Food as Culture: Eating in Social Context (Credits: 4, GenEd SB)

Sociology 225 Spring 2027; T/Th 10:00-11:15am; Location: Lederle Grad Res Tower rm 123

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Student Hours: to be arranged at class

Overview. During the last century there have been remarkable changes in what Americans consume that have drastically altered the landscape of how we think about food and eating. These changes have not simply been a matter of quantity. We eat out in restaurants more, and in particular, patronize more fast-food restaurants, and consumers are offered larger portion sizes than past generations. We eat together less often than in decades past. Or do we? Is it possible that perhaps what has changed is *how* we eat together – as families and social situations themselves have changed? It is known that on average, food needs to travel further to reach our homes as Americans have become accustomed to "seasonless" consumption. There are also fewer unadulterated foods on grocery store shelves. Our eating patterns are linked to a range of food decisions that nowadays typically require a significant amount of information awareness. These include choices between multiple sources of high-energy but low-nutrient sugar on the shelves of the supermarket, choices between organic and nonorganic produce, or choices between farm-raised, humanely-treated, or industrially processed, mass-produced meats. All of these foods might travel from the neighboring town or halfway around the globe.

A central tenet of research on food consumption is that our food choices are largely determined by nutritional need – we have to eat, or we die. *But this isn't a nutrition class*. This is a *sociology class*, and one of the main ideas here is that there are considerable social forces at work behind how, and what, we eat. Some of these are obvious, some of them less so. For instance: early childhood learning of taste preferences and taste aversion mechanisms, the broad array of choices facing consumers in their local food aisles and restaurants, and changes in prices over time. In short, we adopt our tastes for so many other reasons than nutritional content. Think about availability, cost, religious guidelines, short-term diets for health purposes, and cultural beliefs. Not to mention that our relationships with others influence what we eat, whether at the family dinner table, a friend's lunch spot, or the workplace dining commons. We're constantly learning about ways of eating from people around us. We've learned that the presence of friends and family affects what food – as well as how much of it, and how – we consume. Further, one's demographic and cultural background contribute to the cultures of food that one is exposed to. Food exposure and access is unequal across the American landscape in a variety of ways – we'll probe how these inequalities arose, are perpetuated, and discuss how these inequalities may be narrowed (or exacerbated) in the future.

Objectives: You should leave this course with an ability to think critically about how, and what, you eat is shaped by a wide range of social forces. Although genes and biology may be responsible for some part of the foods you prefer to eat, tastes for food are enacted and reinforced in the social context in which you live. Your job as a member of the class is to be relentlessly curious about how this might work. Equally important goals are to continue to develop skills *that will transfer beyond this course*: a) evaluating the quality of evidence on scientific claims about food and eating, b) interpreting data (in many forms) about food, and c) writing/reflecting about social science research on food and culture.

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Grading. This course will reward consistent engagement with the material and with your classmates. Letter grades will be used (A: 93-100, A-: 90-92.9, B+: 87-89.9, B: 83-86.9; B-: 80-82.9; C+: 77-79.9; C: 73-76.9: C-: 70-72.9; D+: 67-69.9, D: 60-66.9, F: 0-59.9). You have multiple ways to excel; the grade consists of: 35% engagement with regular writing assignments & discussion; 20% in-class midterm; 20% final exam; 25% life experience activities (2 assignments). There is no grading curve.

Prerequisites. There are no formal prereqs besides an active curiosity for the topics; a willingness to read and write about material across the social sciences (mostly sociology), psychology, and public health; and a willingness to engage with a variety of data. You'll read diverse kinds of (mostly) qualitative and (some) quantitative methods. You are expected to come to class ***having read*** the material so we can talk about it. You'll also be expected to contribute to feedback at several points during the semester – not just our department's Forward Focus at the term's end.

Connection. Every student is required to sign up for a 10-minute "student hours" meeting during the first 2 weeks (in person) – it is part of your grade. It helps me be a better instructor if I know more about your interests in the course material, and if there are ways that I can help you learn. (Pro tip: *it helps you too*. It's easier for faculty who know their students to write letters of recommendation for them for a job or scholarship. Think ahead.) You will also be required to pair with an accountability partner in class.

Readings. There are 2 required books (both paperbacks). The remainder are primary-source (original) scientific journal articles, a couple short films, podcasts, and other media. Most are food-centric, with a few expanding beyond the study of food. I've selected this material to be challenging but rewarding – staying on top of the readings and engaging in class will help you get the most out of class. PDFs of readings and links to media are available on Canvas. Two strong encouragements:

(1) Order the two required books early so you don't fall behind!
   • Chapman, Nathaniel G., David L. Brunsma. 2020. *How beer became white, why it matters, and the movements to change it*. Bristol University Press. Link here.
   • Ewoodzie, Joseph C. *Getting Something to Eat in Jackson: Race, Class, and Food in the American South*. Princeton University Press, 2021.

(2) A coursepack is required to purchase (details TBD). I want you to mark up and highlight articles. I want you to take notes in the margins. I want you to not be dependent on your screen for thinking and organizing your thoughts. And most importantly, I want you to bring it to class so you can discuss your observations.

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This course has been designed to fulfill the four core General Education learning objectives.

Content: this course focuses on the study of how social forces and changes in society shape what, and how, we eat.

→ [Application: weekly course material]

Critical thinking: this course asks you to critically analyze qualitative and quantitative empirical research, and to reflect each week on implications prompted by bringing perspectives into conversation.

→ [Application: one 4p response memo W1-W4; one 2p response memo W6-7; four 1p reflection memos to be chosen from W9,W10,W11,W12,W14; exams W7 & finals week]

Communication: this course asks you to be a proactive and respectful communicator in class, as a general member but also as a small-group discussion partner and topic facilitator. Learning to appreciate perspectives you may find disagreeable is key to your growth as a thinker. I believe that while classrooms should be a place of physical and psychological safety, they needn't be a place of intellectual comfort – we should be challenged to expand our thinking. I want you to be a careful thinker, take risks, and embrace uncertainty – I believe that is a core part of our job as learners.

→ [Application: weekly in-class discussions; topic facilitation one session of the term with a partner.]

Connections: it is equally important that you draw connections between course material and real-world scenarios and your lives, but also build high-quality connections *between each other* as peers. We will accomplish these objectives through a series of in-class interactive activities and discussions as well as written assignments.

→ [Application: weekly interactive class activities; life activities W5, W13]

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What I expect of you:

Attendance. Attendance is expected, and historically, students' performance in class tends to have a strong correlation with engagement with the material and discussion with classmates. I will not be grading for attendance, but all material we discuss in class will be on exams. It's *your* responsibility to obtain notes/material from a classmate. I'll post slides on Canvas at week's end, but encourage you to make a few friends as well to obtain notes. Get in touch if you have extenuating circumstances that make attendance difficult, and we can try to find a solution.

Engagement (35%).
(a) *Reflective writing (30%)*. A somewhat counterintuitive proposition is that it's often easy to write a lot! It's *much* harder to refine and to be concise. To help scaffold a regular writing practice to help you be a better communicator, this course implements a tiered reflective writing strategy with progressively shorter writing assignments as the term goes on (first a 4-page memo, then a 2-page memo, then a series of four 1-page memos). You will get feedback on your writing along the way. We'll also be analyzing the writing of the authors we read during the term both for content, but also for style.

- For the first two memos (4p memo W1-W4; 2p memo W6-7), your task is to write a response statement that connects key points of at least two chapter/article(s) but more importantly offers your original thoughts and reactions to them. What struck you as surprising? What challenged your previous thinking on the topic? Do you disagree with the author(s)? How might this connect to ideas you learned elsewhere? You will have flexibility here in terms of what you write about, by design.

- For the four 1-page memos post-midterm (W9, W10, W11, W13, W14), there will be guidelines provided to help you practice a particular form of writing (collaborative; persuasion; scientific abstract; defending a position that you might disagree with).

Memos must be uploaded to Canvas prior to the class about which you're writing to receive credit. Late memos after the prescribed window will not be accepted. (~11 pages, double-spaced, total). Graded on a 0 -5 scale.

(b) *Discussion facilitation (5%)*. Separately, I will ask each of you – on one of the 5 weeks that you don't choose to write a memo, to contribute to a 10-15-minute overview/introduction of the material to present to your classmates and key questions you found yourself puzzling over. This is intended to help keep discussion lively and promote social cohesion! You are not expected to teach the class – you are expected to practice your oral communication skills to connect ideas. Graded: Check-, Check, Check+

Exams.
(a) In-class midterm (20%). This 70m in-class exam on Th, March 13 will be multiple-choice and short-answers intended to test your grasp of key ideas from the 1st part of the term. Graded 0-100.

(b) The final exam (20%) will be given during exam week (date TBD) and heavily weighted towards material from the 2nd half, to connect with core ideas from the first half. Graded 0-100.

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Life experience activities (25%). There will be two of these activities intended to connect your own life experiences to the course material, one during the first half of the term (Week 5), one during the second half (Week 13). Details will be provided during class. Graded on a 0-50 point scale.

Class norms. Let's take a break from screens. I generally have a "no screens in class" policy. I've designed our sessions together as interactive and discussion-based. Taking notes, asking questions, and reviewing notes in preparation for exams are the best predictors of *deep learning* in college coursework. I'm happy to point you towards numerous pieces of research that show this to be the case.

Grading. Make-up assignments and exams are only available if you produce a valid excuse (illness, family emergency, excused university absence). If you are planning on missing a course deadline due to a religious observance, you need to notify me in advance. If you have to miss an exam due to a family crisis or personal emergency, contact the Dean of Students' office first (413-545-2684). After the last day of class, I will not accept any of the above excused late work, as I will be grading exams.

What you can expect from me:

To help co-create a constructive learning environment. This means being knowledgeable, prepared, and willing to puzzle through questions prompted by the material. It means helping us to take stock of where we've been each week, and where we're headed the following week. It means being as responsive to your concerns as I can be. It means me sometimes modeling ways to agree and disagree with positions that I might not personally hold in order to show multiple dimensions and perspectives on a given phenomenon. It means me being reflective on what's working and what sometimes isn't.

To be available to you outside of class. I'll take a poll in class as to the best times for student hours and I'll set that time according to what works best for your schedules. *This is because I want this time to be helpful for you*. You can zoom or stop by my office. If you email, you can usually expect a response within 24h. I check email about 2x/day during the week. I have a professional Twitter account but generally don't follow (or accept follows) from active students – you all deserve to have an online life unsurveilled by university faculty!

To be transparent and clear about how you are being evaluated during the term. I want you to be apprised at all times about how you're doing in the class. This syllabus gives you an overview of how your grade is calculated. Every response paper and homework assignment will have a rubric. You can check your grade at any time on the Canvas website, or email me. I will also post a grade calculator spreadsheet in the "class documents" folder on Canvas so you can forecast what your grade will be if you were to get a [X] grade on assignment [Y] (Canvas also has a built-in tool that lets you estimate). Re-evaluation of graded material is always possible (I make mistakes!) but please approach me in office hours rather than over email (due to the volume I receive) or in class (because my mind is typically on the week's lesson).

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Part I: Fundamentals of culture and socialization

Week 1 (Feb. 2/4): Course overview

Tuesday:

Read syllabus, come to class with questions!

Berry, Wendell. 2009. "The pleasures of eating." *Bringing it to the Table: On Food and Farming*. Berkeley: Counterpoint Press. pp. 227-234.

Thursday:

Spillman, L. 2002. "Introduction: Culture and cultural sociology." *Cultural sociology*, pp.1-9.

Abend, Gabriel. 2023. "Sandwichness Wars." Chapter 1 in *Words and Distinctions for the Common Good*. Princeton University Press.

Week 2 (Feb. 9, Feb. 11): How do sociologists study culture?

Tuesday

Pallavi, Aparna. 2018. "What foods did your ancestors love?" TedXCapeTownWomen. (15m video)

Simko, Christina, & Olick, Jeffery K. 2021. What we talk about when we talk about culture: A multi-facet approach. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, *9*, 431-459.

Thursday

Required TA meetings during class time

Week 3 (Feb. 16, Feb. 18): What makes food culture? (Part 1)

Q: What is a "typical" American diet? Where does our idea of a "meal" come from? How do sociologists think about "taste", and where do our tastes for food come from?

Tuesday

Simmel, Georg. 1997. "Sociology of the meal." In *Simmel on Culture*, edited by Michael Featherstone David Frisby, pp. 130–136. London: Sage Publications.

******* Elias, Norbert. 1978. "On behavior at table." *The Civilizing Process*. pp. 72-87 (quotes from 16-19th century manners books); 89-92 (discussion of changes); 103-109 (knife/fork origins).

Thursday

Brillat-Savarin, J.A., 1825. "Meditation 2: On Taste." The Physiology of Taste: Or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy, trans. *MFK Fisher, New York, Everyman's Library*, pp. 44-58.

Bird, Tess, and Tenna Jensen. 2022. "What's in the refrigerator? Using an adapted material culture approach to understand health practices and eating habits in the home." *Social Science & Medicine* 292: 114581.

Week 4 (Feb. 23, Feb. 25): Food & Social Space

Q: How is what we eat affected by where we come from?

Tuesday

******* Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. "The Habitus and the Space of Lifestyles", pp. 168-200, *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Freedman, J. and Jurafsky, D., 2011. "Authenticity in America: Class distinctions in potato chip advertising." *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, *11*(4), pp.46-54.

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Thursday
Menjivar, Jonathan. 2023. "Parmesan Foam and Shredded Cheddar." *Classy*. (podcast, 49m)

Week 5 (March 2, March 4): Food inequalities & social status(es)
Q: How do material resources and social position shape access to what we consume?
Tuesday
Shostak, Sara. 2023. "Food and inequality." *Annual review of sociology* 49: 359-378.
Daniel, Caitlin. "Economic constraints on taste formation and the true cost of healthy eating." *Social Science & Medicine* 148 (2016): 34-41.

Thursday
Bowen, Sarah, Sinikka Elliott, Joslyn Brenton. 2014. "The Joy of Cooking and Other Cooking Lies." *Contexts*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 20-25.
Choudhury, Athia N. 2023. "Milky Appetites: The Foods that Make Us Human." *Disability Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1. https://dsq-sds.org/index.php/dsq/article/view/9679/8018

*** Friday, March 4: Assignment 1 Due***

Week 6 (March 9, March 11): Eating together and social norms
Q: Why do we eat with others? How do we affect what other people eat (and vice versa)?
Tuesday
Higgs, S. 2015. Social norms and their influence on eating behaviours. Appetite, 86, 38-44.
Dunbar, Robin I.M. 2017. "Breaking Bread: the Functions of Social Eating." *Adapt Human Behav Physiol*, 3, 198-211.

Thursday
In-class midterm

Week 7 (March 16, March 18): spring break week

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Week 8 (March 23, March 25) Eating in & eating out
Q: How do our environments shape what we eat?
Tuesday
*** Pachucki MA, Jacques PF, Christakis NA. Social network concordance in food choice among spouses, friends, and siblings. *American journal of public health*. 2011;101(11):2170-7.
*** Levy, D.E., Pachucki, M.C., O'Malley, A.J., Porneala, B., Yaqubi, A. and Thorndike, A.N., 2021. Social connections and the healthfulness of food choices in an employee population. *Nature Human Behaviour*, pp.1-9.

Thursday
Frame, Edward. 2015. "Dinner and Deception." *New York Times*. August 22, 2015.
Bullard, Gabe. 2026. "Eating alone." *Longreads*. September 15, 2026.
García Bulle Bueno, Bernardo, Abigail L. Horn, Brooke M. Bell, Mohsen Bahrami, Burçin Bozkaya, Alex Pentland, Kayla de la Haye, and Esteban Moro. 2024. "Effect of mobile food environments on fast food visits." *Nature Communications* 15(1): 2291.

Part II: Systems & food choices

Week 9 (March 30, April 1): Examining racism in the study of food, Part I
Q: What is structural racism, and how does it shape access to food?

Tuesday
Slocum, R. 2011. "Race in the study of food." *Progress in Human Geography*. Vol. 35(3): 303-27.
Maghbouleh, Neda. 2022. "Twenty-five years of Charles Mills's racial contract in sociology." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 8(4): 433-442.

Thursday
Chapman, N. and Brunsma, D., 2020. *Beer and Racism: How Beer Became White, why it Matters, and the Movements to Change it*. Policy Press., Chapters 1-3

Week 10 (April 6, April 8): Examining racism in the study of food, Part II
Tuesday
Chapman, N. and Brunsma, D., 2020. *Beer and Racism: How Beer Became White, why it Matters, and the Movements to Change it*. Policy Press., Chapters 4-7.

Thursday
Bowen, Sarah, Sinikka Elliott, and Annie Hardison-Moody. 2021 "The structural roots of food insecurity: How racism is a fundamental cause of food insecurity." *Sociology Compass* 15(7): e12846.
Scott, Jose J., Wändi Bruine de Bruin, Lila Rabinovich, Alison Frazzini, and Kayla de la Haye. 2024. "Understanding food insecurity in Los Angeles County during the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath: A qualitative interview study." *Appetite* 198: 107323.

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Week 11 (April 13, April 15): Food and biology
Q: How does our biology play into what we choose to eat? How much is our choice? Do we have a taste for artificiality or for whole ingredients?
Tuesday
Rozin, Paul, and Deborah Schiller. 1980. "The nature and acquisition of a preference for chili pepper by humans." *Motivation and emotion* 4(1):77-101.
*** Adam, Tanja C., and Elissa S. Epel. 2007. "Stress, Eating and the Reward System." *Physiology and Behavior* 91(4): 449-458.

Thursday
Rozin, P., & Ruby, M. B. 2020. "Bugs are blech, butterflies are beautiful, but both are bad to bite: Admired animals are disgusting to eat but are themselves neither disgusting nor contaminating." *Emotion, 20*(5), 854–865.
Michaela DeSoucey & Emma McDonnell. 2026. "Gummies, chews, and powders." *Science Politics*.

Week 12 (April 22): Omnivores, vegetarians, and everything in between
Q: How are our choices in plant and animal-based products shaped by our ethics, morals, taste, and our wallets?

Thursday
Singer, Peter. 1980. "Utilitarianism and vegetarianism." Philosophy & Public Affairs: 325-337.
Elias, Norbert. 1978. "On behavior at table." *The Civilizing Process*. pp. 99-103 (meat consumption).
Miller, Adrian. 2021. "Pit smoked: barbecue's Native American foundation." Chapter 1 in *Black Smoke*.
Johnston, Josée & Emily Huddart. 2026. "Consuming with Conscience? The Moral Privilege and Narrative Scale Paradoxes of Happy Meat." *Sociologica* 20(2).

Part III: The Future of Food & Society – how do we do better?

Week 13 (April 27, April 29): Eating and health
Q: What kinds of social origins do diet inequalities have? What are some of the consequences of our diet decisions?
Tuesday
Belasco, Warren. 2008. "Responsibility: Who pays for dinner?" Chapter 5 in *Food: The Key Concepts*. Bloomsbury Press.

Thursday: Food Inc. 2 (2023, 90m, streaming film)

Friday, April 30: Assignment 2 Due

Week 14 (May 4, May 6). How does place matter to what we eat?
Tuesday: Ewoodzie, Joseph C. *Getting Something to Eat in Jackson*, Chapters 1-10

Thursday

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Ewoodzie, Joseph C. *Getting Something to Eat in Jackson*, Chapters 11-16

Week 15 (May 11). What makes food culture? (Part 2)

Tuesday

Shoham, H. 2021. "The Israel BBQ as national ritual: performing unofficial nationalism, or finding meaning in triviality." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, *9*(1), 13-42.

Course wrap-up, review for final

****** Final exam will be given during exam week ******

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I want you to succeed in this course! See below for additional resources.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Relationship Violence at UMass
As a faculty member I am a *mandatory referrer* – this means that I have a responsibility to all students to provide resources and assistance to anyone who wishes to disclose potential sexual misconduct. I am not a *mandatory reporter* – this allows students to approach me confidentially if they wish. Students can also contact the Title IX office directly at eod@admin.umass.edu if they want to make a report, file a complaint, find out about resources and/or accommodations. Other resources include the Title IX webpage: http://www.umass.edu/titleix/ and the Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Interpersonal Violence: https://www.umass.edu/equalopportunity/titleix

UMass Amherst Office of Disability Services http://www.umass.edu/disability/students

> **Accommodations and Services For Students:** Disability Services provides a wide variety of services to students with disabilities. Our office promotes the empowerment of people with disabilities and their full integration into campus life and the community.
>
> **Accommodations:** An accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job, activity, or facility that enables a qualified student or employee with a disability to participate equally in a program, service, activity, or employment at the University. A "reasonable" accommodation refers to an accommodation that is appropriate as well as effective and efficient, and is agreed upon by the University and the consumer with a disability. Many accommodations are available at the University to ensure that students with disabilities participate fully in academic and student life. They provide a student with a disability equal access to the educational and co-curricular process, without compromising essential components of the curriculum. Accommodations are determined on an individual basis, based on the student's documentation. For accommodations to be timely, they must be arranged in advance. *Students are responsible for contacting Disability Services at the beginning of each semester so that reasonable accommodations can be made in a timely manner (first two weeks of classes).*

Common Accommodations For Students**:** most frequently provided include, but are not limited to: Additional time to complete assignments / Alternate Formats for Printed Course Materials Alternate Types of Exams / Assistive Technology /Captioning Services / Classroom Access Assistants/Document Conversion / Extended Time on Exams / Extension of Statute of Limitations Exam Proctoring / Learning Specialists / Modification of Graduation Requirements Note-Taking Services / Paratransit Services / Prepared Materials Before Class / Reduced Course Load / Sign Language Interpreters and Oral Transliterators /Tape Recorders

Note (2024 update from Office of Disability Services): just because a student has requested and are entitled to accommodations, that student still needs to coordinate with instructors and be proactive in communication if they will be making use of an accommodation for a given assignment. Accommodations are not intended to be applied retroactively.

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Department of Sociology Statement of Values

The Department of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive and equitable department. We ask that all members of the Sociology community -- faculty, staff, and students -- be mindful of our responsibility to create an environment that is welcoming to all, and where each person feels accepted, included, seen, heard, valued, and safe. We recognize that learning how to be inclusive and respectful is an iterative process and sometimes we all act in imperfect ways. As sociologists, we are aware that we are all inheritors of systems of inequality, whether to our advantage or our disadvantage. We also acknowledge that we each are privileged in various ways. We strive to create safe spaces to encourage productive dialogue with the goal of learning from our mistakes and changing for the better.

We strive for excellence in all we do. True excellence requires each individual to be able to work and learn in an atmosphere of respect, dignity, and acceptance. Our commitment to equity and inclusion requires each of us to continuously ensure that our interactions are respectful. We recognize that marginalized groups of people have unique experiences in the Pioneer Valley and within the larger society. We are committed to making our department a place that counteracts, to the best of our abilities, those processes of marginalization, and that inspires academic freedom and creativity.

Whenever and wherever possible, our department will affirm this commitment to values that oppose racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, classism, and hatred based on religious identity publicly and explicitly. As a department dedicated to social justice, we will take very seriously reports, formal or informal, of harassment and discrimination. We will make every effort to ensure that this commitment manifests in our department's policies, programs, and practices. In the Department of Sociology, we:

- Value equity, inclusion, and dignity for all.
- Insist on a culture of respect and recognize that words and actions matter. The absence of action and words also matter.
- Encourage respectful expression of ideas and perspectives.
- Will not tolerate sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, and other overt and covert forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- Share in the responsibility to create a positive culture and to safeguard equity, inclusion, dignity, respect, and safety for all. Each member of our community - faculty, staff, and students - should be a role model for others.
- Will take action when we observe people being treated unfairly or in a demeaning manner.
- Envision and strive to foster an inclusive, welcoming department.

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UMass Amherst statement on academic honesty
http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy

All members of the University community must participate in the development of a climate conducive to academic honesty. While the faculty, because of their unique role in the educational process, have the responsibility for defining, encouraging, fostering, and upholding the ethic of academic honesty, students have the responsibility of conforming in all respects to that ethic. Intellectual honesty requires that students demonstrate their own learning during examinations and other academic exercises, and that other sources of information or knowledge be appropriately credited. Scholarship depends upon the reliability of information and reference in the work of others. Student work in this class may be analyzed for originality of content, electronically or by other means. No form of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating of dishonesty will be condoned in the University community. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, facilitating dishonesty among others.

Professor Pachucki's statement on AI

In terms of the above UMass Academic Honesty policy clause that *"other sources of information or knowledge be appropriately credited",* please be advised that AI-generated content is not allowed in this course and its use will be considered academic dishonesty, though there is a rich debate about its place in our society that we will explore together.

Here's why I don't want you to use AI in our class: (a) your deep engagement with and understanding of the material I assign is one of the primary ways for you to learn about the world; circumventing this with AI may slow your intellectual growth; (b) there is a great deal of evidence that college writing is a key form of learning loss that has been affected since at least the pandemic, and it's incumbent on me and my colleagues to help you improve; (c) a major objective of college is to help you to get better at writing so that when you enter the workforce, you can succeed.

If you ignore these, I don't think that you're doing your future self any favors. For most of us, learning involves making our own mistakes – with our own writing, not an AI company's – and learning from these mistakes.

We will commit to giving you *our* feedback on *your* writing so that you can become a better writer. In return, we ask for your commitment to not use AI-generated content. Violating this commitment will result in sanctions.

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