Although our daily lives are organized around food, most of us, especially the fortunate few getting college educations in advanced western democracies, probably never think of it in political terms except in the narrowest of senses -- food stamp policy, perhaps, or farm subsidies. In truth, for human beings, food -- the control of our food supply and its distribution -- is power, and power is the essential stuff of politics. This course focuses on several aspects of the politics of food in contemporary America, including food and political identity (if we are what we eat -- who are we?); politics and the American food industry (who designed that food pyramid, and why is government telling us what to eat anyway?); fast food culture and the Slow Food alternative (you want fries with that global controversy?), and the political implications of where our food comes from (what does what's on your plate say about what's in your future?).

Class work will range from the creative (the keeping of individual food journals and the creation of a class cookbook) to the mundane (short papers, quizzes and exams) and will be appropriate for freshmen though seniors. There will be a substantial amount of reading, including fun stuff like *Fast Food Nation* and Michael Pollan's excellent work, as well as academic studies by political scientists, anthropologists and sociologists. No pre-requisites except for a healthy appetite for learning about a familiar subject in an unfamiliar way. Students taking the class for Honors credit must register for H299. They will attend the regular Y200 class plus an additional hour of discussion section weekly led by the professor. H299 does not include any additional written work, but it does involve a 2 hour/week service learning component.

*Christine Barbour is an assistant professor of political science. She was appointed to IU in 1990. She earned her Ph.D. from Indiana University.*