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ENG 111: TOPICS IN LITERATURE, FILM, AND CULTURAL STUDIES
WRITING ABOUT FARMING, FOOD AND SUSTAINABILITY
ENG 111-B, Term 3, 2015-16
Beijing, Thomas Commons



REQUIRED TEXTS

Changing Writing: A Guide with Scenarios, by Johndan Johnson-Eilola

NOTE: if you purchase a used copy, you will need to purchase the online writing tutorials that come with new copies of the book.

The Omnivore's Dilemma, by Michael Pollen

Readings on the web or on Moodle (as designated on the schedule). Always print to read, and bring a PAPER copy to class for group analysis.

Films, to be screened in class, may include: *More Than Honey*; *Food, Inc.*; *GMO OMG*; *Wisconsin: A Food Fight*; and *Food Chains*

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Food movements today are a media event. Some movements emphasize eating locally grown (or raised) foods. Others advocate for organics; or call for GMO food labeling. Bee watchers worry about the impact of declining honey bee populations on common food sources; and vegetarians, vegans and others point to inhumane (and unsustainable) practices common in raising animals for food. Fish and seafood provide good sources of Omega 3 nutrients but some sources also carry risks related to high mercury levels traceable to human industrial activities. In all food-related industries, human labor can be rewarded or exploited, sometimes to the point of engaging in modern forms of slavery. What a picture!

Contemporary food movements have their advocates and detractors. Conflicting information can make it difficult to know what position to hold. But the picture usually more complex than a position “for” or “against” can reasonably encapsulate. Often “neither/nor” and “both/and” logics are necessary to construct an informed position. Above all, this class seeks to help students to understand the interrelated nature of all of these issues, by focusing on vital points of connect—nexes—of today’s food systems.

Moreover, using both popular and academic sources related to food, you’ll hone your skills in reading critically—or, reading with a inquisitive, well-reasoning, creative and truth-seeking mind; you’ll practice evaluating arguments, and learn how to move past soundbites, toward an understanding of academic research in multiple disciplines. You’ll learn to locate credible and academic sources of information and to read those from an informed perspective, evaluating *their* arguments too.

In your *own* writing about food, you’ll aim to start investigations with an open mind, to avoid personal bias in face of conclusive evidence, to recognize that new knowledge in every discipline is *never* the final word but is continually challenged and reconstructed (and that that’s OK!), and to write persuasively for college-level readers. At the back of this syllabus are more specific writing lesson outcomes, as articulated for all of Cornell’s introductory writing (W) courses.

Class format will primarily be discussion-based and workshop-based, and work will often be collaboratively produced. Peer groups will help you to sharpen your understanding of the issues, your arguments and writing skills.

REQUIREMENTS

(20%) I. PREPARATION FOR CLASS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO COLLABORATIVE LEARNING.

Includes:

- Coming to class prepared and on time;
- Contributing daily and meaningfully to class discussion and projects;
- Submitting drafts and bringing printed drafts to class as instructed, when due;
- Submitting final drafts to Moodle as due;
- Contributing (as instructed) to peer review critiques;
- Engaging in wholesale revisions and editing of first and second drafts;
- Attendance **at least two co-curricular activities** related to the coursework—opportunities in brackets on schedule; also includes visits to the Writing Studio. Other opportunities must be approved by me in advance. For credit, submit 1 page, single-spaced summary of, and response to, the event—SUMMARY: briefly describe the event’s content; RESPONSE: what important points did you take away? what connections can you make to other course material or projects? what questions did this raise for you? Etc.

II. WRITING PAPERS

(20%) Paper I: Why Be a Bee Campus?

Write a persuasive paper of about 1200 words (not including header and footnotes), addressed to the Cornell Community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni) that analyzes and presents the most compelling reasons that Cornell College should become a Bee Campus. A successful paper will have a clear purpose, lay out points in a logical order, support points with compelling evidence, and will be written in an appropriately formal style. The paper will suggest a keen sense of audience and will be grounded in available scientific data. Use APA-style citations.

(20%) Paper 2:

This essay will analyze the “PACT” (a term from *Changing Writing*) of one of the following: a short section of Michael Pollan’s book *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*; the film *GMO OMG*, or *Wisconsin: Food Fight*. A successful paper will analyze rather than evaluate, have a clear purpose and strong thesis, and use logical and evidence to support the thesis. Use MLA-style citations. See rubric for additional considerations.

(25%) Paper 3:

Select a research topic related to GMO’s to explore more deeply. This paper will explain the issue to readers (non-experts who are interested and generally well-educated) and will analyze your secondary research findings. You may use “popular” sources if these would be deemed credible to your intended readers (assume that Wikipedia would not be such a source, although it might give you leads; a newspaper of record like *The New York Times* might be such a source), but you should go to the primary research articles wherever possible; and you must include some scholarly sources. A number between four and eight sources is likely in the right ballpark. Cite sources in APA style.

(15%) III. FINAL EXAM

This will be a short-answer and essay exam that assesses your understanding of basic course material; your editing abilities for clarity and concision; and your ability to identify plagiarism or inadequate documentation of sources, and to create (with a reference guide) citations in MLA and APA.

RESOURCES

Me: I welcome and encourage you to reach out to me if you have questions, find yourself struggling academically, need individual assistance completing reading and writing assignments, or just want to get to know your professor better. The best way to reach out is to come to my office, South Hall 203, during my stated office hours. (See the top of the syllabus.)

If you have a conflict with my office hours and cannot reschedule it, you can reach me most easily email (mmouton@cornellcollege.edu) set up an appointment at an alternative time.

Two caveats: I do not check email or calls after 9 PM, and I do not give feedback on drafts via email, as this can too easily lead to misunderstandings.

The Writing Studio: an invaluable resource for students at all stages of the writing process, from working to understand an assignment to polishing the final draft. They will not edit or rewrite papers for you, but will provide good sounding boards so that you can see your own work through fresh eyes. They can also help you to better understand expectations of college writing, including but not limited to good grammar. Any single session may or may not be especially helpful, but use the studio early and often, and you'll emerge a better writer than you ever thought yourself capable—in part because you'll grow to have a better understanding of why readers are important during the writing process and not only at the end. The studio takes walk-ins, or by appointment. Director: Laura Farmer, 319-895-4462.

Hours: M-Th: 8am-11pm; F 9am-5pm; Su: 1pm-11pm. (Check the website in case of changes.)

The Quantitative Reasoning Studio: a great resource for assistance in understanding the data and arguments in scientific articles you come across in your research. Takes walk-ins, or by appointment. Director: Jessica Johanningmeier, 319-895-4222.

Hours: M-Th: 8am-5 pm, 7-11 p.m.; Fri: 8am – 5pm; Sun: 3-5 p.m., 7-11 p.m.

Consulting Librarians: Jen Rouse (Humanities) and Amy Cullen (Sciences) are available to consult with you on your research. Email them (jrouse@cornellcollege.edu or acullen@cornellcollege.edu) if you have research questions or want to set up an appointment. You can also stop by: their offices are located on the 3rd floor of Cole Library.

Academic Technology Studio: Brooke Bergantzel can provide support for educational technology. She and her staff are available for individual consultations, and her office is in the lower level of Cole Library, near the Writing and Quantitative Thinking Studios.

Student Health and Counseling Center: College can be stressful on any number of levels. If you find yourself distracted or unmotivated, or a personal issue is undermining your academic success, take advantage of the on-campus counseling center to talk it through. This is a great resource and you don't have to be on the brink of disaster to benefit from their services. (If you do feel that you're on the brink of disaster, that's all the more reason to see them early.) You might even think of it as an "adjunct" course, only the subject is (how great is this?) YOU and you get full attention of the instructor! Ph: 319-895-4234 for appointment, open M-F 8am-4pm; 24-hour crisis intervention services (provided by Foundation 2 Crisis Center) at 319-362-2174.

POLICIES

Grading: Note that grades in college are earned and not assumed. That is, you should not assume that you begin with 100 points and are “marked down” for errors, particularly in writing assignments. Instead, you *earn* credit for what is good about your critical thinking and writing, while being pointed to areas for improvement. Furthermore, your written work will be graded based on its quality and not simply based on the fact of your having completed it, or on the effort you spend on it. That said, research shows a significant long-term correlation between time spend on coursework and overall success in college, so don’t be discouraged if you spend a great deal of time your homework but your grades do not *immediately* meet the goals you set for yourself. Congratulate yourself for what you do well and build on it.

Inasmuch as writing is often a social activity reliant upon teamwork, and because biggest improvement in writing happens through good habits practiced over significant amounts of time, your course grade will be based on more than the quality of your final drafts, though this, too, is important.

Your final grade will be weighted (roughly) as listed under “Requirements” above, and will reflect the overall quality of your work in the course:

Technology: Laptops, e-readers, and cell phones may not be used in class unless otherwise stated. Be certain that your cell phone is off or on silent and put entirely out of sight (yours as well as mine!) at the start of each class.

Professionalism in the classroom: While class discussion may be relatively informal at times, certain behaviors are inappropriate because they suggest disrespect for participants and a lack of engagement. Examples include engaging in side conversations when someone else has the floor, speaking over others, tardiness, packing up your things before the end of class, wearing pajamas or slippers to class (OK—that’s just my pet peeve, but it can be distracting), excessive yawning, nose-picking, and you can probably think of others. Put in more positive than negative terms, please be on time, be respectfully engaged, and eat meals and snacks before or after (not during) class time. (Beverages are fine).

Accessibility: I will provide accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities provided that you request them within the first three days of class and if documentation is on file with the college’s disabilities services coordinator. Here is Cornell’s official policy as stated in the college catalogue:

- Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml.
- Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.
- At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Attendance: I expect you to come to class every day and to participate constructively. Because our class format will be based on discussion and workshops, you'll learn most from being fully present and engaged. Any absence after three missed class periods (not days) will result in the automatic diminishment of your final grade by ½ letter grade. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so I advise you to save these three class periods for illness, travel, co-curricular events, and other times you might really need them. Perfect attendance will work in your favor should your final grade be a borderline percentage.

Coordinating Co-Curricular Activities and Religious Observances: Although I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, if you have a sports or other co-curricular activity scheduled that could interfere with your ability to attend class, or plan to observe a religious holiday, please notify me at the beginning of the term and provide me with a schedule of events. Afterwards, you should consult others in the class about what you may have missed. I will also meet with you before or after that class period at your request to discuss options.

Deadlines: Because getting behind on the block plan can be fatal for later assignments, I typically will not accept late papers, and I do not grant extensions except for true emergencies. If you find yourself falling behind, talk with me about it as soon as possible, and I will help you to strategize.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is using others' words, research, or ideas without crediting them fully and accurately, and it is a serious academic offense. Plagiarism can include writing a classmate's paper, stealing (or buying) an essay and submitting it as your own, cutting and pasting from the internet, or mis-paraphrasing an article that you document. Cheating includes receiving unauthorized assistance in class discussions or exams (e.g., relying on crib notes rather than your own reading). We will talk more in class about what constitutes plagiarism and cheating and how to avoid them. Whatever the form, know that you are ultimately the person responsible for maintaining academic integrity. If you plagiarize or cheat, whether it is intentional or not, you'll receive an F as your final course grade and I will document the incident with the registrar. Feel free to ask me questions any time about properly documenting sources, or the distinction between collaboration and cheating. Here is Cornell's official policy:

"Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in *The Compass*, our student handbook, under the heading 'Academic Policies – Honesty in Academic Work.'" *The Compass* may be found on Cornell's website and located through the student portal.

SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Have readings completed prior to the day on which they are listed below. Unless otherwise specified, morning sessions are from 9:00-11:00, and afternoon sessions are from 1:00-3:00—in Beijing.

WEEK I: Food Pollination; Writing for Change

	Readings/Writings Due at 9 AM	AM	PM
M Oct. 26		(9-9:50) Intros (10-11) Mike Bianco – visiting artist	Film screening: <i>More Than Honey</i> (Hall-Perrine) [6:30-8:00; meeting with candidates for MV Town Council]
T Oct. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Changing Writing (CW)</i>, ch. 1 • <i>Pan-UK Fact Sheets</i>, with particular focus on #'s 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9. http://www.pan-uk.org/bees/blog 	Discussion	Campus walk-about (wear comfortable shoes, bring notepad and pen)
W Oct. 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CW</i>, ch. 2 • BeeCityUSA.org – explore website, with focus on becoming a Bee Campus • “Envisioning a Sustainable Future” (Moodle) • “Pollinator Protection Task Force Report”-City of Madison, pdf (use Google to locate) 	Envisioning and Drawing the Future, with Mike Bianco	Discussion, Cont.
Th Oct 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CW</i>, ch. 3, 8 • “Federal Court to EPA: No, You Can’t Approve This Pesticide That Kills Bees,” <i>Mother Jones</i> magazine, online (use Google to locate) • “Neonicotinoid Residues in Wildflowers, a Potential Route of Chronic Exposure for Bees” in <i>Environmental Science and</i> 	Discussion	Discussion, Cont. [5-6 Science Café, Discussion on GMO’s; Fuel in downtown MV.]

	<i>Technology</i> by ACS (Moodle); focus on abstract, introduction, and final three paragraphs; skim rest of article.		
F Oct 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CW, ch. 9 DUE: Paper 1, FULL first draft 	Draft Workshop	Draft Workshop
WEEK 2			
M Nov. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Paper 1, Final Draft; upload to Moodle before 9 AM as rtf or Word document. (Note: The paper will not be accepted if my computer cannot read the document so be certain of your document format.) 	Film Screening: Food, Inc.	Discussion
T Nov. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollan, pp. tba 	Discussion [Lunch: Environmental Club meeting]	Film Screening: <i>King Corn</i>
W Nov. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollan, pp. tba 	Meet at 9:00, Commons Circle , for Field Trip to Abbey Hills Farm with Laura Krause [Reminder: VOTE for mayor and city council members!]	Discussion
Th Nov. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollan, pp. tba 	Discussion	Drafting Workshop
F Nov. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Paper 2, FULL First Draft 	Peer Review Workshop	Peer Review Workshop
WEEK 3:			
M Nov. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Paper 2, Final Draft; upload to Moodle as Word or rtf document before 9 AM. Wendell Barry, "The Pleasures 	Film Screening: <i>OMG GMO</i>	Discussion

	of Eating” (google to locate)		
T Nov. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CW, 6, 7 	Doing College-Level Research [Lunch: Environmental Club meeting]	Doing College-Level Research, Cont.
W Nov. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Unhealthy Fixation: The war against genetically modified organisms....” in <i>Slate Magazine</i> online (google to locate) 	Discussion	Film Screening: <i>Wisconsin: Food Fight</i> ; Discussion
Th Nov. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due: Annotated Bibliography of 3 sources. 	Film Screening: <i>Food Chains</i>	Discussion
F Nov. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper 3, FULL First Draft 	Peer Review Workshop	Peer Review Workshop
WEEK 4			
M Nov. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper 3, Second Draft CW, ch 10; review ch. 9 	Peer Review Workshop –Sentence-Level Editing; Citations.	Peer Review Workshop
T Nov. 17		Review [Lunch: Environmental Club meeting]	Review
W Nov. 18		Final Exam	

Learning Outcomes for First-Year Writing Courses

Through the First-year Writing Course, students should—

Be introduced to:

- conventions of formal academic writing in contrast to informal writing
- some types of writing assignments in the discipline, e.g. a public policy paper, close literary analysis, a primary research paper analyzing data, or analysis of empirical research

Gain guided practice in:

- critical reading
- analyzing student writing
- writing as a process
- incorporating feedback and revision
- writing appropriately for a given audience

Know:

About writing

- that conventions of good writing are different from spoken language and are dependent on discipline, audience, subject and media
- that writing is an iterative process
- the distinction between topic and thesis (thesis=assertion)
- the distinction between primary and secondary sources

About writing as a process

- that pre-writing, composing, and revising are distinct intellectual activities
- the value of varied pre-writing activities (brainstorming, critical reading, etc.)
- the distinction between revising and editing/correcting
- some useful roles readers can play in the revising process

About academic honesty

- when to document sources
- ethical, legal, and professional reasons for documenting sources
- that citation styles vary among disciplines

Be able to do the following at the basic level:

Literacy

- read critically
- identify a thesis
- identify and paraphrase argument

Writing

- limit scope of argument appropriately
- develop a clear, arguable thesis
- introduce and conclude a topic
- develop and sustain an argument
- target claims to specific text/data
- judiciously select and effectively integrate evidence/supporting details
- follow conventions of formal academic writing
- make appropriate stylistic choices
- cite and document sources properly
- write grammatically
- strive to write with clarity, coherence, and unity, whether writing narrative, argument, or summary

General Grading Rubric

- Written work will be graded holistically according to the following rubric:
- "A" = thoughtful and in-depth analysis of the text or subject, strong evidence, highly convincing and memorable presentation of ideas, clear and careful organization, smooth and concise writing with very few or no errors;
- "B" = solid development of ideas, good evidence, good organization, generally good writing with few errors;
- "C" = presentation of ideas is adequate but still sketchy in some places, organization is not always clear, writing is rough in a number of places (major and minor writing errors), evidence is uneven;
- "D" = incomplete development of ideas, unproved assertions, unclear organization, evidence is thin or irrelevant, many errors in writing;
- "F" = undeveloped ideas, little or no organization, lack of focus, multiple mechanical errors in writing (e.g., poor grammar, inappropriate choice of words, misspellings, etc.).