



Food Studies

What is Food Studies?

Food studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between food and the human experience, from nature and biology, to social relations and global and local systems. Food, its production, distribution, preparation, consumption, disposal and meaning, provide a means to dive deeper into social, cultural, economic, environmental and global issues. Food connects to paramount topics such as globalization, science, technology, and social progress. From farm to fork, food production and consumption connects to economic systems, humanities, social science and health. Food studies covers subjects ranging from agricultural practices and product marketing to global food security and public health issues like obesity and malnutrition.

Culture + Place

Food is multifaceted. Our foods, traditions, policies, and industries, provide a background about our identity, our health and our society. Food is central to culture – our connections and communities. It provides a lens in which we can further understand many facets of society. Students will critically analyze the current system, in order to explore future food system solutions. Food ties to a place and food studies students analyze the cultural, political, and commercial forces that bring food to the plate, while being immersed in a local food culture, such as Roma. Gli's city location acts as a classroom to add depth and understanding about living traditions and community challenges. Gli also offers partnerships with experts in the world of food, from farmers, to chefs, policy makers and business owners, to supplement classroom learning with hands-on experience. Food studies students engage in class and the community, nourishing powerful collaborations with professionals in the field. We bring food-related research, teaching, projects, activities, and events together in one place so that we can consolidate our efforts across our network at Gli and the community, both on local and international levels. Why study Sustainability? As stated by the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development, "Food-related research and study is a growing field in academia. Each year, more universities add departments, courses, majors, and minors focused on studying food and society and the complexities of growing, processing, distributing, accessing, and consuming food."

There is worldwide recognition that we need to move together for a more sustainable future if we want to protect our planet and future generations. *The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promoted by the UN*, address and recognize the importance of creating strong food systems, as well as ensuring food security and improved nutrition. Additionally, food systems have an overarching



connecting role to social, economic and environmental goals as well. Sustainability has become a necessity, and social responsibility, in which it is of paramount importance for positive changes to take place. As quoted by the Brundtland Report, 'sustainable' is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The foundations of sustainability, way that "interfaces with both existing natural systems and human culture". We need to think radically about our current food systems, food security and our effects on the environment. The impact between our current systems and the environment are clear. There is high interest in creating a more efficient global food system and sustainability is a fast-growing job sector. Working towards a brighter future can be highly rewarding, and the world needs this action towards positive change.

Skills + Courses

Students will learn about sustainable food production and consumption and how it affects the environment. They will develop strong analytical skills as they delve into the policies and systems of local and national food systems, both in the developed and developing worlds. The students will then use critical thinking skills to connect what they have learned and apply it in new ways. Developed problem solving skills and creativity are key for developing innovative ideas in this vast field. Through interdisciplinary courses and experience, students develop a well rounded framework for understanding this fast developing area of study. An anthropological approach provides insight into the progression of humanity, from foraging to the industrial food system, and cultural traditions of farming worldwide, cooking, and eating. Topics of focus range from gastronomy, culinary history to food systems (production) and food culture (consumption). Students will critically investigate food-related issues including security, policy, media, nutrition, agriculture, environmental sustainability, health, justice and so forth. Furthermore, students will develop ways to implement changes in the system by learning about processes of production, distribution, consumption, and regulation.

Topic-job connections

To understand the place of food in society, students studying food typically draw on a number of diverse methodologies, including, but not limited to: arts, anthropology, ecology, economics, design, gender studies, geography, history, hospitality, folklore, psychology, public health, nutrition, sustainability, sciences, sociology, religion and so on. The study of food provides theoretical understanding and practical knowledge for professional careers in health care, business, government, NGOs, social justice, hospitality, education and community programs. Students are well prepared for diverse food-related careers in the business & non-profit, government sectors, policy making, advocacy, supply & distribution, marketing, research, journalism, consulting, food criticism and food entrepreneurship. Some examples of possible career choices after graduation in this field might be:



program or community outreach coordinator, food related NGOs, food security councils, media (public relations, advertising), food writing (websites, magazines, journalism), advocacy agencies, social worker, government (research, policy development), market research, business, communications, nutrition, food education, advanced work in universities. However, students are not limited to these types of work, as this field builds bridges across a expansive variety of studies and develops applicable real world skills.