

The Evergreen State College
Masters of Public Administration Program
Spring 2016 Food Policy: Digital Cultivation
2 credit elective, location TBD

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Friday, 5/20/16, 5pm – 9pm; Saturday, 5/21/16; 9am – 5pm; Sunday, 5/21/16; 9am – 5pm

Students may contact faculty with questions before the quarter begins at lesliehatfield@gmail.com. Undergraduates wishing to take this class will need to join the wait list.

The policies that govern our food systems – influenced by a wide range of actors representing a breadth of interests – bring serious effects to bear on other related systems, not least health care, education, taxes and the environment. Furthermore, our relationship to food is a constant topic in the media, to the extent that some of us spend more time ingesting media about food than we do preparing – or eating – food in real life. As the media landscape continues to evolve, so does the conversation between industry spin-doctors, nonprofit activists, citizens and government officials, as do so many other key public policies (energy, transport, etc.). In class, we will explore transparency and labeling, traditional food culture and local food production as they relate to political sovereignty, the role of science in assessing and communicating risk, and more.

This class will explore best practices in "good food" advocacy and will look at the ways federal and state agencies engage – digitally and otherwise – with activists, producers and consumers.

This is an intensive class: we will be compressing a full quarter's work into a short time frame. Please plan accordingly to be sure you can attend each session and meet the necessary deadlines for assignments. Schedule is subject to change but the assignment due dates are firm. All assignments must be submitted on time – late submission may be accepted upon prior approval from faculty. Please read the entire syllabus. Thanks!

There is an assignment due before the first class. Detailed instructions for this and subsequent assignments will be delivered to enrolled students at the beginning of the quarter.

Assignments:

Food policy sketch. Examine a specific piece of food/agriculture legislation [read: NOT an omnibus bill like the Farm Bill or Childhood Nutrition Act] and write up your findings, including general background of the issue, the efforts of at least two stakeholder organizations to influence the outcome (with 3-4 screenshots documenting these efforts) and analyzing their successes or failures. (1-2 pgs, double-spaced, plus screenshots) Due: May 13th.

Food policy campaign. Ideally, you will work on the same piece of policy you examined for your case study, but you may opt to work instead on another topic, individually or in a small group. This assignment is 2 parts and is due May 29th:

1.) Design a campaign plan advocating for or against a specific food policy issue of your choosing. Identify the audience you wish to reach and determine how best to communicate with that audience, using a multimedia platform. Set at least 1 short-term goal (number of signatures on a petition, etc.) Write at least one paragraph connecting your analysis to the required reading for the course.

2.) Carry out a single aspect of your campaign (create a survey or a letter to the editor, publish a blog post, participate in a public comment period, etc.).

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and a seminar faculty evaluation are required for credit at the end of each quarter, along with faculty evaluations of students. *Evaluations are due at the end of Week 10.*

Late assignments: *Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. If you have a need to turn in an assignment late you must contact your seminar faculty no later than the original assignment due date to discuss options. Parameters are left to the discretion of the faculty on a situation-by-situation basis.* Late assignments must be completed by the end of the quarter the assignment was originally due to ensure course credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, *seminar faculty must be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case.* Makeup work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question for course credit.

Reading

****It is essential that students finish the asterisked readings prior to performing the first assignment (policy sketch) and be prepared to discuss them in class.***

Books:

McMillan, Tracy. (2012) *The American Way of Eating: Undercover at Walmart, Applebee's, Farm Fields and the Dinner Table*. Simon & Schuster. ISBN 1439171955, 9781439171950

Articles and Papers:

Aviv, Rachel. (2014). *A Valuable Reputation*. The New Yorker.
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2014/02/10/140210fa_fact_aviv

Gussow, Joan. (2008). *The Incompatibility of Food and Capitalism*. The Snail, via Grist.com. grist.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/gussow_snail_usa_0820022.pdf

Kaufman, Fredrick. (2010). *The Food Bubble: How Wall Street Starved Millions and Got Away with It*. Harper's. Frederickkaufman.typepad.com/files/the-food-bubble-pdf.pdf

Leonard, Christopher. (2014). *The Chicken Competition*. Guernica.
<https://www.guernicamag.com/features/the-chicken-competition>

Use of Electronic Devices: this course is Moodle-based and mostly paperless. We understand, and expect, that you will need to use electronic devices in class. However, the class is also participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class. This means that electronic devices should not be used for anything other than for class-related activities. Resist the siren call of all the ways in which your devices can distract you from what is going on in the classroom. We will ask people to put away their devices, except for note taking, for guest lectures. Please extend similar courtesies to the faculty when they are lecturing.

Credit: Students will receive two (2) graduate credits at the completion of each quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Incompletes may be offered on case-by-case basis. Refer to the MPA student handbook. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of total credit. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning goals, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the term.

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students work toward weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning in readings, lectures, seminar and group projects.

Learning Styles: Faculty endeavor to provide information in multiple formats: auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc. However, style applications are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. Consult your seminar faculty to discuss learning style options or personal challenges.

Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through a working relationship with Access Services, the Writing Center and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy [here](#).

Other Expectations of Students and Faculty: We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student conduct code](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#).

All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

Guest Policy: Guests are welcome to visit during class time and seminar meetings with discretionary approval from course faculty in advance of the requested visit.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with television, web pages, and radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel program meeting even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-program email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies [here](#).

Communicating with Each Other: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking your Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.

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