

MSER 521: Project Proposal

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The goal of this proposal document is to help you think about your project topic, audience, and data sources – so you can get feedback on your idea. Please make a copy of this worksheet, fill it out, and submit it. Please also come to class prepared to talk about your idea and answer questions about it. Here is a link to the [final project guidelines](#).

1. Topic - What topic are you going to explore? Why does this topic matter (to you, your audience, or society)? What perspective or insight do you want to highlight?

Through this data communication campaign, I am to raise awareness among policymakers, practitioners, and the public that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, DGAs, are flawed with biases of industry influence that have contributed to an agricultural system that is less sustainable, more resource-intensive, and extremely harmful to public health. The resulting food system and dietary patterns have contributed to poor health outcomes such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, especially among vulnerable populations. The guidelines steer public and institutional purchasing, subsidies, and food production. They affect what is grown, how it is grown, and therefore have consequences for land, water, greenhouse gases, biodiversity and resilience.

2. Goal - What do you want your audience to think, feel, or do (e.g., to raise awareness, inspire curiosity, influence behavior, correct misconceptions, highlight hidden patterns)?

My goal is to encourage the general public to take action and put some of these sustainable eating recommendations to practice in hopes of living a healthier, more environmentally conscious life.

My goal for this communication campaign is to encourage policymakers, health practitioners, and stakeholders to align dietary guidance with sustainable production, support more plant-based food systems, increase transparency, reduce industrial influence, and integrate sustainability into nutrition policy.

3. Audience - Who is your audience (noting that you can also have multiple audiences)?

Primary Audience: General public

Secondary Audience: Policymakers & government officials (USDA, HHS, FDA, state nutrition programs), Health & nutrition practitioners (dietitians, public-health professionals), and Agriculture stakeholders (farmers, food processors, distributors)

4. Preliminary Data Sources (most important) - What source(s) of data will you be using to communicate your ideas? A few notes here:

- Make sure you have downloaded your dataset, examined it, and determined that you can answer the questions you propose using the dataset provided.
- Note that sometimes more than one dataset is needed to answer the question / illustrate the point you are trying to make.
- You might also need to gather some data for yourself in order to be able to achieve your communication goal.

1. A report with graphic and data highlighting conflicts of interest in the dietary guideline advisory committee

[Conflicts of interest for members of the US 2020 dietary guidelines advisory committee](#)

2. A 2016 Johns Hopkins survey found 74% of adults believed DGAs should include sustainability language. [Dietary Guidelines Ignore Broad American Support for Food Sustainability](#)

3. Statistics of diet related health issues in US [U.S. food policy to address diet-related chronic disease](#)

4. Data of impacts on meat production on the environment. [Alignment of Healthy Dietary Patterns and Environmental Sustainability: A Systematic Review](#)

5. Please describe the **specific variables / measurements / dimensions** that will be most important to your data narrative.

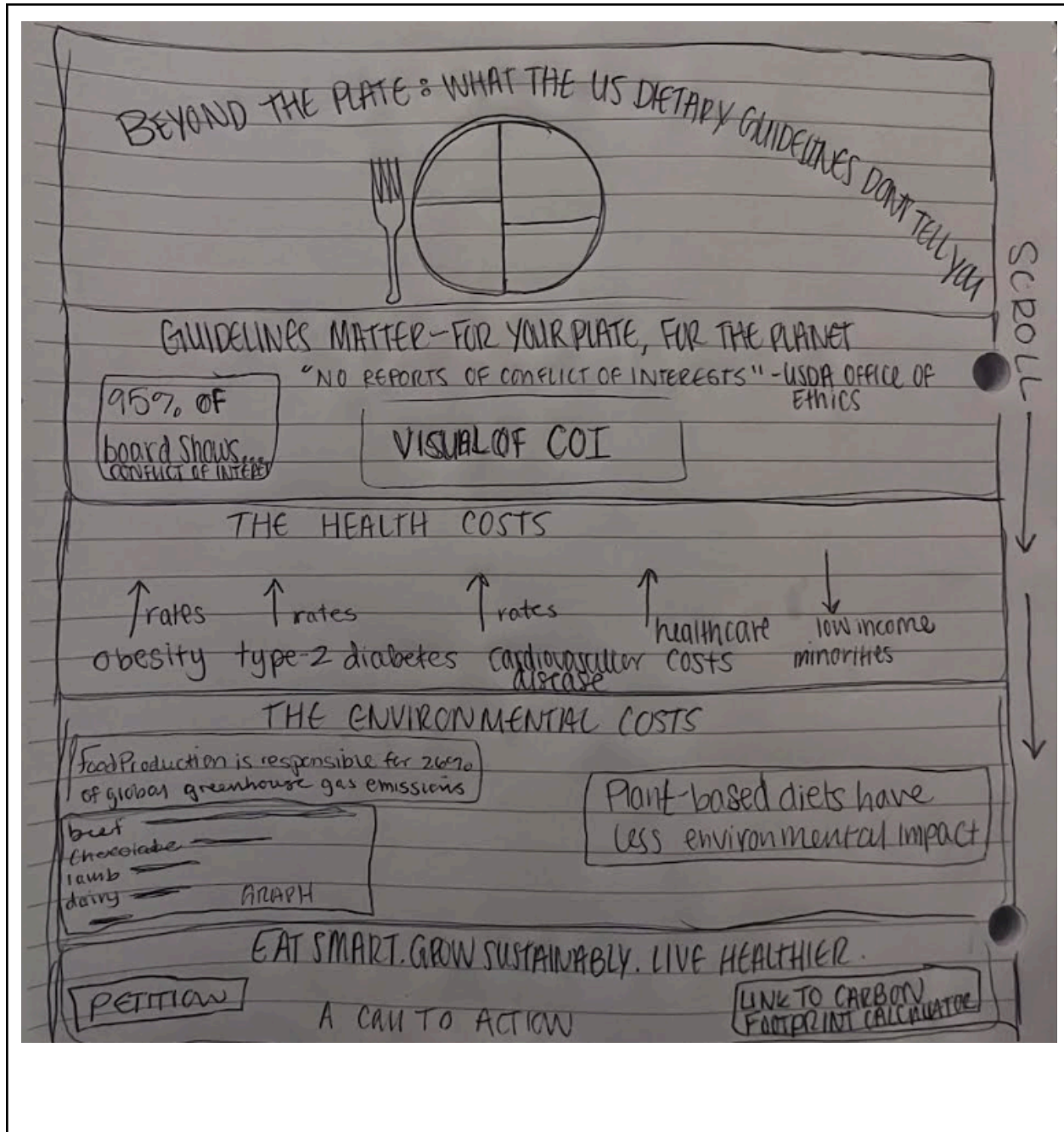
1. **Percentage** of conflicts of interest in the Dietary Guideline Committee (important to get the audience thinking about why they shouldn't inherently trust the guidelines).
2. **Chart** comparing environmental impacts of diets higher/lower in animal foods.
3. **Infographic** showing the food system chain from guideline to agricultural production to environmental impact then diet and finally health outcome.
4. **Survey results** showing public support for including sustainability in DGAs.

6. Have you thought about bias, accuracy, uncertainty, and representativeness within your dataset? How do you plan to handle this?

- My goal is to highlight how the guidelines perpetuate an unsustainable, fractured food and health system. There is substantial evidence to draw a link between these, however, there are other reasons for our poor health as well as climate concerns and unsustainable practices related to agriculture.

7. **Rough Storyboard or Sketch** - Please paste a simple visual outline of your campaign idea (for at least one of your deliverables).

Paste image or screenshot here...



What to Submit

When you're done answering these 7 questions, please download this worksheet as a PDF and turn in submit it to the Moodle.