



DECT3200_CRITICAL ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

Course Syllabus

I. Course Code: DECT3200
Course Title: Critical Issues in Sustainable Food Production

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Instructor's name	NECI Email
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II. Course Description and Rationale

Together we will take a journey into the heart of the food-production process and its social, economic and environmental consequences. We will explore the moral, economic and physical landscape of our eating habits, food fads, taboos, and health and nutrition issues. We will analyze and translate readings and multimedia (movies, video and audio) into short essays, presentations and research projects that offer insightful arguments relevant to agroecology. Further, we will investigate our attitudes regarding current events and critical issues that affect day-to-day operations in the culinary industry: food production, sustainability, corporate greed, and farm-to-table solutions, for example. Above all, we will engage in thoughtful, lively discussions, ever-refining and defining our knowledge and opinions.

Student Objectives

- To use writing and reading for inquiry, thinking, learning, and communicating
- To work with readings and learn to interpret, incorporate, and evaluate these readings
- To engage in various research methods to study and explore topics
- To justify these interpretations with textual evidence
- To learn how to read all texts (written and visual) closely and carefully

- To analyze differing perspectives (ideological, social, cultural, economic, historical) on issues so as to understand that multiple perspectives of an issue operate at the same time
- Learn how to separate the wheat from the chaff (truth from lies) in arguments by understanding Logical Fallacies
- To use conventions of format, structure, and language appropriate to the purpose of academic discourse, including correct quotation and documentation
- To enjoy reading, thinking about, and developing critically informed interpretations of various texts

Course Competencies

This course emphasizes the “three C’s” of composition—writing correctly, clearly, and convincingly. **By the end of the course, you will be able to:**

- Develop a unified focus statement with a controlling idea and plan of development
- Organize paragraphs into a essay on an assigned topic
- Employ the writing process to generate strong ideas and supporting material
- Proofread and fix your own “mechanical errors” (spelling, punctuation, etc.)
- Feel comfortable interacting productively within a group feedback environment
- Perform basic word processing operations to produce a clean, presentable document
- Handle quoting and documentation competently and confidently
- Read, understand, and use information gathered from professionally published source texts

III. Course Evidence

Course Description and Rationale

Critical Issues in Sustainable Food Production is based on the idea of “critical inquiry,” a fancy way of saying that the class centers on asking “tough questions.” The questions, though, are supposed to come from the student, not just the teacher. As you proceed with the course, remember that you are more than welcome to write me with any questions you have about the readings, assignments, or the comments on your writing. The more you communicate with your instructor, the more personalized the course becomes for you.

In reading seminars and response journals, students will explore the connections between reading, critical thinking, and self-expression and will begin to develop an individual voice and perspective. Formal short papers, the annotated bibliography, and the research paper will establish a foundation for future work in the B.A. program. Through technical approaches to writing, the process of revising for the Final Portfolio, and grammar clinics, students will have a chance to advance their writing skills. The book review is an extra-credit option that involves reading a full-length bound book on a relevant topic and developing a written assessment of the book's message, subject matter, and usefulness.

Course Evidence

Evidence Descriptions	Associated Standards
1. Short Papers	1. CCT—Writing, 1-3
2. Grammar Clinic	2. PPD—Communication Skills
3. Reading Seminars	3. CCT—Contemporary Issues, 1-6; Critical Thinking, 6
4. Response Journals	4. CCT—Critical Thinking, 2-3, 5
5. Annotated Bibliography	5. CCT—Res Methods, 1; Writing, 3; Readings..., 1-3
6. Research Paper	6. CCT—Res Methods, 1, 3; Readings..., 1-6
7. Final Portfolio (Revised Drafts)	7. CCT—Writing, 1; PPD—Communication Skills
8. Book Review	8. CCT— Critical Thinking, 2-3; Writing, 1

Rituals and Routines

- Arrive on time and ready to participate. Bring laptop, readings, notebook and pen or pencil, and all assigned material for that day.
- Attendance Policy. This course will observe the policy that is spelled out in the NECI Student Handbook. If you anticipate being absent in advance, fill out an Absence Request Form and follow the protocol in order to receive an **excused absence**. In case of emergency or if you wake up sick and can't attend class, contact me **the same day** by email, at darryl.benjamin@neci.edu. In this case, I may issue an excused absence. Any work missed must be made up or it will result in an Incomplete, at my discretion. If you reach a 20% absence rate—excused or not— at any time during the course, no further absences will be excused, and any further absences will result in an Incomplete. [Exception: an extreme, unavoidable emergency, in which case you must present documentation that explains your absence satisfactorily.]
- Assignments not turned in on time must be turned in within 5 calendar days to receive credit. You must make a written request for an extension on the original date due. Normally, one extension is available for the term.
- Avoid creating distractions in class. This time is for everyone! Please turn off pagers and cell phones and put them away before class begins. Special permission may be granted with advance notice of an anticipated emergency situation that may result in your being called during class time.
- Observe the NECI guidelines for grooming and attire.
- Assignments. **Do all assignments in full as assigned and turn them in when they are due.** Assignments that do not observe guidelines for presentation, and assignments submitted after the due date without a request for extension, will be docked as follows: A level work will be given a grade of A-, B work will be scored B-, etc.
- Academic honesty. Your achievement must be your own. Cheating and “borrowing” the work of another writer without explicit permission and/or without attribution, intentionally or unintentionally, is plagiarism. This includes direct quotations as well as extensive or too-close paraphrasing. Papers written for other courses, whether at NECI or elsewhere, may **not** be used for the current assignment.

General Writing Guidelines (For All Assignments)

- Use MLA style. Double space your essays—including all quotes and the Works Cited page (if the assignment instructions require one). Consult the Required Texts section of this syllabus for full bibliographic citations for the course texts.
- MLA style offers only two choices for presenting titles: either the title appears in quotes if it is a short work (a poem, an essay, article, or short story), **or** it is italicized if it is a long work (a novel or book, movie, play, or journal).
- MLA style requires the use of the **present tense**. When discussing what happens in a text (written or visual), remember that the text is always current:

Freire *argues* against what he *calls* the “banking model” of education.

The ending of *Dead Poets Society* is unexpected.

Lord Henry *corrupts* Dorian.

In *The Shape of Things*, Evelyn *changes* Adam.

- Make sure you give your reader the work and the author you are discussing as soon as you begin to write. Most essays name the work and the author in the first sentence.
- When blending quotes into your writing, always introduce the source fully the first time you refer to it and enclose in quotation marks any material that is borrowed word-for-word (refer to the author by his or her last name after the initial introduction). Conclude the quote with the appropriate page number, followed by a period.

IV. Course Standards

Critical and creative thinking are significant skills required for any professional in the foodservice industry. Students will demonstrate their ability to think critically through their writing and group discussions. Using a disciplined process of thinking, students will take positions on issues affecting the industry while working with diverse groups of people. Students will be expected to empathize with the opinions and positions of others, recognizing that multiple opinions contribute to intellectual conversations and on-going debates. Reading, writing, research methods, analytic reasoning and problem solving, presentation, and language are topics that are introduced within this class.

CCT Reading in Contemporary Issues

The student explores multiple viewpoints on complex global issues. The student reads selected books including novels, nonfiction, case studies, industry journals, online resources and periodicals. The standard is met when the student:

1. Demonstrates an ability to read and analyze written work
2. Comprehends and retains key information.
3. Identifies key concepts and ideas, supporting arguments, and supporting evidence
4. Interprets implications and consequences
5. Makes connections between multiple works
6. Relates reading to relevant personal perspective and experiences

CCT Writing

The student writes to demonstrate his/her understanding of the components of good writing in a variety of styles. Through the active process of writing and revising, the student establishes his/her point of view in a disciplined and sophisticated manner. The standard is met when the student:

1. Demonstrates an ability to draft, revise and finalize written work at a professional level by clearly articulating main ideas, providing appropriate supporting information, following an organized structure, using the appropriate tone and maintaining correct sentence-level grammar.

2. Produces critical and creative writing including persuasive essays, reflective writing and descriptive writing.
3. Produces technical writing including business writing, employment related writing, industry specific writing and other related types of written communication.

CCT Teaching, Training and Oral Presentation

Through the preparation and delivery of professional presentations, the student gains knowledge of a specific topic while sharpening communication and oral communication skills. The standard is met when the student prepares and delivers professional presentations by:

3. Projecting a professional appearance and demeanor
4. Facilitating presentation in a timely manner
5. Documenting findings of presentation topic
6. Addressing and engaging the group in a confident and clear manner
7. Using visual aids.
8. Integrates appropriate technology
9. Incorporating relevant and appropriate assessment and evaluation tools
10. Accepting and responding appropriately to questions, comments and criticisms

CCT Research Methods

The student uses a variety of research methods to investigate topics and to extract pertinent information to support or dispute ideas. The student uses this information to support written work at a professional level. The standard is met when the student:

1. Is analytical in research process and demonstrates the ability to access and use information from a variety sources including books, magazines, newspapers, the internet and interviews while discerning the relative value or credibility of a source by identifying bias.
2. Compare and evaluate quantitative, qualitative, ethnography, scholarly personal narrative and anecdotal information within different contexts
3. Synthesizes cited material into his/her own writing by using citations that are appropriate to his / her overlying argument, incorporating citations into the text with an appropriate introduction and discussion and using citations as determined by the MLA guidelines.

CCT Critical Thinking, Analytic Reasoning and Problem Solving

The student will be able to use observation, research, experience and creativity to develop a critical and careful response to a written work or an observed situation. The standard is met when the student, through his/her writing and discussions:

1. Demonstrates observational skills by reading or reviewing a primary source for context and interviewing a person for their perspective on an issue, topic, or situation.
2. Demonstrates critical reading skills by identifying key concepts in media, books, journals and other sources.
3. Demonstrates an understanding of societal values and beliefs and makes comparisons between cultures.
4. Uses observation, research, experience, and creativity to develop and present a critical and careful solution to a stated issue or an observed situation.

5. Uses creativity combined with critical thinking to develop innovative responses to specific situations.
6. Demonstrates sensitivity to diverse situations and people and can discuss controversial topics with a strategy of understanding multiple viewpoints.
7. Demonstrates ability to use theoretical models (such as the Moral Languages and Conversation) to analyze, problem solve, discuss and apply to controversial topics and/or situations.

CCT Sustainability

NECI defines the concept of food sustainability as good, clean, and fair. Students understand how they contribute to broader ecological, economical, and social systems and demonstrate awareness of how personal and collective actions affect sustainability at local and global levels. The standard is met when a student:

1. Defines, explains, and analyzes the taste, environmental, and social criteria considered in determining sustainability and the relationship between good, clean, and fair.
2. Identifies, distinguishes, and analyzes the economic, social, and environmental consequences of purchasing local, organic, and recycled, and/or reused products.
3. Defines and utilizes common terminology used to describe sustainability in the food service industry
4. Is introduced to the concept of sustainability – good, clean, and fair – and implements it and its application in business design its application in routine business decisions and practices.
5. Recognizes the moral, ethical, social, and ecological factors that influence sustainable business decisions and makes appropriate judgments.
6. Evaluates conscientious waste management and practices such applicable practices as composting, recycling or safe reuse of goods.
7. Develops a sense of responsibility and applies it as a consumer and member of the global community
8. Reads and analyzes current publications related to local and global environmental issues.
9. Applies complex terminology and advanced concepts pertaining to sustainability

Submitting Assignments

Send your assignments as an e-mail attachment to your instructor. Follow the instructions for e-mail submissions.

Course Schedule

Written (short papers, other assignments)	30%
Reading (comprehension, analysis, reflection)	30%
Research (citations, style, and comprehensiveness)	20%

Final Portfolio	10%
Participation	10%

Lesson Topics

- Day 1: Introduction to the Course and Syllabus
- Day 2: A Close Reading: From *Best Food Writing*
- Day 3: Movie_ "*A Place at the Table*"
- Day 4: Discussion & Exercise: *Food, Inc.*
- Day 5: Partner Presentations: *Food, Inc.*
- Day 6: Solutions: "*Fed Up*"
- Day 7: Lecture: Sustainability #1
- Day 8 Sustainability #2
- Day 9: PPT Workshop
- Day 10: PPT Sustainability Presentations #1
- Day 11: PPT Sustainability Presentations #2
- Day 12: Corporate Greed #1
- Day 13: Corporate Greed #2: "*The World According to Monsanto*"
- Day 14: Logical Fallacies #1
- Day 15: Logical Fallacies #2
- Day 16: Final Portfolio

Overview of Evidence & Standards: Rubrics

Critical & Creative Standards (CTT)

Element of Evidence	Missing Evidence	Below Standard (I)	Meets Standard (C)	Above Standard (B)	Exceeds Standard (A)
FORMAL SHORT PAPERS	Student did not complete work.	Unclear or lack of focus, organization; severe GUM errors interfere with clear expression. Marginal understanding of the subject matter or source text. Relies on narrative form. Significant departure from protocols or assigned topic. Plagiarism.	Develops a topic by a process of exploration. Focus may not include a controlling idea. Repeats information provided by a source; limited interpretation; may default to narrative form. Rigidly adheres to 5-paragraph template; inconsistent paragraph unity; frequent GUM errors.	Applies knowledge to formulate a well-articulated thesis. May extrapolate new material from a source. Development moves beyond 5-paragraph template. GUM errors limited. Emerging style. Significant improvement over the term.	Combines information from a variety of sources with valid reasoning to create a novel thesis; selects rhetorical devices to aid in developing a strong controlling idea. Mature writing style. Typo errors only.
PORTFOLIO REVISIONS	Student did not complete work.	Minimal effort to revise for an improved product.	Minor revisions based on instructions but not necessarily understood. Repeats same errors. Some GUM corrected.	Revisions at the word/sentence / paragraph level, resulting in significant improvement; understanding prevents repetition of errors. Most GUM corrected.	Revisions at the conceptual level. Typos or GUM errors eliminated.
OBJECTIVE SUMMARY	Student did not	Significant departure from	Incomplete or incorrect	Includes complete	Includes complete

	complete work.	protocols or assigned topic. Excessive paraphrasing, plagiarism.	citation. Topic & minor details are identified but concept, message or purpose is only partially expressed. May distort or editorialize.	citation. Captures topic, message, & purpose of the selection. Repeats important points; may include direct quotes. Does not distort or editorialize.	citation. Captures the topic, message, & purpose of the selection. Incorporates direct & indirect quotes; recognizes hierarchy of ideas. Does not distort or editorialize.
RESEARCH PAPER	Student did not complete work.	Significant departure from protocols or assigned topic. Citations limited to Internet or other easily-accessed single source; incorrect citation, given a model; misapplication of quotes & findings; citations are incomplete or incorrect. Plagiarism.	Limits sources to the required number; quotes & cites sources correctly; applies findings appropriately; Limited use of citations with occasional errors.	Uses range of sources to support thesis; applies findings appropriately; relies on direct quotes. Substantially complete citations; error-free formats.	Uses multiple sources; applies direct & indirect quotes with assurance; synthesizes findings to contribute to a unique thesis. Citations are complete; error-free formats.
READING SEMINARS	Lack of attendance or participation results in insufficient evidence to assess reading level.	Inefficient, literal reader; "decodes" at the word or sentence level. Stops at literal interpretation. Does not make a sustained effort.	Functional reader. Reads for superficial meaning. May distort meanings. Discussion, written responses reflect errors in interpretation of source text.	Strategic reader. Efficiently navigates the text. Analyzes & orders major, secondary material within a continuum. Demonstrates full grasp of material; applies what is	Conceptual reader. Draws inferences.& grasps implications readily; easily navigates a text; appreciates the writer's methodology .

			Functional vocabulary minimizes reading difficulty.	learned appropriately.	Applies critical thinking to evaluate the usefulness & validity of the writer's thesis.
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	Student did not complete work.	Demonstrates pre-beginner level of information literacy. Does not meet minimum standard. Excessive paraphrasing, plagiarism.	Demonstrates beginning level of information literacy. Incomplete or incorrect citations. Includes all required sources. Abstracts are brief; some subjectivity.	Demonstrates substantial degree of information literacy. Citations are complete & accurate; includes all required sources. Abstracts are substantially complete.	Demonstrates high level of information literacy. Complete & accurate; includes all required sources with informative, accurate & complete abstracts.

Personal & Professional Development standards

Element of Evidence	Missing Evidence	Below Standard (I)	Meets Standard (C)	Above Standard (B)	Exceeds Standard (A)
APPEARANCE & GROOMING	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Neglects personal grooming; attire is not appropriate to classroom context.	Inconsistent personal grooming; attire is appropriate to class-room context.	Attire & grooming consistently observe the stipulations contained in the Student Handbook.	Personal grooming reflects high self-esteem; attire is consistently business casual.
LANGUAGE, ATTITUDE & DECORUM	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Acts out personal issues or disagreements; indulges in antisocial behavior as defined in Student Handbook; subjects peers	May act or speak inappropriately at times; offers an apology upon reflection; effort is made to modify behavior with	Aware of self within classroom environment; maintains composure; uses appropriate tone of courtesy.	Exhibits courtesy and discretion at all times; sets positive example.

		& instructor to verbal abuse; is unapologetic after conferencing; sets negative example; received demerit.	occasional reminders		
ATTENDANCE	Absences result in demerit.	Unexcused absence rate of 20% or above; late for class more than once without a satisfactory explanation.	Attendance 80-90%; requests excused absences properly; requests & submits missed assignments in a timely manner.	Attendance is better than 90%; 100% punctuality; requests for excused absences are infrequent; requests & submits missed assignments in a timely manner.	100% attendance and punctuality; often arrives early. Requests excused absences properly; requests & submits missed assignments in a timely manner.
RESPONSIBILITY	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Resists taking responsibility for own learning; improvement not observable.	Relies on a grade to mark achievement; tends to shift responsibility for own learning onto other people or circumstances; improves over time as a result of conferencing.	Takes responsibility for own learning; self-evaluations are sincere and thorough; follows up on feedback from others; shows self-initiated improvement throughout the course. Arrives in class prepared with required materials for the day.	Proactive, self-motivated learner. Arrives in class prepared with required materials for the day
CLASS PARTICIPATION	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Arrives in class unprepared to participate in a productive	Arrives prepared for class but maintains limited involvement in	Arrives prepared for class; volunteers often, participates regularly in class	Arrives prepared for class; volunteers often, participates readily in class activities &

		manner; body language and/or attitude signal withdrawal from class activities.	class activities & discussion; participates when prompted.	activities & discussion; makes a positive contribution	discussion; contributes actively to the learning process of the group through mature, far-ranging perspectives
TEAMWORK	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Personal preoccupations regularly take priority over group goals; does not view self as a “team player”; fosters negative learning environment through toxic behaviors.	Personal preoccupations occasionally take priority; passive, selective involvement; may contribute to negative learning environment.	Personal preoccupations rarely take priority; shows awareness of own role on the “team”; contributes positively to the learning environment.	Personal preoccupations are put aside completely; contributions boost “team spirit” and foster a dynamic, stimulating learning environment.
LEADERSHIP	Absences do not support an evaluation.	Participates in or contributes to toxic behavior; does not demonstrate awareness of leadership opportunities; may exercise leadership in a negative way by exploiting conflicts within group to further own agenda.	Aware of leadership opportunities but does not volunteer until asked; follower, not a leader. Passive, selective involvement; ignores inappropriate behavior of classmates; defers to stronger personalities; participates in clique behavior.	May march to own drummer but willingly accepts constructive leadership role when it is presented; contributes constructively to decision-making processes; includes others; shares information transparently; focuses on problem-solving rather than getting drawn into personal agendas.	May march to own drummer but often initiates constructive leadership role in group activities; reaches out to others; focuses on problem-solving rather than getting drawn into personal agendas; ensures performance of own group or project team; demonstrates maturity and balance.