

Course Syllabus Spring 2025

HORT/CROP_SCI 425

Trends in Integrated Plant Sciences

Course description: Critical examination of current impacts and future trends in [crop] plant sciences

3 Credits [CAPS] Integrative Capstone UCORE [M] Writing-in-the-Major

Instructor: Dr. Arron Carter (ahcarter@wsu.edu); office: ITB 3047

Teaching Assistant: None assigned

Office hours are by appointment

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Integrate interdisciplinary knowledge, contextual factors, and stakeholder perspectives via critical thinking to address real-world plant science challenges
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication and interpersonal skills in collaborative teams to deliver interdisciplinary scientific knowledge
3. Evaluate and refine one's own preparedness for a professional career in integrated crop plant sciences

Learning Approaches

As an **Integrative Capstone [CAPS] UCORE** course, this course will engage you in integrative learning, critical and creative thinking, communication, teamwork, and ethical reasoning via instruction from experts, discussions with experts, self-directed deeper exploration of horticultural/agricultural disciplines and issues, and a semester-long capstone project. This approach requires you to develop your own research and/or creative questions and to explore 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; and diversity. Capstone courses are meant to bring closure to the undergraduate experience and prepare you for entering your chosen professional career and life-long learning. This capstone course will emphasize your membership in the crop plant sciences.

As a **Writing in the Major [M]** course, practice in written communication in key genres of crop plant science is a major feature and involves original writing and revision. The total points involved in writing assignments is 70 (30%). These assignments include the opportunity to submit and revise your writing.

Course Expectations

Attendance, attention, and participation are critical due to the nature of the course's ongoing advancement of skills in crop plant science, each class period building on past weeks. You are encouraged to ask questions during class. Because many class periods will be devoted to instruction in progressing your semester-long capstone project, thereby providing immediate assistance and feedback, your need for class engagement will be raised – while reducing your need to do homework. Class activities will therefore account for 35% of course assessment.

You are expected to bring to this course your **plant science knowledge** and **scientific experimentation experience** from other courses. You will hone skills in **critical thinking** and **scientific and professional communication** in this course. While you will demonstrate these honed skills in course assessment items submitted, they are meant to be valuable in a wider range of situations well beyond this course. Effectively integrating and applying such skills, knowledge, and experience – especially **in the context of your chosen major(s)** – will establish your deserved membership as a crop plant science professional.

Teamwork is also emphasized, with various interactions throughout the semester involving other students and understanding and reflecting upon your own personality and team contributions. Just as in the real world, effective teams can achieve much more than single practitioners, and experiences and skills in peer support and operating in a team environment are critical life lessons. Likely you have worked in teams during your previous undergraduate coursework, perhaps with some of the same students in this class. You are expected to have learned from those experiences so that your team activities in this course demonstrate maturity and responsibility commensurate with imminent entry to a professional career.

If you need to miss a class, it is expected that you will email the professor one week prior to missing the class to discuss what needs to be done to make-up any assignments. University approved absences can be made up. Absences not approved can be made up at the discretion of the professor. If a class is missed because of an illness, please email the professor within 24 hours to discuss the absence.

Assessment

The course's 200 points of assessment are divided into two parts: (a) the semester-long capstone project with its three "phases" and (b) everything else, being primarily assessments of class engagement. There will be no final exam given in this class.

Course assessment details

Assessment Item and its components	Due date*	Points
Capstone Project (130 pts)		
Phase 1 White Paper	draft: Feb 14	10
	final: Mar 7	40
Phase 2 Infographic	draft: Mar 31	10
	final: Apr 7 or 11	20
Phase 3 Podcast Script	draft: Apr 14	10
Phase 3 Podcast	final: Apr 25	40
Everything else (70 pts)		
In-class activities	As assigned	70

- Phase 1 White Paper final - as an electronic Word file - is due at the start of class on Mar 7
- Phase 2 infographic draft - printed in color - is due by the start of class on Mar 31
- Phase 2 final infographic is due by 9 am via Canvas in .ppt format on Apr 7.
Presentations by half the class on Apr 7 and the other half of the class on Apr 11
- Phase 3 Podcast Script draft is due at the start of class on Apr 14
- Phase 3 Podcast final is due at the start of class on Apr 25

Late Assignment Policy

Missed weekly assignments **cannot be made up** (see the above policy on missing class). Missed classes will often mean missed In-Class Activities and their associated points. *These points can only be made up with an approved University excuse* for your class absence. One option may be that your next assignment will count for double points to make up for the assignment missed.

For the Capstone Project, some components **must be submitted/presented on the due date**. For other components, *unless a legitimate reason is provided in advance*, 10% will be subtracted from the grade for each day the submission is late, beginning a

minute after 5:00 pm on the due date. Assignments more than two days late will not be accepted.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be based on proportion of total points earned:

Grading scale					
		A	93-100%	A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	D-	60-62%
F	< 60%				

Additional Policy Notes and Support

Syllabus Changes: Information in this syllabus and generally in the online course space is assumed to be correct but could change if something unexpected occurs during the semester. Changes will be announced in class, by email, and/or on Canvas.

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Please notify the instructor during the first week of the course if you need accommodations to ensure proper planning. All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

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 could be reported to the [Office of Student Standards and Accountability](#) for further action.

Additional information on WSU policy can be found for:

Academic Dishonesty at <http://www.conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=343>

and Plagiarism at <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/main.html>

Use of generative AI tools: This course assumes that work submitted by students be generated and completed by the students themselves, working individually or in groups as directed by the assignment instructions. This policy states the following are violations of academic honesty: a student has another person or entity do a portion of the graded assignment for them, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a company or person to complete the assignment for them, and/or using generative AI tools to develop text and write documents or create images. While some assignment instructions will explicitly prohibit test-generation tools, other assignments will be used to explore the use of AI for research, brainstorming, and editorial aids. As such, it is highly recommended to reach each of the assignment instructions thoroughly to determine when AI use is permitted, and when it is not permitted.

While there is no substitute for working directly with your professor on the required assignments, the potential for generative AI is clearly developing and progressing. Please communicate with the teacher about any interested use of generative AI to understand how to use it for each assignment. In this course, we may use generative AI tools to examine the ways in which these kinds of tools may inform our exploration of topics in the class. Understanding how and when to use generative AI tools is quickly emerging as an important skill for future professions. When generative AI tools are used they must be documented, and the following are required as an appendix to the assignment:

- the entire exchange with the generative AI tool, highlighting the most relevant sections
- a description of which AI tools were used
- an explanation of how the AI tools were used
- any prompts that were put into the AI tool
- any original text that was put into the AI tool for editing

- an account of why AI tools were used

Campus Resources: There are multiple campus resources available to help ensure you are successful in your degree program while at WSU. These resources include the Writing Center (<http://universitycollege.wsu.edu/units/writingprogram/index.html>), Library Services (<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/>), Center for Advising and Career Development (<http://salc.wsu.edu>), and the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.wsu.edu>). Additionally, the instructor is always available to help ensure your success in the class and can assist in directing you towards appropriate resources on campus. Please use these resources if needed as they are at your disposal.

WSU Safety Statement: Please become familiar with these websites and the guides contained therein to ensure safety on the WSU campus. In the event that our safety becomes compromised, please stay calm and follow the instructions of the professor.

Pullman Campus Safety Plan: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>

WSU alert system: <http://alert.wsu.edu/>

Office of Emergency Management: <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies>

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 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 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.

Lauren's Promise: We will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you.

Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year-old honors student athlete, was murdered on Oct. 22, 2018, on the University of Utah campus by a man she briefly dated. We must all take actions to ensure that this never happens again. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. If you are experiencing sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking, please report it to one of us and we will connect you to resources or call Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse at 877-334-2887 (24-hour crisis hotline). Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated at Washington State University. WSU has instituted procedures to respond to violations of these laws and standards, programs aimed at the prevention of such conduct, and intervention on behalf of the victims. WSU Police officers will treat victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking with respect and dignity. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and WSU Police will assist by providing resources to victims. In addition to its law enforcement

efforts regarding sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking, WSU Police refer victims to the appropriate university and/or local community counseling and other resources devoted to assisting victims. Advocates help survivors determine their own needs regarding their physical and emotional health, reporting options, and academic concerns. They connect survivors to campus and community services, and provide accompaniment to important appointments (court, hospital, and police) and support throughout the process. WSUPD can also connect you with advocacy services, if desired. The local advocacy group is Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse, whose services are free, immediate, and confidential. Other confidential resources include WSU Counseling and Psychological Services. If you would like to speak with a counselor after business hours, WSUPD can contact the on-call counselor and have them call you directly or a crisis telephone number is provided. Information shared with the counselor will not be provided to WSUPD without expressed permission from you. WSU Counseling and Psychological Services 509-335-2159 (crisis services line).