In this course, we will ignore E.B. White’s advice in order to focus on Chicken--in our food system (as meat and eggs), as an object of policy and politics (bird flu, local zoning), and as cultural symbol and metaphor (in folklore, children’s stories and cockfighting)—and to convey our enthusiasm for the ubiquitous bird.

**Overview of the Course**

In the first part of the course, Chicken will be our tour guide as we explore their production for meat and eggs. Chicken will serve as a window into the dramatic changes in the food industry and in kitchen literacy over the past century.

Chickens are not only good to eat; they are also at the center of local and global political debates. At the local level, municipalities in Maine and elsewhere regulate the keeping of chickens as well as poultry and egg production through law and local ordinances. At the global level, bird flu and fear of contagion have generated a variety of national and international responses. In the second part of the course, Chicken will serve as a window on the intersection of policy and politics with science, epidemiology, and ecology.

Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss proposed that animals are not only good to eat, but also “good to think.” Cockfighting, while now illegal in all fifty US states, is nonetheless still practiced here and around the world. If roosters are the stars of cockfighting, hens are the stars of plenty of stories of their own, including “Chicken Little” (“The sky is falling...”) and the “Little Red Hen.” In the third part of the course, we will explore humans’ love affair with chickens in the realm of culture-- in sport and story--to examine what Chicken and our relationships to them have to say about us as humans.
EYE 129 and General Education
This course is part of USM’s Core Curriculum and is thus informed by the University’s Vision, Goals and Outcomes for general education. The Vision and Goals state that

General education at USM is a coherent, integrative and rigorous liberal education that will enable our graduates to be world-minded, intentional, life-long learners. General education engages the academic community in substantive learning experiences that both illuminate and transcend the perspectives of various disciplines, and systematically fosters the values and dispositions, knowledge, and skills essential for students to demonstrate

1. Informed understandings of interrelationships between human cultures and the natural world;
2. Analytical, contextual, and integrative thinking about complex issues;
3. Effective communication using multiple forms of expression;
4. Critical reflection upon, and informed action in, their roles as participants in multiple communities;
5. Ethical action to contribute to the social and environmental welfare of local and global communities.

As an Entry Year Experience, this course is designed to help you transition successfully to college in a rigorous academic context which emphasizes critical reading, thinking, and writing and high levels of interaction with faculty and other students.

Learning outcomes
Students who successfully complete EYE 129 will be able to describe, explain, analyze and evaluate, at an introductory level, orally and in writing, a variety of perspectives which position Chicken at the intersection of human cultures and the natural world.

Students will know
• How the production and consumption of chicken as food has changed in the US over the past century, and how these changes are related to the broader transformation of agriculture and food production
• That alternative methods of raising poultry exist alongside dominant, industrialized methods, and that each has advantages as well as disadvantages
• How the exercise of power at the local level and on a global scale can help solve, and create, problems related to animal welfare, the environment, diet, and public health
• That Chicken can be viewed through a variety of frames or lenses, and that each reveals something about us as members of a culture
• How individual experiences and choices are related to larger cultural and historical patterns

Students will be able to
• Describe some of the many ways that Chicken is the product of both culture and nature
• Locate and critically evaluate information relevant to answering a variety of kinds of questions
• Engage with a range of texts of different types (popular and scholarly; written and visual; in the sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts)
• Use writing effectively as part of the process of learning, and for purposes of exploring ideas and for self-reflection
• Articulate, at a level appropriate for a first year college student, their own views and support those views with reasoning and evidence
• Communicate effectively by writing clearly and correctly and by engaging in meaningful and respectful dialogue
• Exhibit intellectual curiosity and a propensity to act on that curiosity by posing and exploring questions in relation to both familiar and unfamiliar topics
• Articulate, at an introductory level, points of connection between/among different courses and
between learning and experiences inside and outside of the classroom

**Course Structure and Expectations**
The course will combine lectures, discussion and guided conversation, collaborative exercises, and in-class and co-curricular activities, depending on the topic under discussion and the goals of the particular class period.

Your grade in the course will be based 600 points, distributed as follows:

- Essays (3 x 100 points) 300 points
- Focus Questions 100 points
- Group project & co-curricular activities 100 points
- Attendance, Preparation and Engagement 100 points

Grades will be determined by your mastery of the material, not by a curve. This means that it is possible for all students in the course to earn an A, if all students master the material at a very high level.

**Reading.** Reading and visual materials are at the core of this course. You should plan to read 20-30 pages in preparation for each class, with additional time for preparing written work, etc. A general rule for college classes is 2-3 hours of homework for every 1 hour in class.

**Written Work.** Writing is a valuable tool for thinking and learning. Not surprisingly, then, this course will require a substantial amount of writing. A relatively small amount of the total will be formal writing in which you will polish ideas and show us what you've learned. Most of it will be informal writing designed to help you develop and consolidate your understanding of the material and to help you shape your own ideas. Try to begin viewing writing as a part of the thinking process, rather than the outcome of that process.

**Focus Questions** play a central role in writing-to-think. In conjunction with most of the readings, you will be required to answer focus questions. Their purpose is to create a framework for reading carefully and thoroughly, and to provide an opportunity for thinking systematically, reflecting on the material prior to class, and for making connections between and among course material, other classes and events, and your own experience. You must prepare written (word-processed) answers to these questions; we will use your answers during class and papers will be collected at the end of class.

Answers to focus questions will be reviewed, recorded, and returned with minimal comment. Late papers will not be accepted for credit. We will not be grading each set separately, but will award a check (for satisfactory progress toward meeting learning outcomes), a check plus (for excellent progress), and a check minus (for incomplete or careless work or notable lack of progress toward learning outcomes). To earn full credit for focus questions (100 points), you must satisfactorily complete (i.e. get a check on) 12 (out of approximately 17) sets of questions.

We expect that all written work be word-processed/printed. If, on occasion, the choice is handwritten or not at all, however, we will accept handwritten papers PROVIDED that they are neatly written, in ink, on one side of the paper, with large margins, and without rough edges/”fringe.”

In this course you will also write three formal **essays** in which you will use the course material to develop and defend an original conclusion/thesis. The writing process is organized so that you will draft your essay, engage in a structured peer review in class, and revise your essay before submitting it for a grade. Specific writing prompts will be distributed and discussed in class.
**Class Attendance, Preparation and Engagement** are required. You are expected to come to every class (on time) and to be an engaged and prepared participant. This semester, we will comprise a learning community; communities function best when members are consistently present and involved. **Attendance** is essential since we will use some of our class time to present material not available in readings, etc. and to help you see connections among the readings. **Preparation** means that we expect you to read and think about the readings and assignments before class begins; the focus questions are intended as part of this preparation. Given the interactive structure of the class, a lack of preparation on your part will have a negative effect on all of us. **Engagement** refers to your participation in class discussion and to your involvement in and commitment to your own learning. We realize that not everyone will be equally vocal in class discussion, but everyone is expected to be an engaged participant in class discussions, in group work, and in their own learning.

**Co-curricular activities** involve extending your learning outside of the classroom and are a required component of all EYE classes. This semester we have organized two main co-curricular activities. Both are required. The first is a trip to the Cumberland Fair scheduled for the week of September 23. The second is the Campus Chickens group project.

**“Campus Chickens” Group Project**
What if…we were able to keep chickens on campus? What would be involved in getting permissions and securing funding, designing and building a coop, selecting breeds and buying birds, choosing feed, and keeping a flock safe and healthy? We will work in small groups throughout the semester to ask and answer these and other practical questions. Groups will be required to give a public presentation at the end of the semester. Details to follow.

**Required Books**


Diana Hacker. 2011. *A Writer’s Reference*, 7th edition. Bedford/St. Martins. [Available at USM bookstore in Portland and Gorham. This is the same book required for ENG 100 and ENG 104; you do not need a second copy but will be using it for these, and other, courses.]

You must find and have to hand in November a hard copy of a children’s book that features chicken. There are many different possibilities to borrow or buy. We will check that you have hard copy (not e-book) on 11/14.

Many of your course materials will be available electronically on the course Blackboard site. You will want to allocate money for printing articles or use a laptop so that you can have the articles available to you in class.
Blackboard
This course has a Blackboard site which contains course materials including many required readings. The quick guide will help you access materials, change your password, log in, change your e-mail address, etc. If you have activated your Maine Street account, you're all set; login and password are the same for Maine Street and Blackboard. If you have not yet activated Maine Street, you'll need to do that first. Instructions are online; you can navigate from the USM website, www.usm.maine.edu. If you have trouble activating or logging in to Blackboard, please do NOT call us for technical help. Use USM's Computing Helpdesk at 780-4029 or www.usm.maine.edu/helpdesk

Check in to Blackboard regularly (1-2 times/week) for announcements. In case of bad weather or other cancellation, check Blackboard for changes or updates; if no changes are posted, follow the syllabus. In addition, we will use the discussion feature to facilitate work on the group project and the communication function to send e-mails. Please ensure that the e-mail address in Blackboard is where you actually receive your mail.

Course Policies
E-mail. At USM, email is the official and primary means of communication. You can read the university’s policy on email here: http://www.usm.maine.edu/doit/email-communication-policy Since it will also be an important way for us to communicate, please observe the following rules when you email the instructors:
• Messages must come from your USM (maine.edu) email address
• Messages must have a meaningful subject line that includes EYE (eg: EYE question about reading)
• Messages must be signed
• Consider email messages a form of professional communication. You are not texting a friend. Pay attention to your style and tone. Use proper spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.
• Pause and review before you hit send. Make sure that you cannot easily answer the question yourself by reviewing the syllabus or handouts, or by checking Blackboard.

We usually read and reply to emails in batches on weekdays at regular times (at start of workday, midday, and end of workday). You can expect a timely, but not necessarily immediate, response.

Electronic devices. Cell phones should be turned off and put away during class. Under extenuating circumstances, you may keep your phone on vibrate/silent mode but any calls must be taken outside of (and away from) the classroom. Laptops/tablets may be used for taking notes or accessing course materials; they may not be used for other purposes during class time.

Late Policy. We expect that you will hand in written work at the designated times. Graded work (eg. essays) will be penalized (2 points/day) for each day late (including weekends and non-class days), and will only be accepted for credit until the following class session. Focus questions must be handed in IN CLASS on the day they are due. Late focus questions will be reviewed to assess progress in meeting learning outcomes and to give you feedback, but will not earn full credit toward the focus question portion of your grade.

Academic Integrity.
The University’s Academic Integrity policy reads, in part, “Academic integrity is based upon honesty. All students of the University are expected to be honest in their academic endeavors. All academic work should be performed in a manner which will provide an honest reflection of the knowledge and abilities of each student. Any breach of academic honesty should be regarded as a serious offense by all members of the academic community.” Violations of this policy include cheating on exams, stealing words or ideas from others (plagiarism), making statements known to be false or misleading, improperly
using library materials or computer files, or altering or forging academic records. These and other violations are contrary to the educational purposes for which the University exists, and will result in disciplinary action. You can find more information here: https://cms.usm.maine.edu/ocs/student-academic-integrity-policy-0 and on the course Blackboard site.

While we encourage you to share your ideas with classmates and others and to discuss material outside of class, all written work must be your own. Plagiarism in any shape or form will not be tolerated. This includes "borrowing" from friends and classmates as well as from published authors. We will discuss and practice in class proper procedures for referencing and citation. Diana Hacker’s A Writer’s Reference is also an invaluable tool; see Section R3 (p. 341 ff.). Other resources related to plagiarism and correctly using source material are available on the library website: http://usm.maine.libguides.com/content.php?pid=9387&sid=61728. If you have questions about plagiarism, citations, or referencing, please ask any of your faculty.

**Academic Support.** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. The links for many academic supports are available here: http://www.usm.maine.edu/success/academic and here: http://usm.maine.edu/learningcommons

Other support services you might find useful include the Counseling Center (780-4050) and the Disability Services Center (242 Luther Bonney, Portland, 780-4706; www.usm.maine.edu/dsc). The “Campus Resources” tab in Blackboard includes links to these and other campus support services.
COURSE SCHEDULE

BB indicates materials or links available on Blackboard.
Schedule is tentative; changes will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic &amp; class activities</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 9/3</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 9/5</td>
<td>Patterns in Chicken Consumption</td>
<td>Boston Cooking School Cookbooks [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Cookbook activity</td>
<td>Striffler, Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 9/10</td>
<td>Producing Meat 1900-1950: Chicken becomes king</td>
<td>Striffler, Ch 1-2</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rec: Stull &amp; Broadway, 36-51 [BB]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 9/12</td>
<td>Industrialized chicken Video: Chicken of Tomorrow</td>
<td>Striffler, Ch 3-4</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 9/17</td>
<td>Workers and Work Conditions in Poultry Industry</td>
<td>Striffler, Ch 5-6</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 9/19</td>
<td>A Ripple Effect</td>
<td>Striffler, Ch 7</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video: American Egg Board “Good Egg Project” [BB]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>CUMBERLAND FAIR</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 9/26</td>
<td>Laying hens, animal welfare, &amp; Decoster Egg</td>
<td>-Kristof, “Is an Egg for Breakfast Worth This?” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Compassion over Killing, “Animal Suffering in the Egg Industry” [BB]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/1</td>
<td>Taking Action &amp; Making Change</td>
<td>-Charles, “Coop D’Etat” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Greene &amp; Cowan, “Table Egg Prod &amp; Hen Welfare” [BB]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rec: Striffler, Ch 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 10/3</td>
<td>Role Play: Egg Farm Eggspansion</td>
<td>Potts, Ch 6</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/8</td>
<td>Writing Workshop/Peer review</td>
<td>No new reading</td>
<td>Draft of Essay 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PART II: POULTRY POLITICS AND POLICY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Notes</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thur 10/10</td>
<td>The Backyard Hen: Everything old is new again?</td>
<td>-Kingsolver, “Lily’s Chickens” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-McNally, “Fine Fowl” [BB]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Guest speaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/15</td>
<td>No Class: October Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 10/17</td>
<td>Keeping &amp; regulating small flocks</td>
<td>City of Milwaukee ordinance</td>
<td>Essay 1 (revised) Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video: from Natural History of Chicken</td>
<td>2 additional laws/ordinances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/22</td>
<td>Zoning and municipal ordinances</td>
<td></td>
<td>No new reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity: draft an ordinance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 10/24</td>
<td>Not in my backyard: regulating industrial production</td>
<td>Striffler, Chapter 8</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/29</td>
<td>H5N1 Virus, aka Avian flu</td>
<td>Greger, Bird Flu: A virus of our own hatching (Ch 4-5) [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rec: M. Nestle, Safe Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 10/31</td>
<td>Video: “Building the Perfect Bug”</td>
<td></td>
<td>No new reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 11/5</td>
<td>Writing Workshop/Peer Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draft of Essay 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART III: CHICKENS AS SYMBOLS: STORY AND SPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Notes</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thur 11/7</td>
<td>Chickenlore</td>
<td>Potts, Ch 3</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 11/12</td>
<td>A Love Affair with Chickens</td>
<td>Potts, Ch 4</td>
<td>Revised Essay 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video: selections from Natural History of the Chicken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 11/14</td>
<td>Love Affair with Chickens</td>
<td>-one of the following selections</td>
<td>*Bring children’s book to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from Walker, Gurdon, Danaan, White, MacDonald,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goldhammer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 11/19</td>
<td>Multifarious and contradictory Chicken</td>
<td>-Arluke &amp; Sanders, “The Sociozoologic Scale” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 11/21</td>
<td>Telling Stories</td>
<td>Chicken Little</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-class activity</td>
<td>Potts, Ch 5</td>
<td>*Bring children’s book to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 11/26</td>
<td>Cockfighting</td>
<td>Find/read position statements from PETA, HSUS, or other major animal welfare org</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video: Cockfight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 11/28</td>
<td>No Class: Thanksgiving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 12/3</td>
<td>Cockfighting</td>
<td>Geertz, “Notes from a Balinese Cockfight” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 12/5</td>
<td>Cockfighting</td>
<td>Bilger, “Enter the Chicken” [BB]</td>
<td>Focus questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 12/10</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>Potts, Epilogue (pp. 175-185)</td>
<td>Campus Chickens presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 12/12</td>
<td>Writing workshop &amp; peer review</td>
<td>No new reading</td>
<td>Draft Essay 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam Week</td>
<td></td>
<td>Essay 3 (revised) due by 10 am on Thur 12/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**9/3 Introduction**

**CHICKEN AS FOOD: Meat**

**9/5 Patterns in Chicken Consumption**


**9/10 Producing Meat 1900-1950: Chicken Becomes King**


**9/12 Industrialized Chicken**
Striffler, Chapter 3-4.
Video: Chicken of Tomorrow:  http://www.archive.org/details/Chicken1948

**9/17 Workers and Work Conditions in Poultry Industry**
Striffler, Chapters 5-6
Video: selections from Nikolaus Geyrhalter, Our Daily Bread (2005)

**9/19 Transformation of Chicken: A Ripple Effect**
Striffler, Chapter 7

**CHICKEN AS FOOD: Laying Hens and Egg Production**

**9/24 Changing landscape of egg production**

**9/26 Laying Hens, Animal Welfare, and Decoster**
10/1 Taking Action & Making Changes

Recommended:

10/3 Role Play: Egg Farm Eggspansion

10/8 Writing Workshop/Peer Review
Draft of Essay 1 due

POULTRY, POLITICS, AND POLICY

10/10 The backyard hen: everything old is new again

10/15 No Class: October break

10/17 Keeping & regulating small flocks
ESSAY 1 (revised) DUE
City of Milwaukee, chicken ordinance [BB]
Find, read, and bring to class laws and/or ordinances regulating chicken keeping from two locations. One must be from Maine, the other should be outside of Maine. The following link will get you started: http://www.backyardchickens.com/atype/3/Laws/tag/64470/
Video: selection from The Natural History of Chicken
10/22 Zoning and municipal ordinances
No new reading

10/24 Not in my backyard: Regulating industrial production
Striffler, Chapter 8

10/29 H5Ni Virus, aka Avian Flu, aka Bird Flu
Lantern Books. [BB] Available at birdflubook.com
Recommended. Marion Nestle. 2003. Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology and Bioterrorism. Berkeley:
University of California Press.

10/31 Bird Flu
Video: “Building the Perfect Bug”

11/5 Writing Workshop & Peer review
Draft of Essay 2 due

CHICKEN: SYMBOLS, STORY, AND SPORT

11/7 Chickenlore

11/12 A Love Affair with Chickens
ESSAY 2 (revised) DUE
Video: selections from Natural History of the Chicken

11/14 A Love Affair with Chickens
Bring children’s book to class
One of the following (all are on Blackboard):
CT: Lyons Press.

11/19 Multifarious and Contradictory Chicken

11/21 Telling Stories: Chicken Little
Bring children’s book to class
11/26 Cockfighting
Find and read position statements on cockfighting from PETA, HSUS, or other major animal welfare organizations.
Video: Cockfight

11/28 No Class: Happy Thanksgiving

12/3 Cockfighting

12/5 Cockfighting

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS: What do chickens say about us?

12/10 Conclusions

12/12 Writing Workshop and Peer Review
Draft of Essay 3 due

ESSAY 3 (Revised) DUE by 10 am on Thursday 12/19