

## BH 597: Ethical Issues in the Food System and Public Health

Syllabus, Spring 2014

Thursdays 1:30-4:20 pm (3 credits)

Location: HSB A-204

Instructors	Contact Information
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<b>Course Website:</b> <a href="https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/906566">https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/906566</a>	

### **Course Description:**

This course provides an opportunity for students to consider the complexities of the modern food system from a lens of public health ethics and social justice. Every time we make a food-related choice or policy, there are both good and bad consequences. But in our complex food system, we see only pieces of the whole, which leads to a great deal of uncertainty around the risk and benefits of these decisions. Drawing from both peer-reviewed literature and popular media, we examine current issues of food in society, considering impacts on health and health disparities, distribution of risks, benefits and structural violence within the system, how power and privilege impact what we see and know, while asking how to make societal decisions around food. We will apply ethical frameworks such as social justice theories, feminist ethics, public health/communitarian ethics, principles, consequentialist, and virtue ethics to frame our discussions about what we should do as individuals and a society around domains in the food system. Students will practice making an ethical case for a policy on a topic of their interest.

There are many topics that we do not have time to address in this course, including moral duties to non-human animals, and more traditional environmental ethics, but the last class meeting is reserved for student-generated topics, so please bring your ideas to class.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Identify ethical issues in food-related case studies as they relate to individual and community health and well-being.
2. Facilitate discussion around challenging food issues, in an environment of limited or conflicting information, to consider policy or action alternatives.
3. Present and apply a set of ethical theories to food-related decision-making.

### Course Format:

- This is a seminar course, which is primarily based on lecture, group discussion, weekly reading (approx. 50 pages/week, except for the Holmes book, selections of which will be required to be completed by week 6), small group activities and written assignments: short, weekly reflection papers, a midterm ethical argument, and a final commentary-style paper.
- This course meets once per week for 3 hours each.
- There is one **required book**: Holmes, S. (2013). *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*. University of California Press: Berkeley. ISBN: 9780520275140. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 are required. Chapters 5 and 6 are recommended only.
- Additional **required** readings are posted on the course website. Some will be added throughout the quarter, as the guest speakers make them available. Readings listed as “recommended” are simply for your additional information as you are interested, but are *not* required for class.

### Target Audience:

- Bioethics, and Public Health graduate students; other graduate and professional students

### Assignments and Percentage of Total Grade:

- **Weekly reflections (25%):** Initial responses to readings (~1 page, single-spaced), *and* 2 discussion questions.
  - Purpose: To provide incentive for students to do the reading ahead of time and take some time to digest, and consider questions they might have in preparation for the discussion.
  - Expectations: Students should offer their initial thoughts on the readings, raise ethical issues from the readings, draw connections with previous course topics, how these issues and perspectives relate to their own work, resonate with them, or conflict with their own perspectives. The 2 discussion questions could be about any thoughts related to the reading, points of confusion, or pushing the topic forward. Credit will be given for well-thought out and articulated reflections and discussion questions.
  - **Due in Canvas dropbox at 5pm on the *Wednesday before each class. At least 8 reflections are required (i.e. each student can opt not to turn in one reflection during the quarter).***
- **Midterm project (25%):** Research a food-related ethical issue to understand the facts of the case, existing controversies including opposing arguments. Write a **1-page outline** of an ethical argument on that topic, taking a clear side, but also considering opposing viewpoints.
  - Purpose: To deepen students’ knowledge in a particular area of their interest, and clarify and effectively communicate their own ethical perspective on a topic. Students will receive feedback on the strength of their argument and quality of articulation, which is intended to help guide their thinking and writing, in preparation for the final project.
  - Expectations: A rubric will be posted to the course website by the second week of class.
  - **Due in Canvas dropbox at 11pm on Friday of week 5.**
- **Final project (30%):** Write an **ethical commentary** on the topic you chose for your midterm project, incorporating the feedback received. Select a particular audience you would like to write for: a general academic audience, a particular community, political leaders, public health officials, the general public (newspaper op-ed style), etc. Select a format that you would like to practice, and write for that audience.
  - Purpose: To give students practice in articulating their ethical argument in a manner that is relevant to an audience they would like to reach.

- Expectations: 1500-2000 words; Rubric will be posted to the course website by the second week of class.
  - **Due in Canvas dropbox at 11pm on Friday of week 10.**
- **Class participation (20%):** Because this is an interactive course, it is imperative that all students attend, well prepared and actively engage in the discussion each week. Students must notify the instructor in advance if they must miss a class. If more than one class is missed during the quarter, it may be made up by turning in written responses to the class discussion questions for that day, in addition to the weekly reflection paper. Unexcused absences and classes not made up will be cause for deduction in the class participation grade.
  - **Self-evaluation (ungraded, but required):** In a 1-page reflection paper, please tell us what you have gained in this course, and any salient take-home thoughts for your own interests or work. Let us know about *your own* process in this class, rather than giving us a critique on the course itself: that will be welcomed during the anonymous course evaluations. **Due in Canvas dropbox by the Friday after final papers are due.**
  - **Note on grading:** Assignment grades will be reduced 5% per day late after the due date. Please contact the instructors ahead of time if you have extenuating circumstances.
  - **Extra Credit:** An additional 5 points may be earned once by volunteering at a Community Kitchen event, volunteering at the Food Bank, Teen Feed, or similar community service event (at least 3 hours). Please clear the event with the instructors first. To receive credit, submit a paragraph explaining what you did and how it applies to class.

**Disability Accommodation:**

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students Office (DRS), 448 Schmitz, 543-8924 (V/TDD). If you have a letter from Disability Resources for Students Office indicating you have such a disability, please present the letter to one of the instructors so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations.

**Additional Resources:**

Foodjustice.org

The Salt: NPR's Food Blog

U.S. Food Policy Blog

Food Politics (Marion Nestle's blog)

Puget Sound Regional Council: Food Policy Council

Multnomah County Food Policy Council

Center for Food Safety: <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/>

JHU Berman Center for Bioethics' Global Food Ethics Project: <http://www.bioethicsinstitute.org/globalfoodethics>

**Weekly Schedule:**

Weekly Themes and Speakers	Reading Assignments
<p>Week 1: April 3, 2014</p> <p>Course overview; Introduction to the food system, food policy and the role food in our lives and society.</p> <p><i>Key ethical approach: Introduction to major ethical frameworks used in this class.</i></p> <p><b>Speakers: Kate and Kelly</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verweij and Dawson (2007). The meaning of “public” in “public health.”</li> <li>• Dawson (2011). Resetting the Parameters: Public health as the foundation for public health ethics. In: <i>Public Health Ethics</i>, ed. Dawson, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</li> <li>• NWABR (2009). An Ethics Primer. <b>p. 15-28 only</b></li> <li>• <i>The Economist</i> (2006). Ethical food: Good food? <a href="http://www.economist.com/node/8381375">www.economist.com/node/8381375</a></li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> An ethics primer p. 1-14</li> <li>• <b>*Begin reading <i>Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies</i>.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Case: What should the government do about childhood malnutrition? A comparison of ethical frameworks.</i></p>
<p>Week 2: April 10, 2014</p> <p>Food policy as public health policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional food policy councils</li> <li>• Oversight and regulation</li> <li>• “Enhancing” the food supply with broad-based supplementation</li> </ul> <p><i>Key questions: What should the role/reach of government be in promoting public health?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Dr. Jennifer Otten, Assistant Professor, Nutritional Sciences Program, UW School of Public Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson, J. (2011). Health Inequities. P. 211-230. <b>** Focus on this.</b></li> <li>• Daniels (2011). Equity and Population Health. <b>Pp. 191-198 only.</b></li> <li>• Gostin and Powers (2006). What Does Social Justice Require For The Public’s Health? <i>Public Health Ethics And Policy Imperatives</i>. <i>Health Affairs</i> 25(4): 1053–1060.</li> <li>• Petrini (2010). Ethics-Based Public Health Policy?</li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Gutmann and Thompson (2002). <i>Ethical Dimensions of Health Policy</i>.</li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Social Justice foundational readings: Powers and Faden; Sen; Nussbaum, Parfit</li> </ul> <p><i>Case: Mandatory folic acid supplementation</i></p>
<p>Week 3: April 17, 2014</p> <p>Nutrigenomics and Personalized Nutrition</p> <p><i>Key questions: What are the key ethical issues involved in nutrigenomic implementation?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Kate; Dr. Karen Edwards, UC Irvine(online lecture)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Watch 60 minute Lecture (online):</u> <a href="http://depts.washington.edu/cgph/Nutrigenomics.htm">http://depts.washington.edu/cgph/Nutrigenomics.htm</a></li> <li>• <u>Skim:</u> Camp (2014). --for a review of genetic information in the context of NGx. <b>**Especially for those without a genetics background.</b></li> <li>• <u>Read:</u> de Roos, B. (2012). Personalised nutrition: ready for practice? <i>Proceedings of the Nutrition Society</i>.</li> <li>• <u>Read:</u> Castle, D. (2006). Issues in Ethics, <i>Nutrigenomics and Beyond, Informing the Future</i>. Chapter 4, pp. 41-45.</li> <li>• <u>Read:</u> Pollan, M. (2007). Unhappy Meals, <i>New York Times Magazine</i>.</li> <li>• <u>Recommended to Review:</u> NWABR primer</li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Beauchamp and Childress. (2009) <i>Principles of Biomedical Ethics</i>. 5<sup>th</sup> edition, NY: Oxford Univ Press.</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Case: Using the Principles-based framework to determine the best course of action, what is the best delivery model for nutrigenomic testing?</i></p>
<p>Week 4: April 24, 2014</p> <p>Genetically Modified Foods</p> <p><i>Key questions: How should we balance risk in the case of uncertainty? Should we apply the precautionary principle to the case of GMOs?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Dr. Mike Rosenfeld, Professor Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, UW School of Public Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John, (2011). Risk and Precaution. In: <i>Public Health Ethics</i>, ed. Dawson, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</li> <li>• National Collaborating Center for Healthy Public Policy: Public Policies Guided by the Precautionary Principle</li> <li>• Du, D. (2012). Rethinking risks: Should socioeconomic and ethical considerations be incorporated into the regulation of genetically modified crops? <i>Harvard Journal of Law and Technology</i>. 26(1):375-401.</li> <li>• Sunstein C. (2002-3). The Paralyzing Principle, <i>Regulation</i>. Winter: 32-37.</li> <li>• Dr. Rosenfeld's assignments: Students to choose among options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Snell, C., et al. (2012). Assessment of the health impact of GM plant diets in long-term and multigenerational animal feeding trials: A literature review, <i>Food and Chemical Toxicology</i>. 50:1134-1148.</li> <li>○ Strom, S. (2013). Misgivings About How a Weed Killer Affects the Soil, <i>New York Times</i>, 9/19/13.</li> <li>○ Washington State Academy of Sciences (2013). White Paper on Washington State Initiative 522 (I-522): Labeling of Foods Containing Genetically Modified Ingredients. Available from: <a href="http://www.washacad.org">www.washacad.org</a></li> <li>○ ENSSER (2013). No scientific consensus on GMO safety. Available from: <a href="http://www.ensser.org">www.ensser.org</a>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Case: The development of drought-tolerant crops to ensure a stable food supply in the face of climate change: Who are the stakeholders and what are their risks re: this case? How should we balance those risks? Are there certain goods that are so necessary that they trump some risks? Or some special bads that trump goods? Is there a difference between man-made and natural risks? Can the precautionary principle help us move forward?</i></p>
<p>Week 5: May 1, 2014</p> <p>Obesity and diet-related diseases</p> <p><i>Key questions: Stigma and personal responsibility vs. individual agency—</i></p> <p><i>Who is responsible for obesity? What are the myriad determinants of obesity? Does obesity meet the criteria for a public health action? If so, what are the most appropriate ways to address the issue?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Kate; Dr. Kelly Brownell, Yale</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 75 min. Lecture by Kelly Brownell- <a href="http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology/psyc-123/lecture-5">http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology/psyc-123/lecture-5</a></li> <li>○ Wikler, D. (1987). Who should be blamed for being sick? <i>Health Education Quarterly</i>. 14(1):11-25.</li> <li>○ Hatzenbuehler, M., Phelan, J. &amp; Link, B. (2013). Stigma as a fundamental cause of health inequalities. <i>AJPH</i>. 103(5): 813-821.</li> <li>○ Pico, C., Palou, A. (2013). Perinatal programming of obesity: an introduction to the topic. <i>Frontiers in physiology</i>. 4:1-3.</li> <li>○ <u>Recommended</u>: Jackson, et al. (2010). Diet, Nutrition and modulation of genomic expression in fetal origins of adult disease. <i>Journal of Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics</i>. 3:192-208.</li> <li>○ <u>Recommended</u>: Kuzawa and Sweet(2009). Epigenetics and the</li> </ul>

<p><b>University (online lecture)</b></p>	<p>Embodiment of Race: Developmental Origins of US Racial Disparities in Cardiovascular Health. <i>Am J Human Biology</i>21:2–15.</p> <p><i>Case: "Fat tax" proposal debate.</i></p>
<p>Week 6: May 8, 2014</p> <p>Structural violence in the food system: The real price of eating healthfully?</p> <p><i>Key questions: How is injustice distributed through the production side of the food system? How are hierarchies and racism at play? Social connection model of responsibility.</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Star Murray (Office of the Dean, UW School of Public Health, Activist/Photographer)</li> <li>• Mr. Tomás Madrigal (Doctoral Candidate at UC Santa Barbara, Activist with Community to Community Development, Bellingham, WA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holmes, S.M. (2013). <i>Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies</i>. University of California Press: Berkeley. (Chapters 1-4, 7 required; Chapters 5 and 6, recommended.)</li> <li>• Madrigal, T. (2013). Berry Pickers Walk Out, Boycott; photos by Star Murray: <a href="http://www.labornotes.org/2013/08/berry-pickers-walk-out-boycott">http://www.labornotes.org/2013/08/berry-pickers-walk-out-boycott</a></li> <li>• <u>Review:</u> Social Justice overview</li> <li>• <u>Highly Recommended:</u> Holmes (2013) Ch. 5, 6</li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Chavkin, S. (2013).World bank approves loan to Nicaraguan sugar plantation amid concerns about health risks to field workers: <a href="http://www.icij.org/blog/2013/08/world-bank-approves-loan-nicaraguan-sugar-plantation-amid-concerns-about-health-risks">http://www.icij.org/blog/2013/08/world-bank-approves-loan-nicaraguan-sugar-plantation-amid-concerns-about-health-risks</a></li> </ul>
<p>Week 7: May 15, 2014</p> <p>Health/Nutrition Intervention; food security, access and deserts</p> <p><i>Key questions: What are the forces in the food system that have set us up for the current health crises? What are some effective and ethical approaches to public health intervention?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Dr. Deb Bowen, UW Professor of Bioethics and Humanities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hauter, W. (2012). Chapter 2: The Junk Food Pushers, <i>Foodology</i>. The New Press: New York.</li> <li>• Hauter, W. (2012). Chapter 3: Walmarting the Food Chain, <i>Foodology</i>. The New Press: New York.</li> <li>• Story, M., Kaphingst, K. Robinson-O’Brien, R., Glanz, K. (2008). Creating Healthy Food and Eating Environments: Policy and Environmental Approaches. <i>Annu. Rev. Public Health</i>. 29:253–72.</li> </ul> <p><i>Case: Making the implicit explicit: identifying our intuitions about accountability for the state of the food system as it relates to health and articulating an ethical argument to justify these intuitions.</i></p>
<p>Week 8: May 22, 2014</p> <p>Community and environmental sustainability</p> <p><i>Key questions: What does "local" produce mean to different stakeholders? What are the underlying values in the focus on "local" foods and farmers markets? How might these values conflict?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collins, D. (2009).King County Food And Fitness Initiative Agricultural Assessment, WSU Small Farms Program.</li> <li>• King County Dept of Natural Resources and Parks (2010). Farmers Market Report. Available from: <a href="http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/waterandland/agriculture.aspx">http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/waterandland/agriculture.aspx</a></li> <li>• Langston, J. (2008). Poor Seattle Neighborhoods Still Lack Access to Fresh Food, <i>Seattle Post-Intelligencer</i>, 5/1/08.</li> <li>• Brownell, K. lecture: Psychology 123, lecture 10,Impact of Modern Agriculture on Environment/Energy Use, Food Miles, (12:00-34:00 minutes). Available from: <a href="http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology/psyc-123/lecture-10">http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology/psyc-123/lecture-10</a>.</li> </ul>

<p><i>How might farmers markets look different if they were developed using a different approach to virtue-based ethics? Can market-based approaches effectively address issues of access to healthy, affordable food?</i></p> <p><b>Speaker: Dr. Brad Gaolach, Community Sustainability Specialist, Washington State University, Extension Community and Economic Development Program Unit</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Bohle, H-G.,Etzold, B., Keck, M. (2009). Resilience as Agency. IHDP update. Available from: <a href="https://www.ihdp.unu.edu/file/get/7699">https://www.ihdp.unu.edu/file/get/7699</a></li> </ul>
<p>Week 9: May 29, 2014</p> <p>Food sovereignty: Traditional foods, subsistence and contamination</p> <p><b>Speaker: Ms. Valerie Segrest, Member of the Muckleshoot Tribe, UW doctoral student, Community Nutritionist and Coordinator of Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patel, R. (2009). What does food sovereignty look like? <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i>. 36(3): 663–673.</li> <li>• Nyéléni Declaration on Food Sovereignty (2007). Reprinted in <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i>. 36(3): 673–676.</li> <li>• Ishii-Eiteman, M. (2009) Food sovereignty and the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development. <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i>. 36(3): 696–699.</li> <li>• La Via Campesina: Seven Principles of Food Sovereignty. In: <i>Our Food, Our Right</i>. Community Alliance for Global Justice. P. 20-21.</li> <li>• Krohn, E., Segrest, V. (2010). Chapter 2. A Time of Change, <i>Feeding the People, Feeding the Spirit</i>. Northwest Indian College.</li> <li>• Krohn, E., Segrest, V. (2010). Chapter 3. Revitalizing Northwest Indian Food Culture, <i>Feeding the People, Feeding the Spirit</i>. Northwest Indian College.</li> <li>• Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project website.</li> <li>• <u>Recommended:</u> Mundel, E., Chapman, G.A. (2010). A decolonizing approach to health promotion in Canada: the case of the Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project. <i>Health Promotion International</i>, Vol. 25(2): 166-173.</li> </ul>
<p>Week 10: June 5, 2014</p> <p><b>Students’ choice:</b> Advocacy and Action</p> <p><b>[Potential additional Topics:</b>  Food and Climate Change  Environmental Justice  Cultural Meanings of Food: What does food mean across cultures?  Culinary Diplomacy: What is the potential power of food to bring people together?<a href="http://blogs.state.gov/stories/2012/09/30/culinary-diplomacy-connecting-individuals-leaders-and-nations-through-food">http://blogs.state.gov/stories/2012/09/30/culinary-diplomacy-connecting-individuals-leaders-and-nations-through-food</a>]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gottlieb and Joshi (2012). <i>Food Justice</i>: p. 4-7, 223-238</li> <li>• Choose either: <i>Food Justice</i> Chapter 4: Food Politics, <b>OR</b> Chapter 9: New Food Politics</li> <li>• Choose 1-2 cases: Chateau Ste Michelle strike; Farm-to-School case; Rethinkers; Food Aid in Zambia; Place-based food culture, or bring in your own</li> <li>• Homework: Be prepared to discuss these questions, not to turn in-- <i>How are you already working for change in the food system? Which components of the food system do you impact through this work/choices?</i></li> <li>• Activity: Share ethical motivations for our work; place our actions on a model of the food system to see aggregate impact of everyone working on seemingly small pieces.</li> </ul>