The Politics and Ethics of Food  
Fall 2017  
Credits: 3  
Location: Copenhagen  
Major Disciplines: Political Science, Ethics, Environmental Studies, Sustainability  
Faculty Member: Dan Jørgensen  
Program Directors: Neringa B. Vendelbo  
Program Assistant: Alex Berlin  

Time and place: TBA

Instructor:  
Dan Jørgensen is a Member of the Danish Parliament, Former minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and former Member of European Parliament.

Description of course:  
A common notion is; we are what we eat. In this course we analyze some of the core discussions on how we eat and produce food in different societies around the world.

We look at political, economic, social and cultural dimensions and cover themes such as animal ethics, environment, health, food distribution, world hunger and bioengineered food.

We seek to answer ethical and political questions like; should we eat animals? How does food effect our health? Can (and should) politics change what people eat? How is food a part of our culture? What are our responsibility towards our environment when we produce food? Do we have a responsibility to reduce hunger in the world and how can we do it? Should we embrace or avoid GMOs and bioengineered food?

Furthermore, we analyze the politics of our food systems. We look at the decision-making processes in the USA, EU and Denmark and asks; who decides what for whom, why and how?

What people eat and why have changed over time, and will most likely keep changing. We ask how political actors (including NGO’s) influence this development.

Learning Objectives:  
By the end of this course, you will have a comprehensive understanding of the many different ethical and political dimensions of food consumption and production.

The course will enable you to make more informed, rational and moral decisions in your own life. But first and foremost, it will give you factual knowledge and informed arguments that qualify you to engage in substantiated discussions about the political and moral ramifications of different food systems.

This course will be especially beneficial for those of you who consider pursuing a career in political institutions, NGO’s or companies that works with food related issues.

Expectations of the students:  
All students have to do the assigned readings and preparations for every class. Everybody will participate in a

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study-group that occasionally needs to meet outside of class to prepare presentations etc. Participation in class discussions is necessary to create an active learning experience.

Field Studies:
- Visit to the Danish parliament to meet politicians and staff who work with food related policy areas
- Visit to a Danish NGO

Required Reading:
Peter Singer and Jim Mason: We are what we eat
Mars Essing: Lesser Beasts
Ronald Sandler: Food Ethics – the basics
Ronald Herring (ed) The Oxford handbook of food, politics and society

Evaluation/Grading:
To be eligible for a passing grade in this class you must complete all of the assigned work. The overall grade will come from the following:

- Engaged course participation: 25%
- 3 quizzes of 15% - 45%
- Final Paper: 30%

Disability and Resource Statement
Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Academic Support acadsupp@dis.dk. In order to receive accommodations, students should inform the instructor of approved DIS accommodations within the first two weeks of classes.

Attendance Policies
You are expected to attend all DIS classes when scheduled. If you miss multiple classes the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Director of Student Affairs will be notified and they will follow-up with you to make sure that all is well. Absences will jeopardize your grade and your standing at DIS. Allowances will be made in cases of illness, but in the case of multiple absences you will need to provide a doctor’s note. Arriving late to class is unacceptable and will affect your participation grade.

Academic Honesty
Plagiarism and Violating the Rules of an Assignment
DIS expects that students abide by the highest standards of intellectual honesty in all academic work. DIS assumes that all students do their own work and credit all work or thought taken from others. Academic dishonesty will result in a final course grade of “F” and can result in dismissal. The students’ home universities will be notified. DIS reserves the right to request that written student assignments be turned in electronic form for submission to plagiarism detection software. See the Academic Handbook for more information, or ask your instructor if you have questions.

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Schedule of course activities: TBA

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