

Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Geography of Food and Sustainable Regional Development
Course Code	40473
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GEOG-01/B
Language	German
Degree Course	Bachelor in Food and Enogastronomy Sciences
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Dr. Tobias Boos, Tobias.Boos@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/academic-staff/person/38329
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2nd
CP	3
Teaching Hours	18
Lab Hours	12
Individual Study Hours	45
Planned Office Hours	9
Contents Summary	The course aims to introduce students to the basic theoretical approaches and relevant topics of food geography and sustainable regional development. In particular, the course participants will discuss and investigate the economic and social geographies of footpaths, food networks, and sustainable food production, processing, logistics, and consumption. The food geography issues covered in the course include the critical analysis of power constellations at global and regional levels—food regimes, food security, and food sovereignty; globalization and mechanisms of uneven economic and social development (connections and disconnections); strategies for “localizing” and “regionalizing” food

	(fair trade, DOP, terroir, etc.); the geographies of food consumption and food tourism; the creation of sustainable regional food economies in the context of sustainable regional development—agroecology, circular economy, food and environmental justice; and research methods of economic and social geography, which serve to analyze the food sector. The course will analyze and discuss specific case studies and examples, using the peculiar spatiotemporal geographic perspective on the economic, political, and social dimensions of the food sector. In small exercises the students will apply the discussed theoretical concepts and research methods, analyzing local contexts.
Course Topics	This course focuses on the discussion and analysis of the geographical dimensions—both political and social—of existing regional and global food networks. Economic aspects are addressed not from the perspective of economic modeling or market analysis, but rather from a spatial-political and social-geographical perspective. The course focuses on discussing the spatial organization, social embeddedness, political regulation, and cultural context of production, distribution, and consumption. In particular, this approach highlights regional interconnections, power relations, alternative food networks, and issues of sustainable spatial development. This class aims to familiarize students with key topics in food geography and the geographies of food. The goal is to enable them to critically analyze spatially embedded economic and social structures as well as power relations in the food sector and to develop a solid foundation for sustainable regional development. The following topics will be covered as examples and explored in depth using selected concepts, case studies, and methodological exercises: • Basic concepts of geography such as space, place, scale, and network (paths, relationships, and distances) are presented in their economic and political dimensions and their relevance for the food sector (food as a commodity and socio-cultural good). • Sustainable regional food systems from a social and political-economic-geographical perspective: spatial interconnections, local practices, place-based approaches, and regional development processes, which are illustrated by selected case studies. • Discussion of selected approaches in economic geography and political geography, including geographical imaginations for the critical analysis of existing economic systems and alternative food

	networks. • Critical analysis of power constellations at global and regional levels: food regimes, food sovereignty, etc. • The geography of culinary traditions, culinary heritage, and gastronomic tourism, with practical examples of sustainable initiatives and projects. • Strategies for “localizing” food: place identity, terroir, and labels such as PDO/DOP, etc. • A practical introduction to selected methods in qualitative economic and political geography, such as critical mapping, interviews, or observations with a spatial focus (distributions, mobility/routes, relations, etc.), which serve to analyze the food sector in its socio-spatial dimensions.
Keywords	Food Geography, Sustainability, Regional Development, Critical Thinking
Recommended Prerequisites	
Propaedeutic Courses	None
Teaching Format	lectures, discussions, exercises
Mandatory Attendance	No
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of their studies, graduates with a bachelor's degree in Food and Enogastronomy Sciences will have acquired a solid foundation of scientific knowledge in disciplines such as chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics, computer science, and law, specifically applied to the food and gastronomic sector. They will gain technological skills for managing production and transformation processes, along with an integrated view of the quality, safety, and sustainability of food supply chains and systems. In addition, graduates will understand the principles related to waste reduction, resource optimization, and the reconciliation of economics and ethics, which are central elements for addressing the modern challenges of the agri-food system." The knowledge and understanding skills mentioned above are acquired through participation in lectures, practical exercises, seminars, and through guided personal study and individual study as provided by the activated educational activities. The verification of the achievement of learning outcomes is mainly

carried out through exams and any interim tests. The tests may be written and/or oral, and may also consist of reports and oral presentations of projects or seminars.

Students will be able to practically apply the knowledge they have acquired, developing the ability to solve complex problems in the food and gastronomic sector. Thanks to a wide range of practical activities, such as laboratories, internships, workshops, and seminars, they will be able to use chemical, physical, sensory, and microbiological analysis methods to evaluate the quality and safety of food and production processes.

Graduates of the first profile will be able to manage food processing and preservation processes, design new technological solutions, and apply knowledge of plant genetics and process planning to ensure the quality of the final product. Graduates of the second profile will have advanced skills in managing restaurant businesses, promoting gastronomic heritage, and applying fermentation techniques and food design. In both paths, the ability to enhance by-products and reduce waste will be central, contributing to the sustainable innovation of the sector.

The educational activities are designed to strengthen the autonomy of judgment and the ability to make decisions in complex contexts, as well as to develop communication skills and the ability to work in multidisciplinary and international teams. At the end of the program, graduates will be able to independently apply their knowledge in professional contexts, promoting innovative and sustainable solutions for the challenges of the agri-food and gastronomic system.

The achievement of the ability to apply knowledge is accomplished through critical reflection on the texts proposed for individual study, stimulated by classroom activities, the study of research and application cases presented by the professors, the performance of practical laboratory exercises, fieldwork, bibliographic research, the completion of individual and/or group projects included in the core and elective courses of the curriculum, as well as during internships and the preparation of the final exam. The assessments, carried out through written and/or oral exams, reports, and exercises, involve the completion of specific tasks in which the student demonstrates mastery of tools, methodologies, and critical autonomy. During internships, the assessment is conducted through the presentation of a report by the student to

the supervising professor.

Evaluate and critically analyze the quality, safety, and sustainability of production processes and food products, considering scientific, technological, economic, and cultural aspects. Students will be able to make informed decisions based on scientific data and the analysis of production contexts to ensure the excellence of the final product.

Apply ethical and sustainable approaches, reconciling economic needs with environmental and social requirements. Graduates will be able to identify solutions to reduce waste, enhance by-products, and optimize resource use, proposing food production models in line with the principles of the circular economy.

Express independent judgments regarding innovative techniques for the transformation and enhancement of food and gastronomic productions, evaluating the risks and opportunities associated with the introduction of new technologies or business models, both locally and internationally.

Interpret and manage complex data collected through chemical, physical, microbiological, and sensory analyses, in order to improve the quality of food products and effectively respond to food safety needs and regulatory requirements of the sector.

"Communicate effectively and appropriately with both technical and non-technical interlocutors, including professionals in the food and gastronomic sector, public and private institutions, and the general public. This includes the ability to adapt the communication style based on the audience, using the specific technical language of the food and gastronomic sector when necessary.

Present and discuss the results of their analyses and research in both written and oral form, using technological and multimedia tools. Graduates will be able to draft technical reports, research papers, and scientific documents, as well as present their results clearly and structured, for example during conferences, seminars, or business meetings.

Actively participate in discussions and group work in multidisciplinary and international contexts, demonstrating active listening, negotiation, and collaboration skills. Practical experiences and internships will provide students with the abilities to work effectively in teams and contribute to solving complex problems in the sector.

	Use the three languages of instruction of the course (Italian, German, and English) fluently and confidently, both for written and oral communication. Thanks to the trilingual approach of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, graduates will be able to face international work contexts, participate in global networks, and contribute to the development of international cooperation projects to address the challenges of the food and gastronomic sector. "At the end of the degree program, graduates will have developed strong learning skills, essential for successfully continuing academic studies and entering the workforce. In particular, they will be able to: Learn autonomously and continuously, keeping up to date with scientific and technological advancements in the food and gastronomic sector. Graduates will have acquired study methods and research tools that will allow them to independently update their skills, critically interpreting new knowledge.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	After successfully completing the course, students will be able to: • apply basic spatial concepts to food systems (Knowledge and Understanding), • identify and apply simple qualitative/geographical methods for analyzing food systems and to apply them using examples (Knowledge and Understanding), • to explain the sustainability dimensions of food systems and apply them to examples from the regional food economy (Knowledge and Understanding), • critically analyze power relations and global-regional networks (Judgment and Evaluation), • understand strategies for food localization and explain their sustainability (Judgment and Evaluation), • take a critical position on current discussions in food geography (Judgment and Evaluation).
Assessment	Oral final exam on the course material and one selected academic article.
Evaluation Criteria	The final oral exam will be assessed on the basis of the student's ability to summarise, apply, evaluate and relate to one another the topics and concepts covered in the course (including a selected academic article).

Required Readings	Ermann, U.; Langthaler, E.; Penker, M. & Schermer, M. (2018): <i>Agro-Food Studies. Eine Einführung</i> (Chapter 2 „Tradition und Moderne“, pp. 17-38). Böhlau Joassart-Marcelli, P. (2022): <i>Food Geographies. Social, political, and ecological connections</i> (Chapter 5 „Food connections and commodity chains“, pp. 93-114). Rowman & Littlefield. Joassart-Marcelli, P. (2022): <i>Food Geographies. Social, political, and ecological connections</i> (Chapter 14 „New food geographies“, pp. 285-294). Rowman & Littlefield. Kneafsey, M.; Maye, D.; Holloway, L. und Goodman, M. K. (2021): <i>Geographies of food. An introduction</i> (Chapter 1 „Introducing geographies of food“, pp. 3-21). Bloomsbury Academic. Lund-Durlacher, D., Gössling, S., Antonschmidt, H., Obersteiner, G., Smeral, E. und M. Wildenberg (2021). Gastronomie und Kulinarik. In: Pröbstl-Haider, U., Lund-Durlacher, D., Olefs, M. & F. Prettenthaler (Eds.), <i>Tourismus und Klimawandel</i> (pp. 93-106). Springer Spektrum. https://doi-org.libproxy.unibz.it/10.1007/978-3-662-61522-5_5 Martinus, K.; Boruff, B. & Nunez Picado, A. (2024). Authenticity, interaction, learning and location as curators of experiential agritourism, in <i>Journal of Rural Studies</i>, 108, 103294 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103294
Supplementary Readings	Cook, I. et al. (2004). Follow the thing: Papaya. <i>Antipode</i>, 36(4), pp. 642-664. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2004.00441.x Ermann, U. (2006). Aus der Region – für die Region? Regionales Wirtschaften als Strategie zur Entwicklung ländlicher Räume, <i>Geographische Rundschau</i>, 58(12), pp. 28-36. Nowak, Z. (2018). Terroir: A socially constructed subterranean landscape gone global. In J. Zeunert & T. Waterman (Eds.),

	<i>Routledge handbook of landscape and food</i> (S. 543-552). Routledge. Rainer, G.; Kister, J. & C. Steiner (2019). Qualifizierungsstrategien in regionalen Restrukturierungsprozessen. Die Neuerfindung Südtirols in eine, globalisierten Weinmarkt. <i>Geographische Zeitschrift</i>, 107(2), pp. 130-156. Streifeneder, T. (2023). Schauspiele auf dem Land - Das utopische Potenzial des »Malser Wegs« in Südtirol, in: Michael Mießner, Matthias Naumann, Ulrike Grabski-Kieron, Annett Steinführer, Werner Nell, Marc Weiland (Eds.), <i>Ländliche Utopien</i> (pp. 313-323), transcript Verlag. Yikmis, S.; Türkol, M.; Abdi, G.; Imre, M.; Alkan, G. Türk Aslan, S.; Rabail, R. & R. M. Aadil (2024). Culinary trends in future gastronomy: A review, <i>Journal of Agriculture and Food Research</i>, 18, 101363, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2024.101363
Further Information	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Zero hunger, Good health and well-being, Gender equality, Peace, justice and strong institutions, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible consumption and production, Reduced inequalities