

Quick Study on "Slow Food"

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Dreaming of fascinating conversation over a plate of good Italian food, perhaps in the shadow of a beautiful old Italian convent surrounded by Etruscan tombs? The Newcomb College Center for Research on Women has openings for 15 people to participate in the second annual course titled "Food, Globalization and Gender." The two-week course takes place this summer in Bolsena, Italy.



Overlooking the largest volcanic lake in Europe, surrounded by olive fields and vineyards, in the Etruscan land rich in food culture, students can learn for two weeks about food, globalization and gender. (Photos from Punti di Vista)

"Food production and food preparation have traditionally been marked by strong gender roles," explains Nancy Mock, associate professor of international health and development, and interim director of the Newcomb College Center for Research on Women. "In addition, feminist theory is more aligned with new food movements such as 'slow food' and organics in contrast to agro-business and globalized food systems."

The impact of global issues of crisis and conflict can be felt in the kitchen or around the cooking stove, explains Mock. Questions of who grows food, who controls food, how food is prepared and how families are nourished intersect with the seemingly ordinary tasks of preparing a meal, Mock says.

Studying in Italy is more than an opportunity to stay in a Franciscan convent that has been managed for more than 12 years by a nonprofit organization, overlooking olive groves and vineyards ? the location is close to the United Nations food and agricultural program headquarters and to the origin of the “slow food” movement. The international “slow food” movement was founded in Italy in the late 1980s to combat fast food. Its mission is to preserve cultural culinary traditions and the associated food plants and seeds, domestic animals and farming within an ecoregion.

Students in the [course](#) will gain 3 credit hours with 40 hours of lectures, field trips and a course requirement to blog their experiences.

“Using new media such as blogs is an important skill that will enable participants to more effectively network and exchange information about this dynamic area of study,” Mock says. Students also will create video from interviews with local food experts for podcasts and posting on YouTube.



Students learn how to create hand-made pasta, an example of “slow food” that reflects traditional culture of the region.

Topics for discussion in class and out include sustainable food production, the impact of globalization on local food production, healthy eating, food safety, women's roles in food production and preparation and the regulation of agriculture and food.

Mock and her colleagues Nathan Morrow, Sabrina Aguiari and Charlotte D'ooge have planned field trips to the Slow Food Academy, the European Agency for Food Safety, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, the U.N. World Food Programme and the U.N. International Fund for Agricultural Development, as well as visits with local food producers.

Students will get hands-on instruction in cooking, organic gardening and winemaking. The class is open to university alumni. The program costs \$3,900, including lodging but not airfare. Internships are available in Italy after the course is completed.

The Newcomb College Center for Research on Women also is offering a course in Rwanda during the second two weeks of June on gender, governance and gender-based violence. Interested applicants can take one or both of these courses. For more information, contact [Charlotte D'ooge](#).

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