

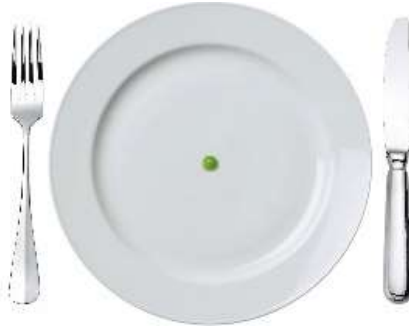
PHI 321: The Ethics of Food

University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Fall Semester 2020; Meeting Virtually

Dr. Jason Zinser; **Email:** jzins@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: M/W 7-8pm 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.

How This Semester Will Work

This class is a virtual class which can be completed asynchronously, which means that you can complete the course without any live meetings. We will, however, have an optional live meeting during our Thursday classes where I will briefly discuss the material for the week, and we will engage in a lively, interactive discussion. One of the most fruitful aspects of learning (and teaching), especially in a philosophy course, are in-class discussions of the material. This semester we will try to replicate this dynamic with our live sessions. These sessions will not be recorded, so if you cannot attend, but would still like to discuss any particular material, we can schedule office hours.

The work, also, can be completed **somewhat** on your own timetable. The readings for the entire semester will be available for you starting on the first day of class. Quizzes, however, will only be available about a week in advance from when they are due. You may take them anytime during the window in which they are available. Exams must be taken anytime during the day they are due. Paper assignments will be distributed one week before they are due and can be turned in early but will be docked points if turned in late. If you have any concerns with these scheduling parameters, please let me know.

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.
- Barnhill, Budolfson, and Doggett, *Food, Ethics, and Society: An Introductory Text with Readings*. Oxford University Press.
- Readings will also be posted on our Canvas site.

Graded assignments will include:

1. Three Exams (45% total)
2. Ten Quizzes/Short Assignments (20% total)
3. Two 1,000 Word Papers (20% total)
4. One Book Review: Class Presentation (15%)

Quizzes/Assignments: There will be (12) quizzes or assignments and only the best (10) will count. You can find the quizzes in the Modules. You will have access to take quizzes roughly one week before they are due, but you must complete them by their due date. Quizzes will be on the material covered in recent readings and lectures.

Exams: There will be three exams. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer and essay questions. Exams must be taken anytime during the day they are due (you will not have access to take them earlier).

Papers: You will be required to write two 1,000-word papers. The writing assignments and paper writing guidelines will be distributed at least a week before they are due.

Book Review: You will consult with me to identify a suitable book on a food related issue (I will also provide a list of recommended books). Book reviews will be a 15-20 minute presentation which will be recorded and posted to our Canvas site for all students in the course to watch. In addition, there will also be a peer-evaluation component to your grade. Guidelines and book suggestions will be forthcoming. If you are unable to complete this assignment for some reason (e.g., don't have access to video recording technology), please let me know and we can develop an alternative assignment.

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>)

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>.

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

Agriculture and the Environment	R Sep 3	Introduction and Syllabus Wendell Berry, "The Pleasures of Eating" (CAN)
	T Sep 8	Paul Thompson, "You are NOT What You Eat" (FFF chap. 1)
	R Sep 10	Industrialized Agriculture Michael Pollan, <i>Omnivore's Dilemma</i> , chaps 4-7 (CAN)
	T Sep 15	Paul Thompson, "The Allure of the Local: Food Systems and Environmental Impact" (FFF chap. 6)
	R Sep 17	Film: <i>Biggest Little Farm</i>
	T Sep 22	Rachel Laudan, "A Plea for Culinary Modernism" (CAN)
	R Sep 24	Food, Climate, and Disease Amanda Little, <i>A Taste of Things to Come</i> (CAN) George Monbiot, "We Can't Keep Eating as We Are..." (CAN)
	T Sep 28	Jonathon Safron Foer, <i>Eating Animals</i> (selections) (CAN) Sigal Samuel, "The Meat We Eat is a Pandemic Risk, Too" (CAN)
	R Oct 1	Seafood Singer and Mason, "Seafood" (CAN) Ian Urbina, "How China's Expanding Fishing Fleet is Depleting the World's Oceans" (CAN) Review for the Exam
	T Oct 6	EXAM
Animal Ethics	R Oct 8	Animal Ethics Peter Singer: All Animals Are Equal (FES, 352-361)
	T Oct 13	Christine Korsgaard: Getting Animals in View (FES, 366-371)
	R Oct 15	Jonathon Safron Foer: <i>Eating Animals</i> (selections) (CAN) Humane Society of the United States: <i>The Welfare of Animals in the Meat, Egg, and Dairy Industries</i> (FES, 347-351)
	T Oct 20	Roger Scruton, <i>Eating our Friends</i> (FES, 391-394)
	R Oct 22	Harman: <i>The Moral Significance of Animal Pain and Animal Death</i> (FES, 395-403)
	T Oct 27	Do Individual Choices Matter? Mark Buldofson, <i>The Inefficiency Objection to Utilitarian Theories of the Ethics of the Marketplace</i> (FES, 204-209)
	R Oct 29	Julia Driver, <i>Individual Consumption and Moral Complicity</i> (CAN) <u>and Review</u>
	T Nov 3	EXAM
Hunger and Social Justice	R Nov 5	Food Justice: Local and Global Paul Thompson, <i>Food Ethics and Social Justice</i> (FFF chap. 2) Film: <i>Harvest of Shame</i>
	T Nov 10	Michael Pollan: The Sickness in Our Food Supply (CAN) Brooke Jarvis: The Scramble to Pluck 24 Billion Cherries in Eight Weeks (CAN)
	R Nov 12	Paul Thompson, <i>Green Revolution Food Technology and Its Discontents</i> (FFF chap. 7)
	T Nov 17	Film: <i>American Experience: Normal Borlaug The Man Who Tried to Feed the World</i>
	R Nov 19	Paul Thompson, <i>The Fundamental Problem with Food Ethics</i> (FFF chap. 4)
	T Nov 24	Movie: <i>Darwin's Nightmare</i> Ian Urbina: "Sea Slaves" (CAN)
	R Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break
	T Dec 1	Book Reviews
	R Dec 3	Book Reviews
	T Dec 8	Book Reviews
	R Dec 10	Lizzie Widdicombe, "The End of Food" (CAN) and Review

FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 14th