



## Hort 425 – Trends in Horticulture

### Syllabus – Spring 2016

Tuesdays and Thursdays – 2:50 to 4:05

WSU-Pullman location - Jackson 55  
WSU-TriCities - TWSC 202

**Course description:** Critical examination of current impacts and future trends in horticulture. (3 cr)

[CAPS] Integrative Capstone UCORE, [T] Tier III GER, [M] Writing-in-the-Major

Instructor: **Kathie Nicholson**, 360-460-6271 or 509-335-6586, [knicholson@wsu.edu](mailto:knicholson@wsu.edu)  
Available after class or by appointment.

### Learning outcomes

- Explore professionally, personally, and socially current and relevant horticultural and agricultural subjects.
- Understand current and emerging horticultural and agri-food issues and their relevance to society, industry, and the environment.
- Foster skills to locate, access, utilize, analyze, synthesize, integrate and critically examine information about complex, interdisciplinary issues related to the horticultural agri-food system.
- Articulate and refine written, oral and interpersonal communications skills.

### Learning methodology

This course is based on collaborative learning and will investigate and critically examine historical, contemporary, and emerging aspects of horticulture, and more broadly, agriculture and agri-food systems. Relevant topics will be examined at both the local and global level, exploring the evolution of these issues and how they currently impact environment and society, and analyzing the prognosis for future generations. These topics will be investigated through an interdisciplinary approach, evaluating many perspectives including scientific, technological, social, economic, cultural, and environmental. This will be accomplished through the use of scientific articles, technical reports from government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), book chapters, lectures, documentary films, and popular media.

As an **Integrative Capstone (CAPS) UCORE** and **Tier III [T] GER**, this course will engage you in integrative learning, creative and critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and ethical reasoning through discussions and research projects. This requires you to develop your own research and/or creative questions, and initiate investigations and exploration of open-ended issues and problems. This course meets the WSU Learning Goals for CAPS courses: depth, breadth, and integration of learning; critical and creative thinking; information literacy; scientific literacy; communication; diversity; and some aspects of quantitative reasoning. Capstone courses are meant to bring closure to the undergraduate experience and prepare you for post-baccalaureate studies and life-long learning. As a **Writing-in-the-Major [M]** course, practice in written communication is a critical element of this course and will include original writing and revision.

### Course expectations

Discussion and questions during class and in online discussion forums are required, with an emphasis on multi-modal and persuasive forms of communication. Due to the nature of the discussions and projects, attendance and participation is essential and will represent a portion of the final grade.

## Course assignments

The following assignments will be explained in detail with more specific instructions as they are assigned:

- **Written assignments: analysis of scientific articles, technical reports, and public media**  
- These assignments will focus on ways to read and critically evaluate scientific and technical articles, in addition to the corresponding public media interpretations.
- **Online discussion forums** - Blackboard Learn online discussion forums are designed to supplement in-class presentations, readings, documentary films, and other course materials. These will be structured in order to elicit substantive postings and responses that are thoughtful and well-reasoned. Simple affirmations, “Yes, I agree”, or denials, “No, I disagree”, are NOT sufficient. One class meeting will be cancelled for each discussion forum to make up for the extra time devoted to thorough reading and responding to posts. A minimum number of substantive posts and/or replies are required for credit in each discussion forum.
- **White paper project** - To prepare for solving real-world problems in the realm of horticulture and broadly related issues, a multi-step written project is required that culminates in a white paper on a personally selected topic. A white paper is an authoritative report that attempts to educate and persuade readers about a specific position and actionable solution to a perceived problem.
- **White paper 3-minute flashtalk** – Based on your white paper, you will prepare and present your topic in an abbreviated and more impactful format as a 3-minute oral presentation. The purpose of this presentation is to quickly and clearly present your topic to the class, compelling them to be convinced of the validity of your statement and/or argument. The presentation may be accompanied by ONE or TWO (at the most) powerpoint slides if you wish, or it may be without any aids.

## Grading criteria

**Analysis of scientific articles and White paper** written assignments:

- 20% for accuracy and completeness of topic coverage
- 10% for the use of references to frame discussion and support points made
- 25% for analysis, integration and synthesis of the subject/topic/issue (i.e. bringing together the tools you are using with your ideas and discussion)
- 20% for organization and clarity of presentation
- 15% for persuasiveness and validity of conclusions
- 10% for spelling, grammar, punctuation, word usage, style, etc.

All assignments are due by 8 a.m. on the specified date in the appropriate Drop Box in the Blackboard Learn course space. Unless a legitimate reason is provided in advance, 5% will be subtracted from the grade for an assignment for each day the assignment is late.

Grading of the preliminary stages of the white paper assignment (proposal and annotated bibliography) is based only on the degree to which these are completed, including bibliography formatting.

Grading of the white paper assignment will include a peer-review of other students’ projects, in addition to a peer-review by other students of your project.

**White paper 3-minute flash talk:**

- 20% for proximity to the 3-minute time limit
- 80% for the degree to which your presentation persuasively represents your topic

**Online discussion forums:**

- 47% for organization and clarity
- 47% for persuasiveness and validity of conclusions/argument
- 6% for spelling, grammar, punctuation, word usage, style, etc.

## Grading

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Weight of final grade</u>
<b>Analysis of scientific paper</b>		
Assignment #1	50	10%
Assignment #2	50	10%
<b>Online discussion forums</b>		
Discussion #1	50	10%
Discussion #2	50	10%
Discussion #3	50	10%
<b>White paper project</b>		
Written communication	200	40%
3-minute flashtalk	<u>50</u>	<u>10%</u>
<b>Total possible points</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading scale – Based on percentage of total points earned

	A	93-100%	A-	90-92%
B+	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%
C+	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%
D+	D	63-66%	D-	60-62%
F		< 60%		

### Course Website - BbLearn

- Course communication will take place in the course space of the new Blackboard Learn (BbLearn) online learning management system.
- Go to the login at <https://learn.wsu.edu/webapps/login/> and use your Network ID and password to log into Blackboard Learn. You should see your courses listed in the courses module in the center of the page.
- Regardless of which section you are enrolled in, use the merged course [\[CAPS\] \[M\] Trends in Horticulture \(2016-SPRI-PULLM-HORT-425-4994-LEC\)](#), as it is the only course space for HORT 425 that is enabled and active.
- Firefox and Chrome are the best supported web browsers by BbLearn, however, Internet Explorer and Safari for Apple may also work, but with some minor configuration problems.
- You can find help for BbLearn features at [https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1\\_2014\\_04/Student](https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_2014_04/Student).

The HORT 425 course space will contain files for the syllabus, class schedule, assignments, resource materials, and other pertinent information about the course. In addition, the course space will contain notes, reading materials, news, industry and scientific articles, and other supporting documentation, as well as PDF files of lecture presentations for each topic. Lecture presentations and any associated resource materials will be added to the website as they are presented in class to help you prepare for the required assignments.

### Additional Policy Notes

**Syllabus Changes** - Information in this syllabus, on class web sites, and in class handouts is assumed to be correct, but could change if something unexpected occurs. Changes will be presented in class, on class web sites, and/or in class handouts.

## **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to act in accordance with the WSU policies on academic honesty as found in the *Standards of Conduct for Students* and the *Student Standards and Accountability Guidebook* which can both be found on the [Office of Student Standards and Accountability](#) website. These policies prohibit falsification and fabrication of information, plagiarism, multiple submissions, and others. For additional information see WSU's [Academic Integrity Program](#), and for information specifically on plagiarism, see WSU Libraries [Plagiarism Information Site](#). Plagiarism is knowingly representing the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment of the source. The only exceptions to the requirement that sources be acknowledged occur when the information, ideas, etc., are common knowledge. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- submitting as one's own work the work of a "ghost writer" or work obtained from a commercial writing service;
- quoting directly or paraphrasing closely from a source without giving proper credit;
- using figures, graphs, charts, or other such material without identifying the sources;
- quoting or paraphrasing extensively from a source even if credit is given.

A written document that you prepare and submit must reflect your own understanding and synthesis of the concepts. If evidence of plagiarism is detected in any assignment, that assignment will receive a zero grade and the incident may be reported to the [Office of Student Standards and Accountability](#) for further action.

## **Cell Phone, Tablet and Laptop Use**

Use of cell phones, tablets, laptops, pagers, PDAs, or similar personal communication devices is not allowed during class unless it supports class activities, such as taking notes, completing in-class or group assignments, etc. In order to ensure a productive learning environment, you are required to turn off or set your personal communication device to silent mode during class time.

## **Reasonable Accommodation**

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the [Access Center](#) (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center.

## **Safety and Emergencies**

Washington State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its faculty, staff, and students. Safety is the responsibility of every member of the campus community and individuals should know the appropriate actions to take when an emergency arises. In support of our commitment to the safety of the campus community the University has developed a Campus Safety Plan, <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> (Pullman) and <http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/safetyplan/> (Tri-Cities). It is highly recommended that you visit this web site as well as the University emergency management web site at <http://oem.wsu.edu/> to become familiar with the information provided.

## **Discrimination Reporting Requirement**

Discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct (including stalking, intimate partner violence, and sexual violence) is prohibited at WSU (See [WSU Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#) and [WSU Standards of Conduct for Students](#)). If you feel you have experienced or have witnessed discriminatory conduct, you can contact the WSU Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO) and/or the [WSU Title IX Coordinator](#) to discuss resources and reporting options. (Visit [oeo.wsu.edu](http://oeo.wsu.edu) for more information, including a list of confidential and other resources.) WSU employees, with limited exceptions (e.g. confidential resources such as health care providers and mental health care providers – see [oeo.wsu.edu/reporting-requirements](http://oeo.wsu.edu/reporting-requirements) for more info), who have information regarding sexual harassment or sexual misconduct are required to report the information to OEO or a designated Title IX Coordinator or Liaison.