

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
Undergraduate Course Outline 2018-19**

**Arthum 3391F: SASAH The Philosophy of Food  
Philosophy 3010: The Philosophy of Food**

<b>Fall Term 2018</b>	<b>Instructor: Benjamin Hill</b>
<b>UC1110</b>	<b>STVH 3142:</b>
<b>T 12:30-14:20</b>	<b>519-661-2111 x80143</b>
<b>W 9:30-10:20</b>	<b>Office Hours: M, 9:30-10:30</b>
	<b>T, 12:00-12:30</b>
	<b>W, 14:30-15:00</b>
	<b>Email: Please use OWL Messages</b>
	<b>Emergencies Only: <a href="mailto:bhill28@uwo.ca">bhill28@uwo.ca</a></b>

**DESCRIPTION**

Few things we do, day-in and day-out, is as value-laden as eating. Unfortunately, most of those values are hidden from us, sometime unintentionally but often intentionally so. Sometimes the values are hidden from us, but often we are willingly complicit in hiding the values, and hiding them even from ourselves. This course is about uncovering the values hidden by our food systems and becoming mindful of them and their presence. The goal is to empower us to “see through the plate” and to change our personal relationship with the food that we eat by challenging, and changing, how we think about food, food values, and our food choices. The central notion behind the course is “sustainability” and become a more mindful and sustainable eater. It is hoped that students will transform their food habits and how they think about their relationship to food through this course.

The story of our conventional, industrialized food system, and our complicity in its development and continuation, is not a pleasant one; the material will make you feel uncomfortable. It is intended to provoke us to think critically and philosophically about our food values and our relationship to food. Students should be aware that at times the course material, and its implications for their own lives and actions, can be difficult and troubling.

The course is an “active learning” course, rather than a lecture course, which means that it is structured around in-class activities providing opportunities for self-discovery and self-learning. Regular attendance, preparation, and full engagement during class time is essential to properly experiencing the course.

Topics that will be covered in the course include the industrialization of food production and processing, the corporization of our food system in the hands of Big Ag and Big Food, the marginalization of family farmers and rural communities, environmental degradation, gender and gendered exploitation built into the structure of the food system, human rights and the exploitation of farm labour and farming

communities, modern slavery and human trafficking, food justice, hunger and poverty, food wastes and its costs.

Prerequisites: None

Antirequisites: None

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### **WARNING**

This course will require frequent, sometimes personal, and extended discussions of food, an individual's relationship with food, and the role food does, can, or should play in one's life. **Individuals with a history of eating or food disorders may find the material and the course difficult and traumatic.** If you have a history of eating or food disorders, I would ask that you think twice about enrolling in this course and carefully consider the potential impacts on your recovery or continuing struggle with eating or food disorders. If you are currently experiences an eating or food disorder, please seek professional help immediately through the Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych/eating\\_disorders.html](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych/eating_disorders.html)). Please take care of yourselves and your well-being first and foremost.

During the course of the class and its activities, you may be sharing your food journals and discussing your food choices and food habits with others. Although your food journals are intended primarily for your own benefit, you should approach the journaling activity and the resulting documents as if it were public documents. You are also expected to be professional when you engage with others and their food journals. **Judgmental, belittling, shaming, rude, ridiculing, bullying, and all other unprofessional behavior, comments, and attitudes are inappropriate and will not be tolerated.** Food is a powerful conduit directly attached to people's self-identity, body image, cultural identity, moral self, and self-esteem. Sometimes, discussing people's food values and eating habits can be difficult and it needs to be approached respectfully. **We require that all discussion be respectful and kind even when that discussion is critical, defensive, emotional, and contradictory.**

### **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Attendance is mandatory for this course and unexcused absences will adversely affect the student's grade. See Methods of Evaluation for information about how attendance is graded.**

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- 1) Compare and contrast our industrialized, globalized food system with sustainable alternatives; [measured by: Exams, Bk review, CEL project]
- 2) Assess and Acknowledge the values and disvalues hidden within in the

- industrialized, globalized food system and sustainable alternatives; [measured by: Journal, Bk review, CEL project]
- 3) Acknowledge the consumer's role in and responsibility for the values of the industrialized, globalized food system; [measured by: CEL project, Journal]
  - 4) Describe and Explain the values of sustainable eating; [measured by Exams, CEL project]
  - 5) Defend and Justify sustainable eating habits; [measured by Journal]
  - 6) Acknowledge the food values underlying their own food choices; [measured by Journal]
  - 7) Display more sustainable eating habits; [measured by Journal]

### **TEXTS**

Both texts are available at The Bookstore at Western for your convenience.

Thompson, Paul. *From Field to Fork: Food Ethics for Everyone*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN 9780199391691;

McKenna, Maryn. *Big Chicken: The Incredible Story of How Antibiotics Created Modern Agriculture and Changed the Way the World Eats*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2017. ISBN 9781426217661.

### **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

All assignments are due at midnight on their specified due dates and must be submitted via OWL. All assignments have an automatic 48-hour grace period where the assignment may be submitted via OWL as "late" but without any late penalty. To submit an assignment after the 48-hour grace period when the OWL submission portal closes, contact Prof. Hill and, if necessary, your Academic Dean, regarding an academic accommodation and alternative submission.

**CEL Group Project (40%)** All students are required to **actively participate in and complete a CEL group project**. Information about Community Engaged Learning (CEL) can be found here: <http://success.uwo.ca/experience/curricular/index.html>. All students should review the information available here. Our CEL project requires each student to contribute an average of 2 hours per week (outside of class time) over the remaining 11 weeks of term (Sept 18-Dec 5). Our CEL partner for this term is the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council (<https://www.mlfpc.ca/>). More information about Community Engaged Learning (CEL) and the details of the projects we are working on for MLFPC can be found on OWL in the "CEL" folder under "Resources". Groups are required to submit for a mark (a) their deliverable for MLFPC, (b) an academic research poster describing their project and (c) an oral presentation at the CEL showcase event describing their project.

**Book Review (25%)** All students are required to write a 1000-1200 word **critical** book review of *Big Chicken* by Maryn McKenna. The due date is Fri Oct 26. The review should describe the thesis and main argument(s) of the book as well as provide some reflective, critical comments about its thesis and argument. A grading rubric and guidelines for

writing a book review will be available via OWL. We are fortunate that Ms. McKenna will be visiting Western Oct 23-24 as part of the SASAH “Humanize the Future” Speakers Series. Ms. McKenna will be giving a lecture entitled “Cheap Meat: Antibiotic Abuse and the Future of Farming” on Tues Oct 23 in UC3110 “Conron Hall” 16:30-18:00. She will be visiting our class on Wed Oct 24 to discuss her book and answer questions. Students who attend her Oct 23 lecture are eligible for three (+3) Extra Credit points on their Book Review assignments. To receive the Extra Credit points, students must sign-in at the lecture and submit via OWL two questions or critical comments about Ms. McKenna’s lecture.

**Food Journals (10%)** All students are required to complete a food journal throughout the term. Students must track their consumption using the YouAte app (available for IOS and Android [Summer 2018]). Students are required to submit four (4) Reflections (min 300 words each; min 1200 words in total) regarding their eating habits and food values. Reflection #1 is due Sept 19 [ungraded; qualitative feedback only]. Reflection #2 is due Oct 5 [worth 3.00%]. Reflection #3 is due Nov 9 [worth 3.00%]. Reflection #4 is due Dec 6 [worth 4.00%]. The food journal should ***include everything you eat and drink***: meals, snacks, coffee/smoothies, beer/alcohol, etc.. Journals that are incomplete, anomalous, or appear to be fraudulent will be flagged by the GTA for review by the Professor and, if unexplained, the associated reflective assignment will be given a score of 0. The first Reflection assignment (Sept 19) will be ungraded and given only qualitative feedback; the three remaining Reflection assignments will be assessed and each will be worth 3-4% of your total grade. The goal behind the food journals is self-discovery and the promotion of mindful eating; you will personally gain more from it the more attention you put into it. More information about the journal, the YouAte app, and the assessment of the assignment can be found on OWL.

**Examinations (20%)** Students are required to complete two self-administered multiple choice, true/false, or short answer examinations. The examinations will be available via OWL during a 48-hour window and are to be completed during that period. The examinations will be open-book, open-note. Students are not to collaborate, discussion, consult with one another, or jointly complete the examination; completing the examination must be an individual effort. An honor pledge will be included with each examination. The examinations will cover all the materials in the assigned readings and course materials and all material discussed or reviewed during class. The examinations will be available for 48 hours beginning at 18:00 Nov 2 (Fri) and 18:00 Nov 30 (Fri).

**Attendance (05%)** All students are required to attend every class (beginning Sept 18). Attendance is mandatory. As an active learning, CEL course, the learning outcomes and the assessments presuppose students will be physically present, prepared, and active engaged in all class contact hours. Students will be permitted **a maximum of 5 hours of excused class absences** for the course. Students not physically present for significant portions of the class meetings should not expect to perform well in the course. A sign-in sheet will be distributed. Attendance does not connote mere physical presence in the classroom. It requires paying attention and not engaging in rude, disruptive, or disrespectful behavior during the class. Examples of such behavior include, but are not

limited to: texting, checking email, reading the newspaper, reading material for another class, chatting or joking during class, surfing the internet, internet shopping, etc.. The instructor reserves the right to strike any person's name from the attendance roll for engaging in the above, or any other such disruptive or disrespectful behavior. Students are awarded 3.03 points per hour of class attended (33 hours).

**To request that an individual absence be excused from the grade calculation, send a message via OWL to the "SECONDARY INSTRUCTOR ROLE" with the subject heading "ABSENCE" detailing the date of the absence and the reason(s) why it should be marked as an "excused absence". ONLY MESSAGES SENT TO OWL AS DESCRIBED ABOVE WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR EXCUSAL.**

### **Note on Attendance and Participate in CEL Group Project**

CEL participation and attendance in the weekly work sessions will be tracked and verified using multiple tools and resources. All student work on the project must be coordinated, organized, and submitted using the MEISTERTASK project set up for each group. Notes from each weekly meeting, including location & date/time, attendance, and length of the meeting should be posted to the project sites. Students will also be required to submit biweekly CEL logs documenting their hours and activities on the project. Anonymous peer evaluations regarding the group dynamic and individual participation will also be required. Students who fail to attend 3 or more weekly group sessions or meetings will suffer a 10% penalty on their grade for the project; Students who fail to attend 5 or more weekly group sessions or meetings will suffer a 40% penalty on their grade for the project. (So, if the group's grade is 70, a student missing three or more sessions will receive a 63 for the project and a student missing 5 or more sessions will receive a 42 for the project.) Attendance at the group sessions will be determined by the group's peer reviews, CEL logs, and meeting reports and notes available through the QUIP and TRELLO project sites.

### **Grade available prior to November 5th**

The following grades will be available prior Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, a total of 41.06% of your final grade:

- Book Review (25%)
- Attendance through Nov 1<sup>st</sup> (2.73%)
- First Examination (10%)
- Reflections #1 and #2 from the Food Journal (3.33%)

### **Essay Course Word Count**

As a course that satisfies the senior level essay course requirement, student enrolled in this course should expect to submit a minimum of 3200 words of written work.

### **Course Average**

The course target average is set at 76 per departmental guidelines and policies.

### **AUDIT**

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES**

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

## **ACADEMIC OFFENCES**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

## **PLAGIARISM CHECKING**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.