



**Anthropology 4013 WA
Archaeology of Food
Winter 2025**

Instructor: Dr. Jessica Metcalfe
Class Times: Monday & Wednesday 10:00 – 11:30 am
Location: BB 2002
Office hours: Mon & Wed 9:00-10:00 am or by appointment
Office: BB 2001 D
Contact: jmetcal1@lakeheadu.ca

Note: the best way to reach the instructor is by email or by attending office hours. I usually check my email several times a day during work hours. I will not typically answer emails on evening or weekends.

Course Description: Food is necessary for human survival, but also impacts almost every facet of human culture, including identities, ideologies, economies, environments, symbolic systems, and interpersonal relations. This course will introduce methodological and theoretical approaches to understanding past foodways. We will examine such topics as early hominin diets, plant and animal domestication, development of cooking, dairying, and fermenting, hunter-gatherer land management, weaning, trade, feasting, and gender. Throughout the course, we will consider two broad questions: (1) Is there an 'ideal' human diet? (2) What can the study of food and nutrition tell us about our ancestors and ourselves?

Prerequisites: Third year standing or higher, or permission of the Chair of the Department of Anthropology.

Format: This course is **reading-intensive** and **discussion-based**. To be successful, you must complete the assigned readings before each class and actively engage in class discussions. You will be learning not only from the instructor, but also from the readings, your peers, and your own reflections.

Course Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Reflect on personal and cultural biases about food and diet
- Discuss selected examples of diverse human diets and foodways
- Examine social, cultural, and biological roles of food among diverse human societies
- Recognize and experience a variety of approaches for studying past human diets, including methods, theories, and embodied practices
- Discuss Western and Indigenous perspectives on food and food-related topics

- Demonstrate skills in oral and written communication
- Discuss, synthesize, and critique scholarly literature

Course Website: The location to access lecture slides readings, and course materials, and to submit assignments.

Required Materials:

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Estimated cost: \$54 (paperback version; other versions are also acceptable), price accessed Dec. 2024 from Amazon.ca.
- Other required readings will be posted on the course website (no associated cost).

Grades Breakdown

Item	Value (%)	Due Date
Participation	20	Throughout the course
Reflections (4 x 5% each)	20	Jan. 17, 24, 31 & Feb. 7
Fermentation Assignment	15	Feb. 12
Food History Project (in stages):		
1. Ancient Recipes	15	March 10, 12, or 17
2. Proposal & Annotated Bibliography	10	March 31
3. Term Paper	20	April 14
TOTAL	100	

Participation. This course is heavily based on readings and in-class discussions. Therefore the majority of your participation grade will be based on attendance. The remainder will be based on the quality of your participation, which includes respectful listening and responding to the instructor and classmates, asking questions, making comments, providing critiques and suggestions, contributing ideas based on your experience and the readings, and engaging with in-class activities. Occasional ungraded take-home assignments (e.g., peer feedback on classmates' presentations) may also contribute to the participation grade.

Reflections. During the first month of the course (beginning in week 2), you will post a weekly self-reflection related to the course content. These must be personal reflections, not objective summaries. Further guidelines will be posted on the course website.

Fermentation Assignment. You will engage in a home-based fermentation project designed to (1) teach you about an ancient and widespread food preparation/preservation technique, and (2) encourage you to reflect on embodied experiences of food preparation that are relevant to understanding past human practices and relationships with food. You will present the results of your project in class, and write a short summary and reflection. Detailed instructions will be provided separately.

Food History Project Stages:

Stage 1: Ancient Recipes

In this assignment you will explore the history of a particular food and cultural group, by focusing on a single 'ancient recipe' that you will make at home. (For those without kitchen facilities, there are many possible 'recipes' that don't require special tools or cooking implements; contact the instructor if you need help finding something appropriate). During class time, you will teach us about your chosen food, recount your attempts to re-create the 'ancient recipe', and share the final product (food) that you made. This assignment may also provide a starting point for your research proposal and term paper. More detailed instructions will be provided separately.

Stage 2: Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

The purpose of this assignment is to identify and begin to investigate a topic for your term paper. You may choose any topic that is relevant to the broad themes of this course; that is, your topic must be food-related, focus on the past, and include anthropological perspectives and/or approaches. You are encouraged to seek advice/feedback from the instructor to confirm that your chosen topic is appropriate, before getting started on this assignment. Note: your 'Ancient Recipes' assignment introduced you to literature-based and embodied knowledge about a particular type of food, but you are not limited to selecting a topic related to your ancient recipe.

Proposal: Your proposal must include a working title and 2-3 paragraphs (~300-500 words) summarizing and defining your topic, including a clear topic statement and a brief description of relevant geographical areas and/or cultural groups to be examined. Your proposal must also include in-text citations of articles relevant to your topic, which will be listed below, in your annotated bibliography.

Annotated Bibliography: A list of at least 10 relevant scholarly sources (full reference provided), followed by a paragraph-length (~150-200 word) annotation for each. The annotation should include a brief content summary and a reflection on how the paper will contribute to your research. Annotations must be written in paragraph form. More detailed instructions will be provided separately.

Stage 3: Term Paper

The purpose of the term paper is to consolidate and deepen your understanding of selected topics/themes of this course. Your paper will be a literature review (comprehensive synthesis and analysis) of previously published research on a chosen topic or research question (as outlined in your proposal). In the paper, you should demonstrate your ability to conduct literature research and to think critically and reflectively. Your paper should not be a simple summary or description of research findings, but rather a *critical analysis* in which you search for relationships and trends within an area of research. Based on your analysis, you must *take a stand* on a given topic or issue (i.e., formulate a thesis statement that is supported by the research you have conducted). The suggested length (not a firm limit) is 15-20 pages (4000 to 5000 words). More details will be provided separately.

Late Policies

- Late **assignments** will receive deductions of 5% per calendar day (including weekends and holidays). Assignments more than one week (7 days) past a deadline will not be accepted unless excused in advance by the instructor, and will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
- If you cannot give **presentation(s)** on the assigned date, please contact the instructor ASAP. You may receive a grade of zero if you do not meet your seminar deadline. However, I understand that emergencies do occur, so please don't hesitate to discuss your situation with me.
- For the **term paper**, there is a 2-day grace period during which there are no deductions for lateness. After the grace period, late papers will receive a deduction of 5% per calendar day, including weekends and holidays. Papers submitted more than one week (7 days) past the original due date will not be accepted without prior permission of the instructor.

Course and Readings Schedule

(Subject to modification)

Important: You must complete the readings before the class to which they are assigned, so that you are prepared for in-class discussions.

Week 1

Mon. Jan. 6: **Introductions and Course Overview**

- No readings except course outline

Wed. Jan. 8: **Food in Anthropological/Archaeological Research**

- Crowther, G., 2018. Prologue: Setting the Anthropological Table. In: *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*, University of Toronto Press.
- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 1, Introduction: The social life of food. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1 – 16.

Week 2

Mon. Jan. 13: **Human Evolution and Nutrition**

- Crowther, G., 2018. Chapter 1, Omnivorousness: Classifying Food. In: *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*, University of Toronto Press, pp. 1-14 (first half of chapter 1).
- Lindeberg, S., 2010. Chapter 3: Ancestral Human Diets. In: Lindeberg, S. (Ed.), *Food and Western Disease: Health and Nutrition from an Evolutionary Perspective*, Wiley-Blackwell, UK, pp. 30-55.

Wed. Jan. 15: **Food Rules**

- Crowther, G., 2018. Chapter 1, Omnivorousness: Classifying Food. In: *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*, University of Toronto Press, pp. 14-26 (second half of chapter 1)
- Dawson, L., 2020. Chapter 5, “Food will be what brings the people together”: Counter-narratives from the perspective of Indigenous foodways. In: *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations*. Priscilla Settee and Shailesh Shukla (Eds), pp. 83-97.
- Soil Association (2023). *Ultra-Processed Planet: The Impact of Ultra-Processed Diets on Climate, Nature, and Health (and what to do about it)*. Bristol, UK.

Reflection 1 is due on Friday Jan 17

Week 3

Mon. Jan. 20: **Food Choices and Meals**

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 2, Framing Food Investigation. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 19 – 54.
- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 3, The Practices of a Meal in Society. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 55 – 80.

Wed. Jan. 22: **Archaeological Approaches to Studying Food, Part I: Production, Procurement, Processing, and Storage**

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 4, The Archaeological Study of Food Activities. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 81 - 117 (first half of the chapter)

Reflection 2 is due on Friday Jan 24

Week 4

Mon. Jan. 27: **Archaeological Approaches to Studying Food, Part II: Preparation, Serving, Consumption, Cleanup and Discard**

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 4, The Archaeological Study of Food Activities. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 117 - 141 (second half of the chapter).

Wed. Jan. 29: **Hunting: Relationships with Animals**

- Barsh, R.L., Marlor, C., 2003. Driving Bison and Blackfoot Science. *Human Ecology* 31, 571-593.
- Oetelaar, G.A., 2014. Worldviews and Human–Animal Relations: Critical Perspectives on Bison–Human Relations among the Euro-Canadians and Blackfoot. *Critique of Anthropology* 34, 94-112.

Reflection 3 is due on Friday Jan 31

Week 5

Mon. Feb. 3: **Learning from Plants: Anishinaabe Teachings**

- Geniusz, M.S., 2015. *Plants Have So Much To Give Us, All We Have To Do Is Ask: Anishinaabe Botanical Teachings*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
Selected chapters/sections will be posted to the course website

Wed. Feb. 5: **Hunter/Gatherer Resource Management**

- Amundsen-Meyer, L.M., 2013. Nature versus Culture: A Comparison of Blackfoot and Kayapó Resource Management. *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 37, 219-247.
- Lyons, N., Hoffmann, T., Miller, D., Huddleston, S., Leon, R., Squires, K., 2018. Katzie and the Wapato: An Archaeological Love Story. *Archaeologies* 14, 7-29.

Reflection 4 is due on Friday Feb 7

Week 6

Mon. Feb. 10: **Domestication of Plants**

- Stetter, M.G., Gates, D.J., Mei, W., Ross-Ibarra, J., 2017. How to Make a Domesticated, *Current Biology* 27, R896-R900.
- Fuller, D. Q., Denham, T. & Allaby, R., 2023. Plant Domestication and Agricultural Ecologies. *Current Biology* 33(11):R636-R649.

Wed. Feb. 12: **Fermentation Assignment: Student Presentations and Discussions**
Written summary and reflection is due by the end of the day.

Reading Week – No Classes Feb. 17 – 21.

Week 7

Mon. Feb. 24: **Domestication of Animals**

- Larson, G., Fuller, D.Q., 2014. The evolution of animal domestication, *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics* 45, 115-136.

Wed. Feb. 26: **Dairy**

- Gerbault, P., Roffet-Salque, M., Evershed, R.P. & Thomas, M.G., 2013. How Long Have Adult Humans Been Consuming Milk? *IUBMB Life* 65(12):983-990.
- Mlekuž, D., 2015. Archaeological Culture, Please Meet Yoghurt Culture: Towards a Relational Archaeology of Milk. *Documenta Praehistorica* 42:275-288.
- Rosenstock, E., Ebert, J., Scheibner, A., 2021. Cultured Milk: Fermented Dairy Foods Along the Southwest Asian–European Neolithic Trajectory. *Current Anthropology* 62, S256-S275.

Week 8

Mon. March 3: **Indigenous Agricultures**

- Sayre, M., 2007. Chronicling Indigenous Accounts of the 'Rise of Agriculture' in the Americas. In: Denham, Iriarte, & Vrydaghs (Eds.), *Rethinking Agriculture: Archaeological and Ethnoarchaeological Perspectives*, Routledge, New York, pp. 231-240.
- Lyons, N., Hoffmann, T., Miller, D., Martindale, A., Ames, K.M., Blake, M., 2021. Were the Ancient Coast Salish Farmers? A Story of Origins. *American Antiquity* 86, 504-525.

Wed. March 5: **Agricultural Sustainability**

- Fisher, C., 2019. Archaeology for Sustainable Agriculture. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 28, 393-441.

Week 9

Mon. March 10: **Ancient Recipes Day 1 (Student Presentations)**

Wed. March 12: **Ancient Recipes Day 2 (Student Presentations)**

Week 10

Mon. March 17: **Ancient Recipes Day 3 (Student Presentations)**

Wed. March 19: **Food for Infants: Breastfeeding and Weaning**

- Rebay-Salisbury, K., 2017. Breast is Best—And Are There Alternatives? Feeding Babies and Young Children in Prehistoric Europe. In *Mitteilungen Der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, edited by Zabrana Lilli, pp. 13-30. Verlag, Vienna.

Week 11

Mon. March 24: **Food and Gender**

- Buffalohead, P.K., 1983. Farmers, Warriors, Traders: A Fresh Look at Ojibway Women, *Minnesota History* 48, 236-244.
- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 6, Food politics: Power and Status. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 179 - 194 (first half of the chapter)

Wed. March 26: **Feasting**

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 6, Food Politics: Power and Status. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 194 - 217 (second half of the chapter)
- Green, J.S., 2010. Feasting with Foam: Ceremonial Drinks of Cacao, Maize, and Pataxte Cacao. In: Staller, & Carrasco (Eds.). *Pre-Columbian Foodways*:

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Food, Culture, and Markets in Ancient Mesoamerica, Springer New York, New York, NY, pp. 315-343.

Week 12

Mon. March 31: **Food and Identity**

- Hastorf, C.A., 2017. Chapter 7, Food in the Construction of Group Identity. In: *The Social Archaeology of Food: Thinking about Eating from Prehistory to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 223 – 272.

Proposal & Annotated Bibliography is due by end-of-day

Wed. April 2: **Final class with celebratory meal/snacks, term paper preparation, and final reflections.**

Term papers are due on Monday April 14 at midnight. There will be an automatic grace period* (no late penalties) until Wednesday April 16 at midnight.

*You must contact the instructor in advance of the initial deadline if you wish to take advantage of the grace period. You do not need to provide a reason for requesting this extension; it will be granted with no questions asked.

Important Dates for Winter 2025

First day of classes: Mon Jan 6

Add date: Fri Jan 17

Study Break: Mon Feb 17 – Fri Feb 21

Drop/Withdraw date: Fri March 7

Last day of classes: Fri Apr. 4

Exam period: Mon April 7 – Fri April 17

Instructor's grade submission deadline: April 25

General Information

Regulations – from the Lakehead University [Academic Calendar](#)

It is the responsibility of each student registered at Lakehead University to be familiar with, and comply with all the terms, requirements, regulations, policies and conditions in the Lakehead University Academic Calendar. This includes, but is not limited to, Academic Program Requirements, Academic Schedule of Dates, University and Faculty/School Policies and Regulations and the Fees and Refund Policies and Schedules.

Academic Integrity

For a range of resources related to Academic Integrity, see the [Student Conduct – Resources](#) page. A breach of Academic Integrity is a serious offence. The principle of Academic Integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity ("[The Code](#)") - and, in particular, **sections 26 and 83 through 85**. Non-compliance with the Code will NOT be tolerated in this course and the Code will be adhered to in terms of disciplinary action. The Code provides a full description of academic offences, procedures when Academic Integrity breaches are suspected and sanctions for breaches of Academic Integrity.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI or GenAI) is a category of AI systems capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts. These systems include ChatGPT and its variants Bing (built by OpenAI) and Bard (built by Google) among several others. Other generative AI models include artificial intelligence art systems such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, and DALL-E.

Inappropriate usage of Generative AI tools is captured by Section III of the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity Policy, which lists a variety of acts that are considered offences under the Academic Integrity Code. While not an exhaustive list, submission of work created by or in collaboration with Generative AI tools (ChatGPT, Bard, etc.) could be categorized as Plagiarism (para 26a), Use of Unauthorized Materials (para 26b), or Falsification (para 26e), and may be in conflict with the Academic Policy quoted above.

GenAI tools can provide valuable assistance and support in academic work. However, it is essential to use them responsibly and ethically. **The following information and guidelines apply to the use of AI-based tools in this course:**

Student Responsibility – It is the responsibility of the student to understand the limitations of AI-based tools. While these tools can provide suggestions and insights, final decisions and critical thinking should come from the student's own understanding and effort. Before submitting, review your work with this in mind. If you don't understand what type of GenAI usage is appropriate, ask the course instructor for clarification.

Formative Usage – In this class, you may use GenAI for formative, but not summative, work. That means it can be used as a “possibility engine” (brainstorm tool), a “study buddy,” a “collaboration coach,” a “guide on the side,” a “personal tutor,” a “co-designer,” etc. to help you learn course content, but it cannot be used as the primary vehicle for any work that is submitted for marks or evaluation. (See UNESCO’s “ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education Quick Start Guide,” page 9, for explanations and examples of these and other roles GenAI can productively serve in a formative capacity.)

Error & Bias – AI content is created by computer algorithms that have been trained using large amounts of data. The AI learns from patterns and examples in the data to generate new content that resembles what it has been trained on. If the training data used to train the AI model is biased or limited in scope, the AI may reproduce content that is inaccurate, incomplete, offensive, and/or biased. Students should weigh this as they consider material produced by AI.

Trustworthiness – Generative AI can be vulnerable to manipulation and misuse. It can be used to generate fake news, misinformation, ‘hallucinations’, or deepfake content, which can have harmful consequences. Students should check AI generated content against reputable sources.

Plagiarism – Since writing and critical thinking ability are evaluated in this course, all work submitted for evaluation must be the student's original work. Using the work of others (including content curated/generated by AI) without proper citation is considered plagiarism. See “Citing Artificial Intelligence” for assistance with correct documentation.

Citation of Sources – If you use material generated by an AI program for an assignment in this course, it must be cited like any other source (with due consideration for the quality of the source, which may be judged as poor). Failure to do so will be considered a violation of academic integrity. See Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity.

Copyright

Students should be aware that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials prepared for this course are protected in their entirety by copyright. Students are expected to comply with this copyright by only accessing and using the course materials for personal educational use related to the course, and that the materials cannot be shared in any way, without the written authorization of the course instructor. If this copyright is infringed in anyway, students may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University’s academic values.

Supports for Students – there are many resources available to support students, including:

- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Student Success Centre](#)

- [Student Accessibility Centre](#)
- [Academic Support Zone](#) (Writing and Math Tutoring Centre)
- [Library](#)
- [Lakehead International](#)
- [Indigenous Initiatives](#)

Lakehead University is committed to achieving full **accessibility** for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities and/or medical conditions to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SC0003, 343-8047 or sas@lakeheadu.ca)

As a university student, you may sometimes **experience mental health concerns or stressful events** that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, **Student Health and Wellness** is there to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at lakeheadu.ca/shw. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.