

IAH 206: 11--16 Technology, Self and Society

MW 12:40—2:00 North Kedzie Hall Room N101 Section Meetings on Thursday

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Teaching Assistants: **Erik Jensen:** jensen82@msu.edu Sections 11, 12 & 13

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Office Hours: Paul B. Thompson: 526 South Kedzie Hall, M & W 2:30-4:00 pm

Erik Jensen: 538 South Kedzie Hall, Tuesday 11:00 am-1:00pm

Amelia Martin: 542 South Kedzie Hall, M 11:00 am-12:00pm & Th. 1:00-2:00pm

If you are unable to meet instructors during office hours, e-mail for an appointment.

Course Focus: Food: Technology, ethics and cultural identity

Course Description: How does technology affect what we eat, and how we associate the things we eat with the things we care about? We will use readings, films and class visits to MSU farms to explore the way that our food is produced, distributed and prepared, and we will use class time to engage in wide ranging discussion of the way that what we eat both shapes and is shaped by culture, tradition and competing conceptions of ethics and personal identity. Key topics will include: the way in which the plants and animals on our plates are the product of technological practice on the farm, in the factory and in the laboratory; ethical vegetarianism and the basis for considering our consumption of other animal species; technological practices in animal production and their reform; modern biotechnology and its impact on food; historical views of agriculture's role and purpose starting with Thomas Jefferson and following with Wendell Berry's contemporary reconsideration of agriculture and agricultural science.

Goals of Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities: Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities at MSU seeks to assist students to become more familiar with ways of knowing in the arts and humanities and to be more knowledgeable and capable in a range of intellectual and expressive abilities. IAH courses encourage students to engage critically with their own society, history, and culture(s); they also encourage students to learn more about the history and culture of other societies. They focus on key ideas and issues in human experience; encourage appreciation of the roles of knowledge and values in shaping and understanding human behavior; emphasize the responsibilities and opportunities of democratic citizenship; highlight the value of the creative arts of literature, theater, music, and arts; and alert us to important issues that occur among peoples in an increasingly interconnected, interdependent world.

Learning Objectives:

1. Engage with and critically assess the assigned materials covering literature, poetry, film, history, law, religion and philosophy as it relates to the interface of food and technology both historically and in our own time.

2. Improve thinking and critical analysis skills by participating in discussions, problem solving activities and in-class exercises.
3. Have a better understanding of the way that technology for production, distribution and consumption of food intersects with political and cultural identities.
4. Become familiar with ways that technology is now being developed and applied in ways that could change the way that we view the relationship between ourselves and our food in the future.

Course Requirements: Students should must complete a series of out of class assignments and must both attend and actively participate in classroom activities. The evaluation and grading policy for completing course requirements is discussed at some length below. Course participation activities can be described as comprising five categories:

1. Attendance Attendance will be taken for all class sessions except August 28, Oct. 30 (the Mid-Term) and November 27 (the Wednesday before the Thanksgiving holiday).
2. Out-of-class Preparation You must complete the out-of-class reading, film viewing and other assignments listed under the “Out of Class Assignments” section below. You must also complete in class objective quizzes to demonstrate your familiarity with this material.
3. Problem Solving & Discussion Problem solving exercises & Discussion Forums will be posted on the Desire2Learn site for the course, and students will be required to complete an exercise during each 2 week period of the course.
4. Discussion Sections In addition to attending discussion sections, you will be expected to participate in a manner that demonstrates both your attentiveness to the class activities and your completion of outside assignments.
5. Examinations You must complete in class quizzes and two written examinations, one during a class session and the other during the final examination period. A study sheet for written examinations will be distributed one week in advance. Questions for examinations will be taken verbatim from the study sheet.

Instructor/TA Roles: All instructors will be attending and monitoring student activity during M&W sessions. Jensen and Martin will lead discussion sections on Thursday. Discussion sessions are a key component of learning from one another by sharing ideas and reactions to material that is being read or presented in other aspects of the course. Thompson and the TA for your section will jointly review and grade a sample of written work from each section, with TAs taking lead responsibility for students in their sections. TAs for each section will be responsible for keeping track of respective attendance and quiz grades.

Required Texts:

IAH 206 Course Packet Available from Student Book Store on Grand River Ave.

Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* New York: 2003, Doubleday-Anchor ISBN 978-0-385-7216-7

Wendell Berry, *New Collected Poems*. Berkeley, CA: 2012, Counterpoint Press, ISBN 978-1-61902-152-5

Wendell Berry, *It All Turns on Affection: The Jefferson Lecture & Other Essays*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, ISBN 978-1-61902-114-3

Timothy Egan, *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived The Great American Dust Bowl*. Boston: 2006, Houghton Mifflin ISBN: 978-0-618-3469-7
Kimberly Smith, *Wendell Berry and the Agrarian Tradition: A Common Grace*. Lawrence, KS: 2004, University of Kansas Press, ISBN 978-0-7006-1230-7
John Ford, *The Grapes of Wrath* (Film Version-Released originally in 1940)

Students are responsible for acquiring access to the above listed materials for the course. The course pack has been delivered to the Student Book Store All others have been ordered through the MSU textbook ordering system, and may be available in local outlets as well as on line (Amazon.com was selling Smith's book for \$21), and including formats for electronic tablet readers. **Note that bookstores begin to return unsold books after the 3rd week of the semester. You will need to acquire books well before we are using them in the class.** John Ford's filmed version of the John Steinbeck novel *The Grapes of Wrath* is widely available in a number of formats, including streaming through Netflix. The MSU library has two videotape copies.

In addition to the sources listed above, some materials are available online through public sources such as the World Wide Web and YouTube, or through the MSU library electronic resources. Links to these sources are embedded in the course Desire2Learn site. Note that links to MSU library sources require you to be signed in to the MSU system. If you have difficulty in accessing any material housed in the electronic resource collection of the MSU library, please consult the MSU library either through their FAQs or through the 24/7 help desk for online resources: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/>

Course Grade: The course grade will be based on a 1000 point scale. Points can be earned in each of five categories described above under course requirements: Attendance; Quizzes; Problem Solving and Discussion; Mid-Term Examination and Final Examination. The maximum number of points that can be earned in each category is 200. The final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

1000—941: 4.0
940—881: 3.5
880—821: 3.0
820—761: 2.5
760—701: 2.0
700—641: 1.5
640—581: 1.0
580—0: 0.0

Attendance (200 points possible): Students will receive 6 points for each class they attend during the semester except for August 28, 2013 (The First Day of Class); November 1, 2013 (The Mid-Term Examination) and November 27, 2013 (Class will not be held in N. Kedzie Hall and attendance will not be taken). There are 40 days on which attendance will be taken, leading to a total point earning opportunity of 240 points. The maximum number of points that can be earned for attendance is 200. (You can think of this as having 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ "free" days that you can miss without affecting your ability to make a perfect score on attendance.) Attendance will be taken and recorded by Erik Jensen and Amelia Martin, who will be the final judge of credit for attendance on any given class day. No points will be

awarded for excused absences, but students with excused absences are eligible for Make-Up Assignments described below.

Quizzes (200 points possible): There will be 11 quizzes consisting of objective, multiple-choice and true/false questions. Each student's course grade for quizzes will be calculated by summing the best 10 scores. (You can think of this as having a "free" or extra quiz. If you miss one quiz or do very badly, you still have an opportunity to make a perfect score on this section of the course grade.) The maximum amount of points that can be earned on quizzes is 200. Each quiz will consist of between 22 and 24 questions. Students will earn one point for each correct answer up to a maximum of 20 points for each quiz. Students who have more than 20 correct answers on any given quiz will receive a grade of 20 for that quiz. (You can think of these as "extra" questions that improve your chance of getting a perfect score on the quiz.)

Problem Solving & Discussion (200 points possible): Research and discussion points can be earned by making a post in one of the discussion forums on the course Desire2Learn site. Some posts will provide opportunities for students to answer questions that will require online or other research, will other opportunities will involve participation in discussions with other students. New opportunities to make posts will appear every two weeks ending November 29, 2013, yielding a total of six opportunities. (There will be no opportunities to make posts during the last week of class.) Students will receive credit for each posting period in which they make a post, subject to the requirements listed below. Students should consult the course site on Desire2Learn regularly. In general, posts should range between 100 and 300 words. In no case should a post exceed 1000 words. (Write your post in a word processor before putting on line to get an accurate word count). Copied or quoted material *will not* count toward the word limit on discussion posts (e.g. If you copy a block of text and put it a post as a quote, you still need to write 100 words that is your own work.) Some conversations may involve multiple postings. It is acceptable to achieve the minimum 100 words by making several shorter posts within the same period, but the word count for all posts by a single individual within a posting opportunity should not exceed the total 1000 word limit. Posts will be graded according to the following scale:

- Exceeds Expectations : A post that is on topic and that makes an especially perceptive and constructive observation, comment or critique: 40 Points.
- Achieves Expectations: A post that is on topic and clearly relevant to the topic at hand: 38 points.
- Satisfactory: A post that is "in the ballpark", if not entirely clear or relevant. 35 points.
- Minimally Acceptable: Any post that is at least 100 words and that is not shown to have been plagiarized (see "Academic Integrity"). 30 points
- Unacceptable: A post of at least 10 words but less than 100 words. 10 points
- Zero: A post that is less than 10 words. 0 points

Students are encouraged to engage with one another in vigorous conversation or even debate and disagreement. However, all posts should be courteous, free of profanity or offensive language and should not engage in personal attacks.

Examinations (400 points possible): The mid-term and final examination will consist of essay questions that must be written in class. Each exam will be worth 100 points. The mid-term will occur on

Wednesday, October 30, 2013. The final exam must be written during the scheduled Final Examination period for the course, Monday, December 9, 2013, from 12:45 to 2:45 pm.

Mid-Term Examination: (200 Points) The exam will consist of four short answer definitional essays that should be between 50 and 100 words worth 25 points each, and one long essay that will provide an opportunity to analyze and discuss topics, issues or themes that have been discussed in the course. All questions (short and long essays) will be drawn from a study sheet that will be distributed in class and posted on Desire2Learn on October 23, 2013 (one week in advance). Students may not possess and may not consult *any* additional materials such as books, notes or electronic data sources during the examination period. Short essays will be graded accorded to the following scale:

- Exactly! The answer gives a succinct, precise and insightful definition of the term in question, and states clearly how the term or concept is relevant to topics that have been discussed in the course. 10 points
- Not Exactly The answer is generally accurate and indicates how the term or concept is relevant to topics discussed in the course, but may contain extraneous elements, be overly short or long, or is vague or ambiguous in its discussion of relevance to course topics. 9 points
- Basically Although the answer contains elements that are incorrect or flawed, either in its definitional component or in its discussion of course relevance, it is “in the ballpark” and captures the spirit or thrust of the idea that the term or concept indicates, and it’s relevance to the course. It may do reasonably well on one element and poorly on the other. 7 points
- Not Really The answer is not accurate and contains important inaccuracies or flaws both in definition and discussion of relevance to the course, but the student seems to be trying, and is able to express some ideas that relate to the overall content of the course. 6 points
- Not at All The answer is totally inadequate but the student has written at least 5 legible words in the English language. 2 points
- Zero The answer has been left blank. 0 points

Long essays will be graded on a 50 point scale and will reflect the instructor’s judgment of how well the student’s essay achieves the following five criteria:

- Spelling and Grammar Essays should be relatively free of spelling errors. Sentence and paragraph construction should not distract from the content or message that the essay is trying to get across. 10%
- Logical Coherence The essay should make sense. Each thought or theme should have some evident connection to the overall point or message of the essay. It should not read like a “memory dump” of random claims or observations. 30%
- Relevance The essay should make use of readings, films, lectures and experiences that have been included in the course syllabus up to the point of the examination. References to these items should meet a good standard of accuracy, though minor inaccuracies will be tolerated: It should be evident to the reader that you have read, heard or viewed the material you are discussing, though graders will be open to disagreements about how that material should be utilized or interpreted. 30%
- Critical Awareness, Creativity or Persuasiveness The essay should be responsive to problems, queries and a general topic area that has been indicated in the question. While students should

be free to develop and state opinions, those opinions should be supported by a discussion of key points and by brief arguments that recognize how a point might be interpreted differently or contested by someone with a different point of view. 30%

Although students are encouraged to be creative and to write in a manner that would interest readers, be wary about using sarcasm, humor or witticisms that could be easily misunderstood in the context of an examination.

Final Examination (200 points possible) The Final Examination will have the same format and grading approach as the mid-term examination. The exam must be written during the scheduled Final Examination period for the course, Monday, December 9, 2013, from 12:45 to 2:45 pm. Students may not possess and may not consult *any* additional materials such as books, notes or electronic data sources during the examination period.

Excused Absences and Make-up Work: The grading policy accommodates substantial leeway for unavoidable absences and missed quizzes, and in most cases, there should be no need for make-up work. However, if you miss a quiz or class due to an absence for which you can present a valid excuse, your TA may, at their discretion, allow you to submit a written essay on a topic of their choice as make-up work. Written essays must be original work and must be not less than 3500 words (roughly five pages, single spaced in a standard typeface). Make up work should be completed in a timely manner. A due date will be set by the TA. Make up essays will be graded and students will receive a percentage of the points (20 or 6) based on the instructor's judgment of its quality, given the general criteria discussed for examinations. If you miss an examination due to an emergency or excused absence, notify your TA or Dr. Thompson as soon as possible and schedule an alternative time to take the exam. Opportunities for alternative exam times or make up work should be requested in advance, if possible, and within 48 hours of the absence, in any case.

Online SIRS Evaluation Policy: Michigan State University takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction and has implemented the Student Instructional Rating System (SIRS) to gather student feedback (<https://sirsonline.msu.edu>). This course utilizes the online SIRS system, and you will receive an e-mail during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out the SIRS web form at your convenience. In addition, participation in the online SIRS system involves grade sequestration, which means that the final grade for this course will not be accessible on STUINFO during the week following the submission of grades for this course unless the SIRS online form has been completed. Alternatively, you have the option on the SIRS website to decline to participate in the evaluation of the course. We hope, however, that you will be willing to give us your frank and constructive feedback so that we may instruct students even better in the future. If you access the online SIRS website and complete the online SIRS form or decline to participate, you will receive the final grade in this course as usual once final grades are submitted.

Academic Integrity: Learning works best when you rely on your own skills, creativity, memory and knowledge base to develop responses to the various challenges that will be presented in the class. Students in this class must comply with university policies as outlined in The Spartan Handbook: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university> and the

MSU Office of Academic Integrity: <https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html>

Students are generally encouraged to share thoughts and work together, especially during the process of developing ideas. However, work submitted for grading should be solely the work of the individual submitting the work. Written work submitted for problem solving assignments or examinations should have been formulated by the student. If ideas or writings by others are reported in written work, the original source of the idea should be attributed. Published material should be attributed by noting the author, title, date and place of publication. Use a standard format. The MSU Library provides a guide to standard formats at: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/research/cite-resources.jsp> Material published on a webpage should be cited by noting the URL and the date on which you accessed the material. **Use of “copy” and “paste” for discussion posts without the use of quotation marks and attribution to the source will be considered a violation of academic integrity.** Other material may be cited by noting the source and the date (e.g. Barak Obama, Personal communication, Aug. 28, 2013; or Thomas Izzo, class lecture, Fall Semester 2003). It is not necessary to provide detailed citations for materials that have been assigned in the course; however, your writing should indicate that you are referring to an assigned source by mentioning the title or the author’s name.

During quizzes and examinations, students should not read or copy from work being done by others in the room. Use of laptops, books, notes or any other extraneous device is strictly forbidden during quizzes and examinations. **Phones and messaging devices are not conducive to the learning approach being applied in this class and are forbidden at all times.** Laptops should not be used during MW class sessions *except* when the session is explicitly identified as a “Lecture” on the In Class Activity guide provided below.

In accordance with university policy offenses will be penalized either by a grade of zero for the assignment or a grade of F for the course, depending on the instructors’ judgment of the seriousness of the offense, and an Academic Dishonesty Report will be filed. Students should consult the Student Handbook and the University Policies on Academic Integrity to be apprised of their rights in connection with academic dishonesty.

Grading Philosophy: A good grading scheme will do two things well: incentivize learning and measure student ability. Virtually all grading schemes compromise one or both of these objectives for practical reasons and the grading scheme for this course is no exception. This section of the course syllabus provides a discussion of why we have developed the grading scheme in the way that we have. Reading it carefully may help you appreciate what we are trying to do, and this may help you achieve a better grade for the course. There are two other reasons to read this section of the syllabus carefully: 1) It is actually a case study for the primary content of the course (e.g. technology, self and society); 2) you will be tested on it during Quiz #1 on September 9, 2013.

Let’s start with measuring student ability. I know of no way to assess the ability of 180 people in basic humanities skills (reading, writing and interpretation) given the amount of time we will spend with you over the course of the semester, so we are throwing this one out and limiting ourselves to an evaluation of your performance in the course. Those of you who participate in sports, competitive games or music, theater and other arts know that a given performance need not reflect your ability. Too often we

underperform, though there are rare and wonderful occasions when luck is with us and a particular performance far exceeds our basic ability. So let's just all get on the same page right here at the beginning of the semester and recognize that the number one of us will eventually enter on the grade sheet for this course is *at best* a measure of your performance with respect to the learning objectives in this particular course.

Several of the components in the grading scheme tell us rather little about how well you have achieved mastery or improvement in the integration of basic humanities skills into your overall ability. Some of them are there because they incentivize learning (more on that soon), while others are there because they are an economical and practical compromise. Most humanities instructors would agree that as the group size rises much beyond 20 students, it becomes increasingly difficult to evaluate things like a student's ability to think, speak or engage in productive discussion. Linking a face first to a name and then to work being produced on paper becomes more and more difficult, and the time needed to simply read work out of class limits the number of assignments that one can evaluate carefully. There is a basic economic logic here. Tuition and fees at MSU are \$6,454 per term for residents of Michigan while up the road at Alma it is \$15,380 while about 85% of the classes have 30 students or less. At Harvard it's \$19,983 (but there are some big classes at Harvard, too). I leave it to you to decide whether you are getting your money's worth, but speaking as an instructor I will tell you that for 20 or 30 students I would have more writing, and I would have a subjectively evaluated grade for "Class Participation" that would reflect my judgment of alertness, comprehension, and discussion skills. We don't trust our own ability to do that fairly for a group of 180 students, and we know that it would just make a lot of you mad, anyway. We've thrown that out for this course because we just can't do it in a fair, impartial and informed manner. Some of you will be hurt by this decision, but others will probably score higher.

The components that tell us most about performance are the written exams and the online research and discussion components. These are imperfect indicators. There will be a lot of thinking and discussion happening in the classroom all semester long, but we aren't even going to try to measure it, for the reasons listed above. Another imperfect tool is that written examinations must be written in class, also for practical reasons. Lots of people, myself included, typically write with a keyboard, and the technology you use for writing affects your thinking. The physicist Richard Feynman famously always worked with a pencil in his hand (so he might do fine on our tests) because he felt that the engagement of his hands and body improved his thinking process. So we must admit that the technology we are deploying for our exam process may affect your performance.

We do this because we want you to actually write the exam during the hour and twenty minutes (or two hours in the case of the final, and because we haven't figured out a good way to ensure that students are doing this if we let them bring their own laptops. We could put everyone in a computer lab to do the test, but economic constraints militate against this solution. If you have a documented disability that makes it impossible for you to hand write an exam paper, the university has resources that will allow us to make an exception (see one of the instructors), but the rest of you will have to suck it up and console yourself with the fact that everyone is laboring under the same handicap.

Which brings up another point in grading philosophy. Students ask, “Do you grade on the curve?” The “curve” is a grading scheme where a distribution of grades (usually 15% A, 20% B, 30% C, 20% D and 15% F) is fitted to whatever scores students happen to have earned on an exam. Note that under a true “curve” students are competing with one another for the limited number of high grades; the distribution above means that 65% of students must make a C or worse. We will *not* grade on a curve. There is no competition for grades in this class. We will be quite happy to give everyone a 4.0, if all 180 of you earn 941 points or more. We will be equally happy giving everyone a 0.0, if necessary. Those elements of the course grade that involve qualitative judgment will be broken out and evaluated according to the qualitative grading rubric that is described above. That is, for example, in grading an exam essay, the grader will read the essay, make grade marks or comments on the margins and will then pause and evaluate each of four elements (spelling and grammar, logical coherence, relevance and creativity or persuasiveness) separately, assigning numbers that reflect the 10, 30, 30, 30 weighting so that they add up to some fraction of 100 (the points possible for an essay). A paper with no or very minor spelling and grammatical errors will get a 10, but the grader will have to use judgment to determine how many or how serious errors are in assigning grades of 9, 8, 7 or less. Graders will bear in mind that once one gets down to a 5 on the spelling or about 15 on the other elements, they have effectively flunked the student for that element. Although it involves skill and acumen to make such judgments consistently and fairly, we strive to do so, and we will consult with one another to ensure that we are applying standards consistently.

Why do we want you to write the exam during a time-limited exam period? Clearly, there are many formats for essay exams including those where students may consult notes or bring in blocks of text that are prewritten, or exams that are done entirely outside of class. All of these formats offer the potential for better measurement of student performance, but they also offer additional opportunities for cheating. They also give students more rope (more different ways to approach the exam and to use their time) and many students use that rope to hang themselves. (Notice also that I am discussing alternative testing technologies here and that this IS a course on technology, self and society). Giving questions in advance and limiting writing time induces a certain amount of stress and some individuals clearly do have bad days with this approach, but overall, this exam format is “easier” in that the limitations in format also limit what we can expect in the way of student performance. The constrained format is thus appropriate for classes that are designed to be taken during a student’s freshman or sophomore year. I know that some, possibly lots, of you are more advanced students, but this, too, is something we simply have to ignore in order to be fair. You design a technology to achieve the result that you want to get, and we have put both thought and experience into the design of these essay examinations.

Another reason for writing exams in class relates to the class policy limiting the use of phones or laptops during class. I can best illustrate my point with an example. Take crossword puzzles. Being able to work a crossword puzzle requires a good vocabulary, to start with, and the ability to spell. Deciphering clues is a task of interpreting and inferring meaning. Difficult puzzles, such as those published in *The New York Times*, use clues that require knowledge of history, literature, science and culture, as well as clues that use puns, irony, simile, hyperbole, synecdoche and analogical reasoning. Being able to work *The New York Times Crossword Puzzle* is actually a pretty fair test of the abilities we are trying to help you

cultivate in an IAH course. If you have never done so, try working the *Times* puzzle for a week starting on Monday and going through to Saturday. If you can work the Saturday puzzle in less than an hour and without help, you are probably smart enough already and really don't need to take this course. But any idiot with an internet connection can work *The New York Times Crossword Puzzle* by using the search function to help interpret the clues, if not by consulting a Thesaurus or Wikipedia, then by simply consulting one of the internet websites that helpfully provide answers to clues given in the *Times Crossword Puzzle*. Do we want to say that this idiot "knows how" to work *The New York Times Crossword Puzzle*? Probably not. It's certainly not the kind of ability that we are trying to cultivate or measure in this class.

Philosophers call this way of using technology to enhance your intellectual ability "the extended mind thesis". People today can rely on their phones for a lot of things that people used to have to remember. Maybe we should own up to the fact that our tools actually *are* part of our minds.¹ In fact, it was probably the invention of the alphabet and written language that was the most significant technology for extending our mental abilities, and that (obviously) happened a long time ago.² Most significantly, by extending our mental reach in some areas, these technologies allow us to develop our mental abilities in very different ways. People today are very unlike those who lived before the age of writing, and it is possible that people who grow up with smart phones will be almost as different from their parents and grandparents as we all are from pre-literate hunters and gatherers (though this is probably an overstatement). (These are core insights for technology, self and society, by the way.) One could argue that the creation of the Internet coupled with smart phones has made the acquisition of many abilities we try to help you develop in IAH courses obsolete. I (Thompson) am willing to have a discussion about this point, and would concede that it is a reason why IAH instructors need to be constantly revisiting our instructional aims. At the same time, many people find working difficult crossword puzzles to be rewarding and entertaining, while sitting there and Googling clues for an hour is probably going to feel pointless, at best, and probably pretty unsatisfying. So maybe there are certain intrinsic rewards to studying the humanities that you might experience someday when you solve a puzzle, see a play or read a book, even if you don't really need these abilities to do your job in a tedious, boring and unsatisfying way.

In fact, the main reason we've included the research and discussion component in the grading scheme is to try and keep the class at least somewhat up to date with current technology. Here you are encouraged to use the Internet or any other technology you might have at your disposal to help you answer questions we pose. We are also using the technology made available through MSU's Desire2Learn tool to allow a semi-public discussion of these topics, so you can use technology to check up on one another and to carry on discussions of how well you think that someone else in the class has approached one of the challenge questions. We could just use a website or a Twitter hash tag for some

¹ Clark, Andy, and David Chalmers. "The extended mind." *analysis* 58.1 (1998): 7-19.

² McLuhan, Marshall, and Robert K. Logan. "Alphabet, Mother of Invention." *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 34.4 (1977): 373-83.

of this, to be sure, but there are reasons (hopefully obvious ones) why we need to confine the community of participants to students who are enrolled in the class. We are also under some legal obligations to protect your privacy. You are free to write your own posts on your Facebook page, but be aware that you won't get course credit for that, and that others might not be crazy about you sharing information that they would rather stay just among the 180 or so of us.

As for the grades on research and discussion, this whole component of the course is still something of an experiment. I want people to take this aspect of the course seriously, but I don't want them to overthink it, either. I don't want you sitting there trying to figure out what we (the instructors) are going to think as you write a post. I would rather that you be thinking about talking to one another. Still and all, I'm not so stupid as to think that very many of you will actually do it unless it's tied to your grade. We are now moving into the terrain of incentivizing learning, you will notice. So I've devised the simple scale devised above that allows us to reward particularly nice posts and to penalize people who are pretty clearly blowing the whole thing off, without making us get into the kind of nuanced judgments that we will try to make in evaluating your exams.

Finally we come to the attendance and quiz parts of the grading scheme. Here we are totally in the realm of incentivizing learning. Since we won't lecture all that much and will use class time for interactive learning, we have to reward you for being there and doing that. Attendance points is a pretty simple way to do it, and notice that I've given you a little leeway to miss some class. Each of the instructors will miss a few classes and we respect that students may need to miss sometimes, as well. As for objective quizzes, it is really hard to devise multiple choice or true-false questions that truly measure learning objectives in the humanities. It's not impossible, and we will do a bit of that, but the main point of quizzes is to devise questions that are so dumb that if you've done the work, you have a 90% chance of getting it right—questions like, are the chairs in the classroom wooden or plastic? If you've been in the classroom lately, you probably have a pretty good idea. Questions like, True or False John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* follows the Joad family across the west to California in wagon train. Again if you saw the movie you know. On the other hand, if you are just guessing, you might get 30% to 50%, which (if you've paid attention so far) means you flunked the quiz.

The upshot here is, do the reading, or whatever else is assigned, and don't sleep in class. You should be able to get 90% correct answers by doing that alone. Everybody overlooks the occasional detail, but nobody overlooks all the details. Don't study for quizzes. I will be shocked if doing much more than a quick scan of material you may have read two weeks ago will be of any use to anyone. And you'll notice that there are always several extra questions on a quiz, which means that if you are getting 90% of the answers, you are getting 100% of the available points. I also include a few extra questions because I guarantee you that despite more than thirty years' experience (it's actually more like 40 years of experience if you count all three of us) a few questions will be poorly formulated and will need to be "thrown out". This way, we can throw them out without having to say that we didn't provide you with a fair opportunity to make a perfect score.

This may be the most long winded syllabus you've ever read. A syllabus, a test or a grade is a tool, a piece of technology. A good teacher uses these tools and techniques to help you learn, and also to make

a fair representation of your performance to others. We live in a world where some of technology works reasonably well, and some of it works poorly. Some of the bad technology we cope with is there because it has been adopted as a practical and economical solution to a problem that was either not worth spending more effort to fix, or for which the needed resources were simply unavailable. This course is no exception. Indeed, none of your courses at MSU will be an exception, though some will certainly serve your needs better than others. The point of this particular course is to ramp up your ability to think reflectively about the technology you have to cope with, and perhaps especially so with respect to the tools and techniques you inflict on others. The syllabus is lesson number one, and there will be opportunities to gripe or comment on this lesson in the “research and discussion” section of the course.

Out of Class Reading Assignments: Like any class at MSU, you will be expected to prepare for classes by doing out of class reading or something else which in this class means watching a film. Problem solving & discussion activities will be posted each week on Desire 2 Learn (discussed above). Below are listed the out-of-class preparation assignments for the entire semester. There are two kinds of reading assignment. First, there is “a poem a day”: A poem for each MWTh of the semester (whether class meets or not). Sometimes we will discuss these poems and sometimes not, but you are responsible for having read them both on quizzes and on examinations. Second is a list of more conventional assignments which are “due” each Thursday. You will want to space out your time for completing these assignments over each week prior to the due date. It would be crazy to try and complete these assignments on Wednesday night before class. Every other week or so you will be tested on these assignment, generally on the Monday *after* they are due (see “Quizzes” above). Some assignments will track closely with in-class discussions and activities. Others will be asynchronous: you will be doing the assignment days and sometimes weeks before they will come up in class discussion.

A Poem a Day (Through Halloween) Unless otherwise noted, poems are from Wendell Berry, *New*

Collected Poems (2012)

9/2/13	September 2, 1968 p 158
9/4/13	Green and White, p 12
9/5/13	The Plan, p. 26
9/9/13	My Great Grandfather's Slaves, p 52
9/11/13	The Mad Farmer Manifesto: First Amendment p. 177
9/12/13	Against the War in Vietnam p. 75
9/16/13	Prayer after Eating, p 169
9/18/13	Grace, p 79
9/19/13	Poem p 166
9/23/13	The Companions, p. 16
9/25/13	Independence Day, p. 132
9/26/13	And I Beg Your Pardon, p. 376
9/30/13	To the Farm at Canteach: http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/songspoems55.html
10/2/13	McDollars, by Kenneth Cassar http://www.rabbitadvocacy.com/animal_rights_poems.htm
10/3/13	Pig Song, by Margaret Atwood http://www.porkopolis.org/library/pig-poetry/margaret-atwood/
10/7/13	Hog Killing, p. 230
10/9/13	Men Untrained to Comfort, pp. 380-381

10/10/13	October 10, p. 63
10/14/13	A Genetically Modified Poem, by Frances Coll http://www.columban.org.au/our-works/JPIC-Justice-Peace-Integrity-of-Creation/Genetic-Modification-of-Food/A-Genetically-Modified-Poem/
10/16/13	Every Man His Chimera, by Charles Baudelaire http://www.baudelaire.cz/works.html?aID=201&artID=7
10/17/13	How to Be a Poet (to remind myself) p. 354
10/21/13	Dust, p. 345
10/23/13	To My Children, Fearing for Them, p. 66
10/24/13	Enriching the Earth, p. 125
10/28/13	The Wild Geese, p. 180
10/30/13	Dante, p. 347
10/31/13	The Millennium, p. 347

Weekly Assignments Keeping up with the schedule below will insure that you are prepared for quizzes. Actual class discussion may not track exactly with due dates for these materials.

<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
8/29/13	Read the Class Syllabus
9/5/13	Read Margaret Atwood <i>Oryx and Crake</i> , Sections 1-6 (pp. 3-144)
9/12/13	Read <i>The Bill of Rights</i> Jefferson's Letter to Jay, John Locke's Chapter on the Beginnings of Civil Society, 2 nd <i>Treatise of Government</i> ; Thomas Jefferson's Chapter on Manufactures from <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> , Links on Desire2Learn; Jefferson, <i>Declaration of independence</i> , and Correspondence between Madison and Jefferson in 1787 Coursepack
9/19/13	Read Selections from Anne Vileisis, <i>Kitchen Literacy</i> , William Cronin, <i>Nature's Metropolis</i> Coursepack;
9/26/13	Bernard Rollin "Animal Production and the New Social Ethic for Animals"; Link on Desire2Learn; Selections from <i>Religious Vegetarianism</i> : Coursepack
10/3/13	Read Margaret Atwood, <i>Oryx and Crake</i> Sections 7-11 (pp. 147-280)
10/10/13	Lawrence Busch, "How Animal Welfare Standards Create and Justify Realities"; A. B. Webster, "Animal care guidelines and future directions." Sarah Cranston, "So Sue Me: How Consumer Fraud, Antitrust Litigation, and Other Kings of Litigation Can Effect Change in the Treatment of Egg-Laying Hens Where Legislation Fails." Coursepack
10/17/13	Read Traci Warkenton, "Dis-Integrating Animals," Paul Thompson, "The Opposite of Human Enhancement," Links on Desire 2 Learn
10/24/13	Read selections from Timothy Egan, <i>The Worst Hard Time</i>
10/31/13	Watch "The Grapes of Wrath". Read Paul Thompson, "The Moral Significance of Land: A Lesson from <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> ." Coursepack
11/7/13	Read: Kimberly Smith, "Agrarian Visions," & "The Greening of Agrarianism," pp. 11-62; Wendell Berry, "The Future of Agriculture," in <i>It All Turns on Affection</i> , pp. 89-92 <i>New Collected Poems</i> , TBA

- 11/14/13 Read: Wendell Berry, *New Collected Poems* TBA, "It All Turns on Affection," in *It All Turns on Affection* pp. 9-39; Kimberly Smith, "Settling America," pp. 87-113
- 11/21/13 Read: Wendell Berry, "Landsman," in *It All Turns on Affection* pp. 41-63; Kimberly Smith, "Beyond Individualism," pp. 129-154
- 11/28/13 Read Michael Pollan, "The Food Movement Rising," Link on Desire2Learn; Selections from Jayson Lusk, *The Food Police* (This text was not available for timely production of the coursepack. An alternative may be substituted during the course of the semester.)
- 12/5/13 Read: Kimberly Smith, "Tending Our Gardens," pp 179-203; Wendell Berry, "About Civil Disobedience," in *It All Turns on Affection* pp. 103-109.

In-Class Activities Below is a brief description of what we will be doing in class throughout the semester. Note that laptops may be used **ONLY** during classes marked "Lecture". Cell phones and other messaging devices may not be used in class at any time.

- 8/28/13 First Day of Class; Technical Overview of the Syllabus
- 8/29/13 Section Meetings: Course Syllabus and Grading Philosophy
- 9/2/13 Labor Day Holiday—No Classes Held
- 9/4/13 Lost at Sea
- 9/5/13 Section Meetings: Debrief Lost at Sea
- 9/9/13 Quiz #1; Course Overview: What do we think we are doing in IAH
- 9/11/13 Lecture: Farming and the New American Republic **Discussion 1 Closes Today**
- 9/12/13 Section Meetings: Write Your Own Bill of Rights
- 9/16/13 Quiz #2: Lecture Food in America
- 9/18/13 How to Watch a Painting;
- 9/19/13 Section Meetings: Know Your Food
- 9/23/13 Quiz # 3: Preparing for Farm Visits
- 9/25/13 Ethical Vegetarianism: Yea or Nay? **Discussion 2 Closes Today**
- 9/26/13 Section Meetings: Discuss Ethical Vegetarianism
- 9/30/13 Farm Visits
- 10/2/13 Farm Visits
- 10/3/13 Section Meetings: Sharing Reactions on Farm Visits
- 10/7/13 Quiz # 4 Debrief with MSU Animal Faculty
- 10/9/13 Animal Welfare Attribute Ranking **Discussion 3 Closes Today**
- 10/10/13 Section Meetings: Animal Ethics
- 10/14/13 Quiz #5 Lecture: Standards and Standard Setting
- 10/16/13 Write Your Own Animal Welfare Standards
- 10/17/13 Section Meetings: Debrief Standard Setting
- 10/21/13 Quiz # 6 Lecture: Biotechnology & Animal Welfare
- 10/23/13 Evaluating Synthetic Meat **Discussion 4 Closes Today**
- 10/24/13 Section Meetings: Discuss Biotechnology and Synthetic Meat
- 10/28/13 Quiz #7; Review for Mid-term Examination

In-Class Activities Below is a brief description of what we will be doing in class throughout the semester. Note that laptops may be used **ONLY** during classes marked "Lecture". Cell phones and other messaging devices may not be used in class at any time.

10/30/13	Mid-Term Essay Examination
10/31/13	Section Meetings: Food and Humor
11/4/13	Film Discussion: The Plow that Broke the Plains & Ken Burns' The Dust Bowl
11/6/13	The Dust Bowl Game
11/7/13	Section Meetings: Discuss "The Grapes of Wrath"
11/11/13	Quiz #8: Lecture: The Dust Bowl Era and <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
11/13/13	A New Social Contract Discussion 5 Closes Today
11/14/13	Section Meetings: The Veil of Ignorance,
11/18/13	Quiz #9: Lecture: Jefferson and Agrarian Philosophy
11/20/13	What Makes a Food System Sustainable?
11/21/13	Section Meeting: Discussing Food System Sustainability
11/25/13	Quiz #10: Lecture: Wendell Berry and the Thanksgiving Holiday
11/27/13	Thanksgiving Holiday: Asynchronous Online Session (No Class in North Kedzie Hall) Discussion 6 Closes Today
11/28/13	Thanksgiving Day: No Section Meetings;
12/2/13	Food Movement: Yea or Nay?
12/4/13	Course Evaluations; Closing Thoughts
12/5/13	Section Meetings: Review for Final Examination
12/9/13	Quiz #11; Final Exam: 12:45-2:45pm