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Science and Cooking: From Haute Cuisine to Soft Matter Science

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How do you teach physics to non-science majors and still get them to be motivated to study physics? This talk will describe an attempt at Harvard University to motivate non-scientists to study, and enjoy, physics. It will describe a physics course that is taught in collaboration with renowned chefs. The course is themed around food and cooking but is still a basic physics course. Each week, a chef presents a lecture about his or her creations. This is followed by a lecture about the science behind these dishes. This allows a full physics course to be taught based on cooking. The course includes a lab, with a recipe of the week, and uses simple calculus, with an equation of the week. The course has become a popular addition to the general physics curriculum at Harvard.