

PHI 321: The Ethics of Food

University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Fall Semester 2019; T/R 11:00-12:15 CCC 126

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Office: 422 CCC **Office Hours:** M/W 1-3 and by appointment



Course Description

Every time you raise a fork to your mouth, you are making an ethical choice that can impact the environment, the lives of billions of animals, global hunger, social justice, and the way we relate to one-another. In this course, we will examine the ethical dimensions of how we grow, consume, and share food.

Essential Questions

- What theoretical principles guide our moral behavior?
- How do ethical concerns impact our food choices?
- Is eating animals morally permissible?
- How do food access and quality relate to social justice issues?

Enduring Understandings

You will come to understand that:

- Moral disputes often (but not always) reflect theoretical differences.
- One's moral beliefs should be grounded in reason as well as value.
- Moral problems are often more complex than they first appear.

Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

You should be able to:

- Identify and evaluate moral arguments.
- Apply critical thinking skills to other professional and personal pursuits.
- Understand a variety of philosophical concepts, questions, and positions.
- Defend your own philosophical positions against criticisms.
- Read and comprehend challenging philosophical works.
- Appreciate and respect differing points of views.

Required Texts:

- Thompson, Paul B., *From Field to Fork*, 2015, Oxford University Press.
- Singer, Peter and Jim Mason, *The Ethics of What We Eat*, 2007, Rodale Publishers.
- Foer, Jonathon Safron, *Eating Animals*, 2010, Back Bay.
- Pollan, Michael, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, 2007, Penguin.
- Additional readings will be posted on our D2L site.

Graded assignments will include:

1. Three Exams (15% each, 45% total)
2. Ten Quizzes/Assignments (10% total)
3. Two 1,000 Word Papers (15% each, 30% total)
4. One Book Review: 500 Word Paper and Class Presentation (15%)

Quizzes/Assignments: Most quizzes will be “pop” and can occur anytime during class. I promise to give at least (12) quizzes or assignments and only the best (10) will count. As a result of this policy, quizzes cannot be made-up for any reason (including sickness, etc.). Please do not ask if there will be a quiz on any particular day.

Exams: There will be three exams. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer and essay questions.

Papers: You will be required to write two 1,000-word papers. The writing assignments will be distributed at least a week before it is due. At that time, I will distribute requirements and guidelines for constructing a successful paper.

Book Review: You will meet with me to identify a suitable book on a food related issue. Your book review will consist of two parts: (1) write a 500-word review of the book. (2) Present an in-class oral review of the book. Guidelines and book suggestions will be forthcoming.

Final grades will be determined on the following scale:

100-93	A	<87-83	B	<77-73	C	<67-63	D
<93-90	A-	<83-80	B-	<73-70	C-	<63-60	D-
<90-87	B+	<80-77	C+	<70-67	D+	<60	F

Late Policy: Quizzes cannot be made-up. Short assignments will be docked 10% off per day late. Exams cannot be made-up without a university approved absence notification (e.g. a note from a health care provider explaining why the student couldn't be there). Furthermore, you need to contact me immediately in order to reschedule the exam as early as possible. If this condition is not met, you may not be able to re-take the exam.

Academic Honesty: If you commit any acts of academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism on written work or cheating on an exam) you will earn a zero for that work (and possibly other disciplinary actions). Please refer to the Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures for more information

(<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>)

Attendance: Attendance is not mandatory and will not be recorded (with the exception of the first few classes, which is mandatory). With that said, if you do not attend class on a regular basis, you will do poorly. Furthermore, quizzes and assignments will be administered on a regular basis and schedule changes will be announced in class.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: The ADA is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, see: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>.

If you require *classroom and/or exam accommodations*, please register with the **Disability and Assistive Technology Center** and then contact me at the beginning of the course. For more information, please visit the Disability Center's office, located at 604 LRC or their webpage at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>.

Risk Management:

"In the event of a medical emergency, call 911 or use red emergency phone. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.

In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. See www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span rooms and buildings.

In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.

Active Shooter – Run/Escape, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of emergency responders.

See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point."

*Schedule is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class or via email.

Agriculture and the Environment	T Sep 3	Introduction and Syllabus
	R Sep 5	Industrialized Agriculture <i>Omnivore's Dilemma</i> , Introduction – chap. 3 (Canvas)
	T Sep 10	<i>Omnivore's Dilemma</i> , chaps. 4-7 (Canvas)
	R Sep 12	Local Food Film: Look and See (view before class) Wendell Berry, <i>The Pleasures of Eating</i> (Canvas)
	T Sep 17	Anne Barnhill, <i>Does Locavorism Keep it Too Simple?</i> (Canvas)
	R Sep 19	Rachel Laudén, <i>A Plea For Culinary Modernism</i> (Canvas)
	T Sep 24	Food and Climate Change Amanda Little, <i>A Taste of Things to Come</i> (Canvas) George Monbiot, <i>We Can't Keep Eating as We Are...</i> (Canvas)
	R Sep 26	Seafood <i>The Way We Eat</i> , chap. 9 and Review
	T Oct 1	EXAM
Animal Ethics	R Oct 3	Animal Ethics Colin Allen, <i>Animal Pain</i> (Canvas)
	T Oct 8	James Rachels: <i>The Basic Argument for Veganism</i> (Canvas)
	R Oct 10	<i>Eating Animals</i> , 1-93
	T Oct 15	<i>Eating Animals</i> , 93-148
	R Oct 17	Roger Scruton, <i>The Conscientious Carnivore</i> (Canvas)
	T Oct 22	Elizabeth Harmon, <i>The Moral Significance of Animal Pain and Animal Death</i> (Canvas)
	R Oct 24	Does Individual Choice Make a Difference? Julia Driver, <i>Individual Consumption and Moral Complicity</i> (Canvas)
	T Oct 29	Mark Buldofson, <i>Is It Wrong to Eat Meat From Factory Farms?</i> (Canvas)
	R Oct 31	Continued and Review
	T Nov 5	EXAM
Hunger and Social Justice	R Nov 7	Food Justice: Local and Global <i>From Field to Fork</i> , chap. 2
	T Nov 12	<i>From Field to Fork</i> , chap. 4
	R Nov 14	Continued
	T Nov 19	<i>From Field to Fork</i> , chap. 7
	R Nov 21	https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/30/business/gmo-promise-falls-short.html https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/23/well/eat/are-gmo-foods-safe.html Joseph LaPorte, <i>What are Natural Foods</i> (Canvas)
	T Nov 26	Movie: <i>Darwin's Nightmare</i> (view before class) Ian Urbina: <i>Sea Slaves</i> (Canvas)
	R Dec 28	Thanksgiving Break
	T Dec 3	Book Reviews
	R Dec 5	Book Reviews
	T Dec 10	Book Reviews
R Dec 12	Lizzie Widdicombe, <i>The End of Food</i> (Canvas) and Review	

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, Dec. 19, 10:15-12:15