

Brescia School of Food and Nutritional Sciences

**FN 3450F – Food and Philosophy
Fall 2026**

Campus Support




Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. For help with:

- Both physical and mental health, go to [Wellness & Wellbeing](#)
- Studying with disabilities, go to [Accessible Education](#)
- Writing skills, go to the [Writing Support Centre](#)
- Learning skills and strategies, go to [Learning Development & Success](#)
- Contacting the ombudsperson, go to the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#)



Your course coordinator can also **guide you** to available campus resources and/or services.

Technical Requirements

-  Stable internet connection
-  Laptop computer
-  Calculator

Important Dates

Classes Begin	Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
September 9	October 10-18	December 9	December 10	December 11–22

September 30, 2026, is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and is a non-instructional day
November 30, 2026: Last day to withdraw from a first-term half course without academic penalty

Contact Information

Course Coordinator/instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Dr. Peggy O’Neil	poneil2@uwo.ca	Wednesdays 9:30AM-11:30AM (via ZOOM Meeting, see link/passcode in OWL)

NOTE: All course information including grades, assignment outlines, deadlines, etc. are available via [OWL Brightspace](#). Download the Brightspace Pulse App to stay up-to-date on course communication and enable your notification settings within “Communications” in the top toolbar. Check the website regularly for course announcements. If you need assistance, visit [OWL Brightspace Help](#) or contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Calendar Course Description (including prerequisites/anti-requisites):

An introductory course in philosophy of food that engages students to think and write critically about local and global ideas about food that impact human ecology and dietetic practice.

Prerequisite(s): Foods and Nutrition 1070A/B or Foods and Nutrition 2070A/B; Foods and Nutrition 1241A/B or Foods and Nutrition 2241A/B.

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.

NOTE: If you wish to enroll in this course without the stated pre-requisite(s), you must obtain written approval from the course instructor. The approval should then be forwarded to your academic counsellor.

Delivery Mode: In-person

Component	Date(s)	Time
Lecture 001		

My Course Description

Through the ages, philosophers and everyday people alike have asked the question, “what is a *good life*”. In searching for the answer, a world view and way of life is discovered. Today, agri-food systems are central to ideas about the future of life on Earth. With an emphasis on philosophic methods, students will ask and answer for themselves what a good life is through food.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate introductory knowledge and application of philosophic methods and writing.
2. Understand philosophy as a means of conceptualizing and responding to issues in agri-food.
3. Critically formulate arguments and strategies in agri-food to address ethical, economic, and/or environmental issues of individual and collective concern to students.
4. Discover and/or expand students’ own world view, and demonstrate a capacity to overcome counter-arguments which may otherwise impede student goals for themselves, humanity, and the natural world.

Course Content and Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic	Study Material	Things Due
1	Sept 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Course Overview • Introduction to Philosophy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWL Resources 	Student-generated topics for Weeks 8, 9, and 10
2	Sept 15, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food sovereignty: Freedom, anti-poverty, and ecological sustainability. • Virtue Ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.1; p. 1-20) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Personal Philosophy #1
3	Sept 22, 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporatism: Creative and economic losses; food environments. • Deontology (Duty to others) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.2; p. 21-38) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Philosophic Analysis #1
4	Sept 29, Oct 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family farming: Intangible cultural heritages, peasant studies, and agrarian citizenship. • Teleology (Consequences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.2; p. 21-38) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Philosophic Analysis #2
5	Oct 6, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioregionalism: Local food, diets of conscience, and cultural food (in)security. • Moral awareness/evolution (Social progress) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.3; p. 45-55) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Philosophic Analysis #3
	Oct 13, 15	Reading Week		
6	Oct 20, 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global peace-keeping: Food insecurity and conflict, emergency food. • Humanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.4; p. 58-63) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Philosophic Analysis #4
7	Oct 27, 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Papers • Exploring personal philosophies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWL Resources 	DUE: Philosophy Research Paper Topic & Position
8	Nov 3, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-generated Topic (TBD Week 1) • Poetics (Spoken/popular thought) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.5; p.65-90) • OWL Resources 	
9	Nov 10, 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-generated Topic (TBD Week 1) • Aesthetics (Beauty, harmony, unity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.6; p.96-106) • OWL Resources • 	
10	Nov 17, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-generated Topic. (TBD Week 1) • A good life (Personal truth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Philosophy (Part 1.7; p.108-116) • OWL Resources 	DUE: Personal Philosophy #2

Week	Dates	Topic	Study Material	Things Due
11	Nov 24, 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Views and Ways of Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philosophy Research Paper: informal presentations to learning community for feedback. 	
12	Dec 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team meetings with instructor (See schedule) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final paper outline, bibliography, questions, and concerns. 	DUE: Questions for instructor
13	Dec 3, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Research & Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team research paper sources 	DUE: Philosophy Research Paper DUE: Community of Practice Self & Team

Course Materials You Must Acquire and Their Costs

Textbook: Vaughn L. & McIntosh, J. S. (2013). *Writing philosophy: A guide for Canadian students* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

- Approximate cost: \$54.05 CAD
- Students are welcome to purchase second-hand copies of this textbook.

*Weekly readings and other resources posted to OWL.

Assessments and Evaluation

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated.

Assessment	Format	Weight	Due Date	Flexibility	Learning Outcome
Personal Philosophy #1: Big Questions	Written; Individual	10%	Sept. 17	Required; Flexible	All
Philosophic Analysis	Written; Team	20%	Weeks 3, 4, 5 & 6 (Thurs.)	Required; Flexible	All
Community of Practice & Engagement Activity	Written, Oral; Individual, Team	10%	See Schedule: Weeks 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11 (Thurs.)	Required; Flexible	All
Personal Philosophy #2: Your Answer(s)	Written; Individual	30%	Nov. 19	Required; Flexible; Note: Grade of 60% to pass course	All
Philosophy Research Paper	Written; Team	30%	Dec. 8	Required; Flexible; Grade of 60% to pass course	All

Notes:

1. **ESSAY REQUIREMENT** According to Western academic regulations as set out in the Academic Calendar, for a student to pass a designated essay course (an E, F, or G course) they must demonstrate competence in essay writing. That is, to pass this course you must pass the essay component. Total written assignments (excluding tests and examinations) for designated essay half courses (2000 level and above) is at least **2500 words**.
2. **HUMANISTIC TEACHING/LEARNING APPROACH:** This course is taught using a **humanistic education philosophy** which focuses on individual development toward the collective potential of humanity. This approach to teaching/learning emphasizes generated knowledge and shared experiences in the classroom; as such, the instructional method for the course is *communities of practice* (Wenger & Trayner), which includes experiential learning combined with self/team contributions, reflections, and assessments. Accordingly:
 - a. Students are expected to foster a **culture of sharing, caring, dignity and respect** in all course-related interactions. Students will help each other during whole class and small group engagement activities, including debates, reflection, analysis, discussions, role play and other collaborative experiences.
 - b. Weekly readings and other resources must be read/viewed PRIOR to each class in order to contribute to **each student's own and to peers' growth and understanding**.
 - c. **Attendance and original, active contribution are mandatory** (See Item #3, below)
3. **ATTENDANCE & ORIGINAL, ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IS MANDATORY.**
In **humanistic education, your ideas are needed to foster a vibrant, democratic learning community**. Regular classroom participation is particularly important to the fulfillment of learning objectives in this course. Participation means not only attendance, but active engagement in the class, including (for example) contribution to small and large group discussions, a demonstrated effort to prepare for class by completing assigned readings before class, and following the instructor's guidelines for use of electronic devices during class time. You are responsible for the material covered during the classes (or parts of classes) that you miss.
 - a. The course has **13 class sessions** (Reading Week is not included), amounting to **39 hours** of classroom time. Students who miss more than 3 class sessions (9 hours) without academic consideration will fail this course. Students who require academic consideration for more than 3 missed class sessions (i.e., students who miss more than 3 class sessions (9 hours) over the course of the term) will fail this course (or, at the discretion of their academic advisor, be withdrawn from the course without academic penalty). No further warning will be given in this regard.
 - b. The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, includes but is not limited to writing assistants (e.g., ChatGPT, QuillBot) and translation services (e.g., Google translate). Use of generative AI tools is prohibited and is a scholastic offence and subject to the penalties for a scholastic offence outlined in the Academic Calendar. **Students cannot use AI in this course. All written assignments will undergo a digital, originality check. Students WILL NOT have access to originality software reports prior to assignment submission.**
 - c. Group assignments must be completed as a group. Individual submissions for group assignments will be automatically reduced by 20%.

d. In rare, unfortunate circumstances, a student might not receive the same grade as their group members if it is determined that the distribution of work was not equal. In alignment with the **humanistic education approach** to teaching, learning, and communities of practice used in this course, every effort on the part of the individual, group, and instructor will be made to avoid this circumstance.

4. **TIMING & FORMAT OF ASSIGNMENTS.** Detailed instructions for all assignments including their purpose, description, instructions/rubric, due date, file upload format, number of uploads, etc. is available in the course OWL Brightspace site.

General information about assessments

- All assignments are due at the time indicated in OWL Brightspace.
- You are responsible for ensuring that the correct file version is uploaded; incorrect submissions including corrupt files could be subject to late penalties (see below) or a 0.
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin (statement in policies below)
- You will NOT have access to Turnitin reports before your submission is graded.
- You may have ONE submission to Turnitin.
- You might not receive the same grade as your group members if it is determined that the distribution of work was not equal.
- After an assessment is returned, you should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting your evaluator; to ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days.
- Requests for regrading must include a written explanation and evidence showing how the work meets the assignment criteria or rubric. Requests without a clear justification will not be considered.
- Prior to the filing of a written request for relief, you must attempt to resolve the concern regarding a mark or grade through informal consultation with the instructor. If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the instructor or you do not receive a decision from the instructor, a written request for relief must be submitted to the Undergraduate Chair of the School offering this course, within three (3) weeks from the date that the mark was issued.
- Team assignments must be completed as a team. Individuals requesting to complete team assignments individually will automatically be **reduced by 20%** of the assignment grade.

The table below outlines University-wide grade descriptors.

Letter grade	Number grade	Description
A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Rounding of Grades (for example, bumping a 79 to 80%)

This is a practice some students request. The final grade documented is the grade that you have achieved. There is no rounding to the next grade level, or ‘giving away’ of marks. Please don’t ask me to do this for you; the response will be “please review the course outline where this is presented”.

Information about late or missed assessments:

- Please see note above on submission status of assignments (e.g. flexible)
- If you miss a team assignment, please see me for instructions on next steps.

Course-specific conditions:

- See above for humanistic education approach as well and learning community contributions (e.g. helping each other, attendance, participation, original contributions, etc).

INC (Incomplete Standing): If a student has been approved by the Academic Advising Office (in consultation with the instructor/department) to complete term work at a later date, an INC will be assigned. Students with INC will have their course load in subsequent terms reduced to allow them to complete outstanding course work. Students may request permission from Academic Advising to carry a full course load for the term the incomplete course work is scheduled.

SPC (Special examination): If a student has been approved by the Academic Advising Office to write a Special Examination and the final exam is the only outstanding course component, an SPC will be assigned. If the class has a makeup exam, the student is expected to write the makeup exam. If the class doesn't have a makeup exam or the student misses the makeup exam for reasons approved by the Academic Advising Office, the student will write the exam the next time the course is offered. Outstanding SPCs will reduce the course load for the term the exam is deferred as outlined in [Types of Examinations](#) policy.

Academic Policies and Statements

Support Services

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Academic Support and Engagement - <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca>
2. Wellness and Well-being - <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>
3. Registrar's Office - <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office - <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

The websites for Registrarial Services (<http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>), and the same for affiliated university colleges when appropriate, and any appropriate Student Support Services (including the services provided by the USC listed here: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>) and the Student Development Services, should be provided for easy access.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

Statement on Harassment and Discrimination

Western is committed to providing a learning and working environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. All students, staff, and faculty have a role in this commitment and have a responsibility to ensure and promote a safe and respectful learning and working environment. Relevant policies include Western's [Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy](#) (M.A.P.P. 1.35) and [Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy – Administrative Procedures](#) (M.A.P.P. 1.35). Any student,

staff, or faculty member who experiences or witnesses' behaviour that may be harassment or discrimination **must report the behaviour** to the Western's [Human Rights Office](#). Harassment and discrimination can be human rights-based, which is also known as EDI-based, (sexism, racism, transphobia, homophobia, islamophobia, xenophobia, antisemitism, and ableism) or non human rights-based (personal harassment or workplace harassment).

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit <https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf>

Absence from Course Commitments

Students must familiarize themselves with the Policy on [Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate, or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the [central academic consideration portal](#). Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term **without** supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g., December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests (typically scheduled during the last week of the term).

Students should also note that the instructor may **designate** one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This **designated** assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Academic consideration requests may be denied when flexibility in assessment has already been included. Examples of flexibility in assessment include when there are assessments not required for calculation of the final grade (e.g. 8 out of 10 quizzes), when there is flexibility in the submission timeframe (e.g. 72 hour no late penalty period), or when timed assessments (e.g., quizzes) are available over an extended period of time (e.g., when you are given a 72 hour time period to start – and finish – the assessment).

Please note that academic considerations in this course are granted by the academic advisors in your home unit and implemented by the instructor of this course in accordance with information presented in this course syllabus. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. If your absence relates to accommodations that are already supported by [Accessible Education](#), please work with your accessible education counsellor regarding your missed course work.

Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting

documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examination dates. The Faculty of Health Sciences has set School-specific dates for these Special Examinations. Please speak with your instructor about the date on which the Special Examination for this course will be held.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the policy on [Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students](#).

Plagiarism

Student work is expected to be original. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and could lead to a zero on the assignment in question, a zero in this course, or your expulsion from the university. You are plagiarizing if you insert a phrase, sentence or paragraph taken directly from another author without acknowledging that the work belongs to him/her. Similarly, you are plagiarizing if you paraphrase or summarize another author's ideas without acknowledging that the ideas belong to someone else. All 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 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 Western University and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

For group assignments, all members share responsibility for academic integrity. Plan your work so the group has time to review the full submission and ensure all sources are appropriately used and cited. In the absence of a scholastic offence, everyone gets the same mark, so work with the rest of your group in a proactive fashion.

Use of Artificial Intelligence for the Completion of Course Work

Within this course, you may NOT use artificial intelligence tools (e.g., "ChatGPT"). See note above on humanistic education philosophy and your original contributions.

Re-submission of Previously Graded Material

Without the explicit written permission of the instructor, you may not submit any academic work for which credit has been obtained previously, or for which credit is being sought, in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

Use of Statistical Pattern Recognition on Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Accessibility Statement

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education (AE) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation or review [The policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation (e.g. separate room to write exams, flexibility with deadlines, etc.) that will be recognized in all your courses, we encourage you to visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information.

Correspondence Statement

The centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Students are further expected to attend to announcements presented through Brightspace, and to read emails generated in this way.

Use of Electronic Devices

During Exams

Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets, cameras, smart glass, smart watches, or iPods) during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations. **These devices MUST either be left at home or with your belongings at the front of the room. They MUST NOT be at your test/exam desk or in your pocket. Any student found with a prohibited device will be referred for investigation of a Scholastic Offence, per the policy listed above. The typical first-offence penalty for possession of a prohibited device is zero on the test or exam.**

During Lectures and Tutorials

Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class.

Copyright and Audio/Video Recording Statement

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws. Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Contingency Plan for an In-Person Class Pivoting to 100% Online Learning

In the event of a situation that requires this course to pivot to online content delivery, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Online Proctoring

Tests and examinations in this course may be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide **personal information** (including some biometric data) and the session will be **recorded**. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

Academic Appeals and Scholastic Offences

Students can file a **request for relief from academic decisions** if the request is based on one or more grounds listed in the policy. Students can read more about the policy [here](#) and a link to the procedures is listed in the Support Services sections of this document.

Students may **appeal** some academic and scholastic disciplinary decisions by a Dean or their designate, to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA). Students can read more about the policy [here](#) and a link to the procedures is listed in the Support Services section of this document.