

INT 101: Food Problems

Professor

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Course Objectives

INT 101 is a seminar course that develops the critical thinking and written argumentation skills

essential to a liberal arts education. This semester we will read about, talk about, write about, and argue about food as a source of nutrition, group affiliation, and social problems. This course has a set of ambitious goals:

- To study the writing process, effective writing traits, modes of writing, and argument construction.
- To develop essential skills in argument analysis and evaluation.
- To become self-aware and self-critical thinkers.

Course Requirements & Grading Policies

To be successful in this class, you must be present, you must be involved, you must be prepared, and you must write well.

Because this is a workshop course, you can expect to discuss, write, and critique in class frequently. Participation will be 10% of your final grade. Your participation grade includes preparing out-of-class assignments, contributing to the class discussion, approaching in-class assignments with an enthusiastic attitude, and meeting with me for a writing conference. I want to emphasize the importance of having paper drafts for workshops. Coming to workshop unprepared will result in a twenty point deduction from your participation grade.

You must attend class. Attendance counts for 15% of your grade based on this scale:

Absence	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Grade	100	98	95	90	85	75	65	50	20	automatic failure

Entering class after attendance has been taken will count as a tardy, and three tardies will count as an absence. Missing class for a verifiable family emergency, participation in a university-sanctioned athletic event, or observing religious holidays will not result in a deduction from your attendance grade, but you must inform me about your absence.

I will give brief quizzes on the reading assignments almost every day. The quizzes are in-class writing assignments designed to test your reading comprehension, practice critical thinking, and initiate class discussion. They will be 15% of your final grade. You may replace up to three quizzes (plus quizzes missed for religious holidays or university-sanctioned athletic events) by writing a two hundred word synopsis of the material covered in the quiz. The synopsis will be due to my email by 6:00 pm on the day of the second class after the quiz.

This course will include ten hours of service learning to enhance our understanding of the human relationship with food. We will work with Macon Roots, a local organization that supports sustainable agriculture, and with an ultra-organic farm that sells its products at the Mulberry Street Market. The service learning is part of your participation grade and is necessary to your service learning reflection assignment.

The majority of your grade will come from four papers and a service learning reflection. The papers are worth 13% each, and the service learning reflection is worth 8%. You must submit your papers to my email by 6:00 pm on the date indicated. Except in cases of dire medical or family emergency, which will require documentation, late papers will receive a grade of "F."

In an ongoing effort to improve the quality of instruction, each student enrolled in this course is required to complete an end-of-semester course evaluation.

I realize that you are busy and that unexpected crises sometimes arise, but as a general rule I do not give extensions on any assignments. I also do not excuse absences. If you have a major emergency or extended illness, you should contact Associate Dean Ed Weintraut to intervene on your behalf. I do not ever give extra credit assignments.

Revision Policy

I encourage you to rewrite and resubmit your papers after they have been graded. Revised papers must be accompanied by a self-critical analysis paragraph that explains how you improved the paper. Submit revised papers to my email by 6:00 pm on the date of the next class period after original papers were returned. When you revise, I will average the original grade with the revised grade to calculate your final grade.

Revising means more than simply correcting minor errors. A weak revision will result in a lower grade, but a well done revision will both improve your grade and improve your writing ability.

Computer Policy

This semester we will be using computers and draft-sharing software to enhance in-class writing assignments and draft workshops. However, this class requires no special technological expertise, and I only expect you to be able to use some standard programs for word processing, sending and receiving email, and using the internet. If you feel uncomfortable using any of these types of programs, talk to me.

Never use your computer or phone for non-academic purposes in class. Texting or emailing during class time will result in a serious deduction from your participation grade. You will also be asked to leave the classroom, and you will receive an unexcused absence for the class.

Disability Policy

Students with a documented disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. If you are not registered with Disability Services, the instructor will refer you to the Student Support Services office for consultation regarding documentation of your disability and eligibility for accommodations under the ADA/504. In order to receive accommodations, eligible students must provide each instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form from Disability Services. Students must return the completed and signed form to the Disability Services office on the 3rd floor of the Connell Student Center. Students with a documented disability who do not wish to use accommodations are strongly encouraged to register with Disability Services and complete a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information please contact Disability Services at 301-2778 or visit the website at http://www.mercer.edu/stu_support/swd.htm.

Honor Code Policy

Mercer students have a long, proud tradition of honorable conduct, and I expect all students in this class to continue that tradition. Cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic misconduct will result in prosecution by the Honor Court, who may censure, suspend, or expel a guilty student. If you ever have any concerns about plagiarism or other forms of misconduct, please consult me, and I will be happy to discuss your situation confidentially.

Course Schedule and Assignments

August 22	Course introduction
August 24	Service-learning workshop
August 27	In-class writing

August 29	Marvin Harris, <i>Good to Eat</i> , Ch. 1-2
August 31	Harris, Ch. 3-4
September 3	Labor Day
September 5	Harris, Ch. 5-6
September 7	Harris, Ch. 7-8
September 10	Harris, Ch. 9-10
	Writing an Argument
September 12	Harris, Ch. 11

You are part of a Mercer on Mission trip to rural China, and your host family has offered you dog. Did you eat it? Explain your decision to your friends and family in a 1500 word blog post.

September 14	Writing workshop
September 17	Writing workshop
September 19	Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> , Ch. I-IV
September 21	Sinclair, Ch. V-IX
September 24	Sinclair, Ch. X-XV
	Writing paragraphs
September 26	Sinclair, Ch. XVI-XX
September 28	Sinclair, Ch. XXI-XXIV
October 1	Sinclair, XXV-XXVII
	Writing sentences
October 3	Sinclair, XXVIII-XXXI

Upton Sinclair's allegations of unsanitary and inhumane conditions in the meatpacking industry created an intense controversy and led to calls for reform. You are a Chicagoan in 1906, and you have been aroused to write a 1500 word letter to the Chicago *Sun* about the book. Write your letter from one of the assigned perspectives: a middle-class mother, an immigrant worker, a local bureaucrat, or an executive in the meatpacking industry. How do you respond to the controversy?

October 5	Writing workshop
October 8	Writing workshop
October 10	Michael Pollan, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> , Introduction- Ch. 2
October 12	Fall break
October 15	Lamar lectures

October 17	Pollan, Ch. 3-5
October 19	Pollan, Ch. 6-7
October 22	Pollan, Ch. 8-9
	Style
October 24	Pollan, Ch. 10-12
October 26	Pollan, Ch. 13-14
October 29	Food, Inc
October 31	Pollan, Ch. 15-16
November 2	Pollan, Ch. 17-18
November 5	Pollan, Ch. 19-20
	Prewriting techniques

Congress is considering modifications to the corn subsidy, and you have been called to deliver a 1500 word testimony as an expert witness. Based on your assigned perspective, do you think the subsidy should be extended, limited, or eliminated? You may be a Monsanto executive, an industrial farmer, an organic farmer, a working mother, or a college student.

November 7	Writing workshop
November 9	Writing workshop
November 12	Gilman, <i>Fat</i> , Introduction and Ch. 1
	Revision Strategies
November 14	Gilman, Ch. 2
November 16	Service day
November 19	Gilman, Ch. 3
November 21	Thanksgiving break
November 23	Thanksgiving break
November 26	Library orientation and scavenger hunt
November 28	Gilman, Ch. 4
November 30	Gilman, Ch. 5
December 3	Gilman, Ch. 6 and Conclusion

You are a nutritionist, and you have been asked to review an article on the obesity epidemic for publication. Find an article, and write a 1500 word evaluation of its claims in light of Sander Gilman's book *Fat*. Do you think the article should be published? Should it be revised?

December 5

Writing workshop

December 7

Writing workshop

Write a 700 word reflection on your experience working with Macon Roots and Davis Farms. What did you learn about food supply? What did you learn about yourself?