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**DAWSON COLLEGE - NEW SCHOOL**

**HUMANITIES 345-BXH-DW, Section 14001 (ETHICAL ISSUES)**

**Supervised by Mari Heywood and Cory Legassic**

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| **LEARNING GROUP TOPIC:** | **Edible Activism** |
| **WORKLOAD (per week):** | 3-0-3 |
| **PREREQUISITES:** | 345-101-MQ; 345-102-MQ |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE:** | **Fall 2016**  |
| **FACILITATOR'S NAME:** | Erik Chevrier |
| **OFFICE NO.:** | **8B.4** |
| **E-MAIL:** | professor@erikchevrier.ca |
| **WEBSITE:** | www.erikchevrier.ca/course/edible-activism |

**STATEMENT OF THE COMPETENCY**

**Learning Outcome:** To apply a critical thought process to ethical issues relevant to the field of study.

**ELEMENTS OF THE COMPETENCY**

**(General Instructional Objectives Common to all Ethical Issues Courses)**

Students who successfully complete the Ethical Issues course in Humanities should be able to:

1. Situate significant ethical issues in appropriate world views and fields of knowledge.
2. Explain the major ideas, values, and social implication of ethical issues.
3. Organize the ethical questions and their implications into coherent patterns.
4. Debate the ethical issues.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND CONTENT:**

**Have you ever heard of Castoreum? Castoreum is the yellowish secretion of the castor sac (anal gland of the beaver) and is used as a flavour enhancer in candies, beverages, frozen dairy foods, baked goods, chewing gum, pudding and a variety of other processed foods. Many people are not aware that they are consuming the anal secretion of beavers because the term Castoreum does not appear on the list of ingredients. Instead, it is placed under the umbrella ‘natural flavours’. This course is designed to address ethical concerns regarding food.**

**In this course, we will become food activists and contribute to the pursuit of a more environmentally sustainable, socially responsible, cooperative food system. We will engage with community food organizations in and around Dawson College. In particular, we will meet and participate with key players who have laid fertile ground for the development of a healthier food system. We will critically analyze how food is produced, procured, processed, distributed, stored, and transported. We will learn about the economy of food by analyzing a variety of actors, like multinational food corporations, governments and community organizations. We will discuss a variety of issues regarding food, including: food security, food privilege, food sovereignty, food customs, communal food production, and waste management. We will review food policies in Quebec, Canada and the world at large.**

**The class will work on a collective project designed to enhance the food system at Dawson College. Together, the class will build a website that will display research findings, blog posts, events and activities about food groups in and around Dawson College.**

**Class participants will each take turns facilitating a discussion based on the assigned readings of the week – as found in the course schedule. The facilitator will be responsible for summarizing the readings and leading a discussion about the topic at hand. Furthermore, participants will take turns preparing food for the class. The person who prepared the food of the week must inform the class about the conditions that brought about the food; including, ingredients (what is in your dish), production (growing conditions, labour conditions, etc.), distribution (where is the food available to obtain, who sells the food, etc.), transportation (where did the food travel from), and processing/transformation (cooking/preserving processes). Students will submit a recipe for the food they prepared to post on the website.**

**Participants will attend a conference on food and write a blog post about the conference to add to the website. These conferences include, Bite Me! – 2016 (at Concordia University), and/or the weekend forum organized by (SAM) Système Alimentaire Montrealais.**

**LEARNING GROUP OBJECTIVES:**

* Cultivate critical thinking skills by analyzing ethical issues regarding food practices. Students will identify key ethical concerns regarding modern food practices.
* Build upon the critical skills, knowledge and insight developed in previous Humanities courses to focus on ethical concerns regarding food sovereignty. Students will identify indicators of healthy food systems.
* Develop a critical and autonomous approach to ethical values related to food and nutrition.
* Develop a critical and autonomous approach to link the values involved in students’ own fields of interest with topics related to food.
* Provide students with an opportunity to critically evaluate their food practices in relation to their personal and social values
* Demonstrate independence and creativity of thought by co-constructing a class website.
* Master the basic rules of discourse and argumentation in order to better understand and create food policy.
* Reinforce the ancillary skills involved in careful reading about food topics.
* Refine oral and written communication in the language of instruction.
* Learn work methods and carrying out various tasks that will allow improvement of oral and writing skills including co-creating a website where every student will contribute writing pieces, facilitating a reading discussion and conducting a research project.
* Improve media and computer literacy by creating a website, blog, photography and video content.
* Get field experience as a food activist by interacting with a variety of local food organizations.

**REQUIRED TEXT(S):**

Wittman, H., Desmarais, A. A., Wiebe, N. (2011) Food Sovereignty in Canada; Creating just and sustainable food systems, Fernwood Publishing

**TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING ACTIVITIES:**

Edible Activism reflects the critical humanistic educational approach i.e., the class is co-facilitated by the students (participants).

* Participants will build a website about food issues at Dawson College and create the content for the site.
* Participants will partake in community service learning initiative by participating with community food groups in and around Dawson College.
* Participants are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and debate the reading material and/or documentaries assigned for the week.
* Participants will take turns facilitating the weekly reading discussions.
* Participants will learn about food by taking turns preparing food for the class. They will lead a discussion about the food they prepared. They will also publish the recipe on the class website.
* Participants will attend a conference about food and publish a blog post about the conference.
* Participants will write a research report about a food topic.

**[TENTATIVE] SCHEDULE OF COURSE CONTENT:**

Each chapter listed below refers to a chapter in the book: Food Sovereignty in Canada; Creating just and sustainable food systems. The class will also watch a variety of documentary movies. These will be determined by the class on a weekly basis.

**August 29 – Introduction**

**September 12 – Finalizing Course Outline**

**September 19 – Nurturing Food Sovereignty in Canada – Chapter 1**

**September 26 – The State of Agriculture in Canada – Chapter 2**

**October 3 – Grassroots Perspectives from the National Farmers Union – Chapter 3**

**October 12 – Gender and Food Sovereignty – Chapter 4**

**October 17 – Food Secure Canada – Chapter 5**

**October 24 – Indigenous Food Sovereignty – Chapter 6**

**October 31 – Food Policies and Food Sovereignty – Chapter 7**

**November 7 – Nutrition – Chapter 8**

**November 14 –Growing Community – Chapter 9**

**November 21 – Emerging Potentials – Chapter 10 or 11**

**November 28 – Food and the Economy – Readings TBD**

**December 5 – Food and Social Change – Readings TBD**

**EVALUATION TOOLS/ASSIGNMENTS:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Instrument** | **Due date** | **Value** | **\*** **Students must achieve a 60% in order to pass this course****\*** |
| **Final Project – Research paper on a food topic (1200 – 1500)** | December 5th | 20 |
| **Documentary review paper** | October 31 | 15 |
| **Food preparation oral presentation and recipe for website** | TBD | 15 |
| **Conference report** | November 14 | 15 |
| **Contribution for website – Interview/Blog** | November 7 | 15 |
| **Participation** | Throughout | 10 |
| **Reading assignment** | TBD | 10 |
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\*The dates labeled TBD will be different for every participant in the course. These dates will be set in the first few weeks of the course.

**BXH:**

To pass this course, the following components must be met:

* Students must obtain a total grade of at least 60% for the course;
* Students must receive a grade of at least 60% for the program-related assignment. If the student does not pass the program-related assignment, the maximum grade the student will receive for the course is 50%.

**Note about BXH courses and program-related assignments:**

In BXH courses, program-related assignments shall be written in a range of 1200-2500 words and will be accorded 20-30% of the final grade for the course” (Departmental Equity Guidelines, 2007).

**Late Assignments:**

**Unless there is an emergency, participants will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day for every day they are late in submitting an assignment. Once the assignment is a week past due, participants will not be allowed to submit the assignment for grades.**

**If there is an emergency, participants must immediately inform the class director. It is up to the discretion of the class director to assess the severity of the emergency and apply amnesty or other appropriate sanctions.**

**ISEP:**

*The Institutional Student Evaluation Policy (ISEP) is designed to promote equitable and effective evaluation of student learning and is therefore a crucial policy to read and understand. The policy describes the rights and obligations of students, faculty, departments, programs, and the College administration with regard to evaluation in all your courses, including grade reviews and resolution of academic grievance. The ISEP is available on the Dawson website.*

**DEPARTMENTAL LITERACY STANDARD:**

Students enrolled in Humanities courses are expected to have college-level English reading skills as well as demonstrate college-level English writing skills.

**COURSE LITERACY POLICY:**

No more than 15% may be deducted directly for spelling, punctuation and grammar for written assignments completed out of class.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

*According to ISEP, the teacher is required to report to the Sector Dean all cases of cheating and plagiarism affecting a student’s grade. (Section IV-C)*

Cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable and represent serious academic offences (refer to the "Institutional Student Evaluation Policy" (ISEP) for further details). Cheating and Plagiarism include: culling ideas, terminology, passages and other information from electronic or print sources that are not properly quoted or credited; poor paraphrasing of a passage from a source; falsifying, altering or creating a source; assistance from another person to such an extent that the work is no longer your own; submitting your own work, in whole or in part, from a previous course; substituting any part of another’s work, published or unpublished, as your own.

Specific **consequences** for cheating and plagiarism involve [1] reporting the act of plagiarism to the supervising instructor (mentor) who will report it to the Dean and [2] an important grade penalty for the assignments with the possibility of failure. According to ISEP, the teacher is required to report to the Sector Dean all cases of cheating and plagiarism affecting a student’s grade. (ISEP section IV-C)]

**STUDENT CONDUCT:**

*Everyone has the right to a safe and non-violent environment. Students are obliged to conduct themselves as stated in the Student Code of Conduct and in the ISEP section on the roles and responsibilities of students. (ISEP Section II-D)*

**ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

*Students should refer to the Institutional Student Evaluation Policy (Section III-C) regarding attendance.* New School requires that students attend every class unless there is an emergency, which is communicated to the facilitator in a timely manner. With a focus on building community, your presence and participation in the group is essential.

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**INTENSIVE COURSE CONFLICTS:**

*If a student is attending an intensive course, the student must inform the teacher, within the first two (2) weeks of class, of the specific dates of any anticipated absences.*

**POLICY ON RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES – Student and Teacher Obligations:**

*Students who intend to observe religious holidays must inform their teachers in writing as prescribed in the ISEP Policy on Religious Observances. (ISEP Section III-D)*

Students must inform the teacher in writing within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe religious holidays so that alternative arrangements convenient to both the student and the teacher can be made at the earliest opportunity.

**Bibliography of potential readings, texts, and resources for this learning group.**

Andree, P., Ayres, J., Bosia, M. J., Massicotte, M-J. (2014) Globalization and Food Sovereignty; Global and Local Change in the New Politics of Food, University of Toronto Press

Berlow, A. (2015) The Food Activist Handbook: Big & Small Things You Can Do to Help Provide Fresh, Healthy Food for Your community, Storey Publishing

Counihan, C., Van Esterik, P. (2013) Food and Culture; A reader, 3rd ed, Routledge

Counihan, C., Siniscalchi, V. (2014) Food Activism: Agency, Democracy and Economy, Bloomsburry Academic.

Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2005) Surplus Possibilities: Post development and community Economies, Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography, 26, 1, pp. 4–26

Gibson-Graham, K., Cameron, J., & Healy, S. (2013) Take Back the Economy; An Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities, University of Minneapolis Press.

Miller, S. (2008) Edible Action; Food Activism & Alternative Economics (2008) Sally Miller

Polanyi, K. (2001) The Great Transformation: The political and economic origins of our time. Beacon Press, Boston Massachusetts.

Shragge, E. (2013). Activism and Social Change; Lessons for Community Organizing 2nd Ed, University of Toronto Press.

Wittman, H., Desmarais, A. A., Wiebe, N. (2011) Food Sovereignty in Canada; Creating just and sustainable food systems, Fernwood Publishing