

# North Hennepin Community College

## PHIL 1230: Food Ethics

### A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours/Week: 0

Lab Hours/Week: 0

OJT Hours/Week: \*.\*

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts, Goal 10 - People/Environment

This course takes an in-depth look at food, which is both very familiar and necessary for our existence. We already think about food in terms of what we like, what we can afford, and how much of it we should consume. But here we will make an ethical examination of all things related to food, exploring what we are eating, where it comes from, how we grow and process it, and how it is distributed and regulated. Several areas of consideration concern the environment, from growing methods, animal production, and waste processing to the impact of this activity on natural habitats and native lands. And we will look at the commercial aspect of food production, such as the creation of genetically modified food, and how food is transported, manufactured, packaged, priced, and marketed. We'll analyze the role of government in areas such as policy-making, food regulation, and consumer safety. In all of these areas, we'll address the important ethical questions: Are we creating harm by our acts of food production and the demands of our eating habits? Do we have a duty to assure that marginalized populations and those suffering from food insecurity have fair access to and ability to procure safe, healthful, real food? Should our government be accountable for providing food education to its citizens? And what of our personal accountability as consumers of food – are there any moral imperatives we should follow? As each of us, both culturally and individually have a relationship with food, these are matters of significance. Can we show that it is more noble to choose organic produce? Does a vegetarian diet address the ethical concerns around eating animals to a proper extent? And what is the value of being truly aware of the impacts of food production, both locally and globally? Discussion topics could also branch out in the direction of the media's impact on perceived body image, the phenomenon of food obsession, the growing world-wide obesity problem, etc. This course will be focused on the critical evaluation of these issues to determine where moral issues present themselves and to work through how we might address those in our role as responsible citizens. We can consider how local groups address food insecurity in our community by community gardens, food banks, and community meals. We will be mindful of the diverse perspectives on food various world cultures hold in their lives. Considering the social, environmental, cultural, and ethical impacts of our food choices will help us understand how they may express our moral values.

**B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES:** 06/24/2019 - Present

### C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World - Through study in the sciences, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, the arts, technology and professions.
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills - Including: Inquiry and analysis; Written Communication, Oral communication; Quantitative literacy; Information literacy.
3. Personal and Social Responsibility and Engagement - Including: Civic knowledge and engagement; Intercultural knowledge and competence; Ethical reasoning and action; Foundations and skills for lifelong learning; Teamwork.

## **D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)**

1. Demonstrate ability to compare and contrast major moral theories as they apply to food production and consumption [ELO  $\zeta$  2, Critical Thinking; Goal Area  $\zeta$  6, Competencies  $\zeta$  C & E]
2. Articulate understanding of the impacts of food growth, production, and distribution on the environment in local/national/global contexts [ELO  $\zeta$  1, Social Sciences; Goal Area 10, Competencies  $\zeta$  C & D]
3. Assess imbalances in equitable food distribution to align with social justice initiatives [ELO  $\zeta$  2, Inquiry & Analysis; Goal Area  $\zeta$  10, Competencies  $\zeta$  D & F]
4. Critically evaluate appropriate level of social responsibility for community response [ELO  $\zeta$  3, Civic Knowledge & Involvement; Goal Area - 6, Competencies  $\zeta$  C & E and Goal Area  $\zeta$  10, Competencies  $\zeta$  C, D & F]
5. Reflect on personal attitudes towards the use of food with greater awareness of individual choices and potential responses and actions [ELO  $\zeta$  3, Ethical Reasoning & Action, and Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning; Goal Area  $\zeta$  6, Competencies  $\zeta$  B & E and Goal Area  $\zeta$  10, Competencies  $\zeta$  C & F]

## **E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies**

### Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts

1. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
2. Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
3. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.

### Goal 10 - People/Environment

1. Describe the basic institutional arrangements (social, legal, political, economic, religious) that are evolving to deal with environmental and natural resource challenges.
2. Evaluate critically environmental and natural resource issues in light of understandings about interrelationships, ecosystems, and institutions.
3. Articulate and defend the actions they would take on various environmental issues.

## **F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

As noted on course syllabus

## **G. SPECIAL INFORMATION**

None noted