Course Description
Eating has become a complicated and often confusing experience. Virtually every day brings news about some “miracle food” that we should be consuming or some "poison" we should be avoiding. One day it's tomatoes to prevent cancer, then flaxseed against heart disease or soybeans for reducing menopause symptoms. At the same time we may be warned about trans fats, genetically modified foods, aspartame or MSG. Dietary supplements may be touted as the key to health or a factor in morbidity. According to some, dairy products are indispensable while others urge us to avoid them. The same goes for meat, wheat and soy; the list goes on. This course will shed light on the molecules that constitute our macro and micro nutrients and will attempt to clarify a number of the food issues using the best evidence available.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1) Identify the main nutritional components of their diet.
2) Explain some of the issues surrounding food production and health.
3) Assess the strengths and weaknesses of food related research that is commonly presented in the media.

Instructors
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# Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<td><strong>Introduction to Food for Thought</strong></td>
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<td>Welcome</td>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Meet the Instructors</td>
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| Week 1: Introduction | January 22 | Lesson 1: A Sampling of Food Topics  
Lesson 2: Perspectives – Health, History, Science & Society  
Lesson 3: Scientific Research and Publishing | |
| | | Assignment #1 | April 30 |
| **Unit 1: Nutrition Basics** | | | |
| Week 2: Micronutrients Vitamins | January 29 | Lesson 1: Vitamins I  
Lesson 2: Vitamins II  
Assignment #2 | February 14 |
| | | | |
| Week 3: Micronutrients Minerals | February 5 | Lesson 1: Minerals I  
Lesson 2: Minerals II  
Lesson 3: Minerals III | |
| | | Assignment #3 | February 21 |
| Week 4: Macronutrients | February 12 | Lesson 1: Carbohydrates  
Lesson 2: Sugar  
Lesson 3: Fats  
Lesson 4: Protein | |
| | | Assignment #4 | February 28 |
| | **February 19** | **Unit 1 Test** | **March 11** |
| **Unit 2: Food Production – Techniques, Issues & Health Impacts** | | | |
| Week 5: Agriculture | February 19 | Lesson 1: Agricultural Science I  
Lesson 2: Agricultural Science II | |
| | | Assignment #5 | March 7 |
| Week 6: Food Additives | February 26 | Lesson 1: Food Additives I  
Lesson 2: Food Additives II  
Lesson 3: Sweeteners | |
| | | Assignment #6 | March 14 |
| Week 7: Adverse Food Reactions | March 05 | Lesson 1: Adverse Food Reactions I  
Lesson 2: Adverse Food Reactions II  
Lesson 3: Cooking Demo | |
| | | Assignment #7  
Assignment #8 | March 21  |
| | **March 12** | **Unit 2 Test** | **April 1** |
| **Unit 3: Food and Health** | | | |
| Week 8: Weight Control | March 12 | Lesson 1: Chocolate  
Lesson 2: Weight Control I  
Lesson 3: Weight Control II | |
| | | Assignment #8 | March 28 |
| Week 9: Diet & Disease | March 19 | Lesson 1: Diet & Cancer  
Lesson 2: Diet & the Heart I  
Lesson 3: Diet & the Heart II | |
| | | Assignment #9 | April 4 |
| Week 10: Wrap-up | March 26 | Lesson 1: The Health Food Business  
Lesson 2: Wine  
Lesson 3: Cheese  
Lesson 4: Sense and Nonsense | |
| | | Assignment #10 | April 11 |
| | **April 2** | **Unit 3 Test** | **April 23** |

* All assignments and tests are due at 23h30 UTC
Assignments
This course has 10 assignments that will be posted every Wednesday along with the lesson materials. If you have any questions about an assignment we encourage you to post them on the discussion forum so that other students can provide input along with the teaching assistants and professors. With the exception of Assignment #1 which is due the last day of the course, you will have a minimum of two weeks to complete assignments. When calculating your final grade, your lowest two assignment scores will be dropped.

Unit Discussions
CHEM181x: Food for Thought is divided into three units that are each comprised of 3 weeks of lectures. At the beginning of each unit you will be assigned readings and a prompting question around which a multi-week discussion will be structured.

Over the course of the unit, the professors and teaching assistants will share their thoughts and identify themes coming out of the discussion threads. We encourage you to use the ‘up vote’ tool to flag posts that you find particularly interesting.

Discussion and collaboration guidelines can be found here.

Note: It is important for you to be involved in the discussion forum. Up to 3 questions on the main ideas/themes of the unit discussions will be included on the Unit 3 Test.

Grading
8 Assignments x 5 points (your two lowest scores will be dropped)  40%
3 Unit Tests (all required, 20% per test)  60%

Certificate of Completion
To obtain a certificate of completion, a final grade of 60% or higher needs to be achieved. EdX will issue and send the certificate under the name of McGillX via email after the end of the course. The certificate will not include a final grade.