian cuisine at Café Ohlone in Berkeley, California.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that students attending NIU understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and are willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present work that they have not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are responsible for plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, articles, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students responsible for or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university. Please familiarize yourself with the full policy on [Academic Misconduct](#) at NIU.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, please contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located on the 4th floor of the Health Services Building and can be reached at drc@niu.edu or 815-753-1303. In addition, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations. Please note that you will not be required to disclose your disability, only your accommodations. The sooner you let me know your needs, the sooner I can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

SAFE SPACE

As a faculty member at NIU and in accordance with the [Northern Pact](#), I adhere to and respect NIU policies and regulations pertaining to the observance of religious holidays; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. My goal is to serve as an ally for students of all identities, and I am available to discuss confidential matters with students individually and offer referrals.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ACCESS Tutoring and Support Services: ACCESS provides students with assistance to aid in being successful in courses through a variety of academic support services, including workshops for time management, effective reading, and test anxiety; as well as walk-in and/or appointment-based tutoring, among other resources. Please refer to the [ACCESS website](#) for more information.

Counseling & Consultation Services (CCS): CCS offers counseling, crisis intervention, advocacy services (for sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, and/or stalking support), specialized services (for substance abuse, eating and body image concerns, and anger), along with other resources to de-stress and ways to cope with academic anxiety. Please refer to the [CCS website](#) for more information.

Support for Undocumented Students: If you are undocumented and need assistance or support to successfully complete your classes or degree, the coordinator for [Undocumented Student Support](#), Sandy López, can help you with advising, campus services, and other university resources. Visit Sandy in the Campus Life Building, Room 236 or contact her at slopez1@niu.edu or by phone at 815-753-

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The course schedule below lists weekly topics and due dates. Lectures, readings, and additional videos that accompany each module will be posted to weekly content folders on Blackboard.

All quizzes, assignments, discussion board posts, reading responses, etc. should be **submitted electronically to Blackboard by 11:59 pm** on the dates listed below. All assignments are due at the end of each week on Sundays. Quizzes will be open from 12:00 am – 11:59 pm Thursday through Sunday of the week they are due, listed on the schedule below.

Students can expect to follow this schedule but please note that some items are subject to change. Any changes will be announced and posted to Blackboard.

UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF FOOD AND HUMAN HISTORY		
How do archaeologists (and anthropologists) think about food? What theoretical frameworks enhance our understanding of food and cuisine? How and why did humans evolve to eat the foods we eat? What was the real “paleodiet”? Why did people begin to cultivate plants and herd animals? What are the historical consequences of agricultural intensification and surplus? What native plants can we find in our own backyards?		
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
1	Jan 11 – 17	Setting the Table
	Module 1	Course welcome and overview
	Module 2	What is the archaeology of food?
	<i>Due Sun Jan 17</i>	<i>Discussion Board 1 Reading Response 1 Syllabus Quiz</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
2	Jan 18 – 24	Researching Food at NIU
	Campus closure	Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (University closed Mon Jan 18)
	Module 1	Guest presentation by NIU librarian
	<i>Due Sun Jan 24</i>	<i>Discussion Board 2 Reading Response 2 Learning Contract</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
3	Jan 25 – 31	Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Food
	Module 1	How does food define society? How does society define our food?

	Module 2	Confronting racism and environmental justice
	<i>Due Sun Jan 31</i>	<i>Discussion Board 3</i> <i>Reading Response 3</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
4	Feb 1 – 7	The ‘Real’ Paleodiet
	Module 1	Evolutionary history of the human diet
	Module 2	Hunting, foraging, and fishing
	<i>Due Sun Feb 7</i>	<i>Discussion Board 4</i> <i>Reading Response 4</i> <i>Writing Assignment 1</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
5	Feb 8 – 14	Is it Agriculture Yet?
	Module 1	Fleshy fruits and fluffy tails: how we domesticate plants and animals
	Campus closure	Floating holiday (University closed Thurs Feb 11)
	<i>Due Sun Feb 14</i>	<i>Discussion Board 5</i> <i>Reading Response 5</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
6	Feb 15 – 21	In Our Backyard
	Module 1	Intensification and surplus
	Module 2	Native plants of Illinois
	<i>Due Sun Feb 21</i>	<i>Discussion Board 6</i> <i>Reading Response 6</i> <i>Quiz 1</i>
UNIT II: ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS FOR STUDYING FOOD		
How does food preserve archaeologically? What methods can archaeologists employ to study the plant and animal foods our human ancestors ate? In what ways is diet encoded in our skeletons? How did early agricultural groups process and store food? What associated artifacts are available for study in the Pick Museum of Anthropology collections?		
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
7	Feb 22 – 28	Preservation and Patterns in Plants
	Module 1	How food and meals get left behind
	Module 2	We reap what we sow: insights from paleoethnobotany
	<i>Due Sun Jan 17</i>	<i>Discussion Board 7</i> <i>Reading Response 7</i>

Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
8	Mar 1 – 7	Studying Skeletons
	Module 1	They are what we ate: insights from zooarchaeology
	Module 2	We are what we ate: insights from bioarchaeology
	<i>Due Sun Mar 7</i>	<i>Discussion Board 8 Reading Response 8 Native plant handout</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
9	Mar 8 – 14	Pick Museum Virtual Collections Tour
	Module 1	Collections highlights with curator Rachelle Wilson
	Campus closure	Floating holiday (University closed Thurs Feb 11)
	<i>Due Sun Mar 14</i>	<i>Discussion Board 9 Reading Response 9 Quiz 2</i>
UNIT III: THE SOCIAL ROLE OF FOOD AND DRINK		
<p>What are the social and political roles of food and drink? How are food and ritual intertwined? How do feasting events emphasize power or status differences, or reinforce shared group identities and traditions? How is food tied to memory, homeland, and ethnicity? How does gender intersect with cuisine choice, food access, and production and processing labor? For what purposes have past societies used alcohol and psychotropic substances? Why is chocolate so delicious?</p>		
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
10	Mar 15 – 21	Feasting, Power, and Political Economy
	Module 1	Feasting with friends, rivals, and ancestors
	Module 2	Materializing power and status through food
	<i>Due Sun Mar 21</i>	<i>Discussion Board 10 Reading Response 10</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
11	Mar 22 – 28	Are We What We Eat? Food and Identity
	Module 1	Memories of home: food and ethnicity
	Module 2	On the basis of sex: food and gender
	<i>Due Sun Mar 28</i>	<i>Discussion Board 11 Reading Response 11</i>

Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
12	Mar 29 – Apr 4	Ancient Libations and Toothsome Treats
	Module 1	Drinks and drugs
	Module 2	Chocolate cravings
	<i>Due Sun Apr 4</i>	<i>Discussion Board 12</i> <i>Reading Response 12</i> <i>Writing Assignment 2</i>
UNIT IV: SCARCITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE		
What environmental factors impact food systems? What happens when there is not enough food? How do individuals and societies adapt to scarcity? How do Indigenous and other forms of traditional knowledge inform us about the sustainability of local resources? How do Blackness, racism, and inequity intersect? What can lessons from the past tell us about the future of food? Will this semester ever end?		
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
13	Apr 5 – 11	Hunger and Food Scarcity
	Module 1	Signatures of starvation
	Module 2	The NIU Campus Food Security survey project
	<i>Due Sun Apr 11</i>	<i>Discussion Board 13</i> <i>Reading Response 13</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
14	Apr 12 – 18	Lessons in Sustainability
	Module 1	Managing risk
	Module 2	Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)
	<i>Due Sun Apr 18</i>	<i>Discussion Board 14</i> <i>Reading Response 14</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
15	Apr 19 – 25	Decolonizing cuisine
	Module 1	Black food matters
	Module 2	Looking to the past for the future of food
	<i>Due Sun Apr 25</i>	<i>Discussion Board 15</i> <i>Reading Response 15</i> <i>Writing Assignment 3</i>
Week	Dates	Topic / Assignments Due
16	Apr 25 – 30	Finals week
	<i>Due Sun Apr 30</i>	<i>Quiz 3</i>