Making Food Policy Relevant: An Innovative Approach

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Background

- Supply plants with nutrient-rich soil, and water them appropriately

- “US Food Policy” Course
  - “IE”

Political Science & Agriculture

- 10 students
  - Predominantly Midwest, small town background

Connections
Goal: Independently identify various points of common intersection among different perspectives.

Transfer
Goal: Transfer previously acquired knowledge, skills, and methodologies to a novel context.

Synthesis
Goal: Synthesize distinct perspectives by applying diverse knowledge and skills in order to create arguments or solve problems.

Reflection
Goal: Reflect on their process of integrative thinking.
Approach

Students need to understand that:

- They can impact food policy.
- Food policy impacts them on a daily basis.
Student Thought (Pre)

Student Perception of Food Policy:

- Distant
- Detached
- Not directly affected
- Cannot Directly Change or affect policy
Approach

“Learn by Doing”

- Students will assume the role of an elected official.
  - Local, Regional, State or National
    - County Supervisor
    - State Senators & Representatives
    - City Councilman
    - Local School Board Member

- Focus discussions & assignments from their elected position.
Approach

Curriculum:
* Text

Current News:
* 2018 Farm Bill
* USDA Handouts/Emails

Class Set Up:
4 hour, 1/week
Approach

**Major Assignments:**
- Campaign Speech
- Restaurant Operation
- Restaurant Comparative Analysis
- Stakeholder Interview
- Policy Memo - (Pol Sci Dpt)
- Speaker Reflections
- “Create a Bill” - Final

**Service Component:**
- Food Related
- 6 hours
- Pre & Post Service Reflection
Approach

Classroom Discussions:
- Sioux City Farmers Market
- Iowa Cattlemen
- Iowa Corn
- Farm Credit Services
- Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska
- Iowa Farm Bureau

Industry On Site Interactions:
- Fareway
- Pizza Ranch
- Hard Rock Casino/Anthem
- Sioux City Councilman
## Student Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEA Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The guest speakers helped me gain a better understanding of food policy or how food policy is made.”</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tours and visits helped me gain a better understanding of what goes into making food policy”</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The class demonstrated the importance and significance of the subject matter.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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“Getting out into the community and doing tours beyond the classroom made it much better.”

“The tours outside of the classroom must continue. I learned a lot while talking to other business professionals.”
Conclusions (Post)

Student Perception of Food Policy:

--- Distant/Detached
  “I didn’t realize we had a policy maker on campus”
  “This course brought an enormous amount of knowledge to me and how policies are implemented through lobbying, producers, consumers, non-profit organizations, and the legislators that make it all happen.”

--- Cannot Directly Change or affect policy.
  “I made connections to use the next time I have questions”.
Recommendations/Improvements

- Continue with “elections”.
  - Limit the number of each elected official?

- Include “Hometown Happenings”.
  - Brings local into the classroom for discussion.
    - School lunches, food recycling, packaging, emissions

- Increase usage of current legislation in the region
  - Classroom discussion (online posts) will ask students to “vote” on a current bill and post their reasoning.
Limitations

- Low Enrollment Numbers
  - Large Numbers the year before.

- Low Response rates to evaluation
  - 30%

- Scheduling
  - 2 hrs/ 2x week next semester.
Questions?