Student-Directed Project

The Basics: The Student-Directed Project (SDP) provides students with an opportunity to explore a topic or to attempt to answer a question related to course content that interests them.

Topic: In the sixth week of class, each student will submit a project proposal in which they 'pitch' a topic to the instructor. *Topics can be anything at all*. There are only two requirements: 1. the proposed topic must be relevant to the course (it must relate to one or more of the nine course themes listed below); and 2. the topic must be relevant to the student in question (the student should *actually care* about the topic). A project proposal template will be distributed and students will have class time to discuss potential topics with the instructor. Ideally, SDP topics will connect to the overall course theme (food) but students may propose non-food-related topics as well

Social Norms	Identity & Solidarity	Class & Habitus
Authenticity	Emotion & Affect	Space & Place
Gender	Justice	Power & Authority

Research and Investigation: Each student must engage in research or investigation in order to explore their chosen topic or answer their question. The exact nature of student research or investigation is negotiable *but every project should include some form of academic research* (i.e. consulting peer-reviewed publications or reliable websites). Students may also opt to analyze primary sources (e.g. philosophical texts, literature, films, artworks, video games, etc.). Other appropriate forms of investigation include self-reflection (e.g. journaling), informal interviews (e.g. speaking with friends or family), and participant observation (keeping notes of lived experiences).

Medium: SDPs are to be submitted as digital files over Léa. Students can express their research, investigation, thinking, and conclusions *however they like*. Every SDP must include between 1500 and 2000 words but these words can be written or spoken. Students who wish to write traditional essays may do so, however in addition to the written or spoken component, SDPs may also involve other means of expressing student thought and conclusions such as: poetry, fiction, song, dance, artworks (painting, drawing, sculpture, textile…), film etc., as long as these can be communicated digitally (i.e. as recordings or images). The project medium should fit with the proposed topic and students will be asked to justify their proposed medium in their proposals.

Evaluation: All SDPs will be evaluated according to the project rubric (attached). The important thing is for students to *think carefully* about their proposed topic or question and to demonstrate their careful thought and analysis in their projects.

Student-Directed Project Grading Rubric

	ADVANCED	THOROUGH	ACCEPTABLE	PARTIAL	MINIMAL
COURSE THEMES	The project engages with course themes in a clear and thoughtful manner. Multiple themes are fully explained and analyzed. Clear and meaningful connections to multiple course competencies are present.	The project explicitly connects to and engages with course themes. Chosen themes are carefully explained and investigated. Clear connections to multiple course competencies are present.	The project explicitly connects to one or more course themes. A basic understanding of chosen theme(s) is apparent. The project connects to at least one course competency.	One or more course themes are mentioned in the project but connections are vague or confused. Some understanding of chosen theme(s) is apparent. Course competencies are mentioned.	Connections to course themes and competencies are incomplete or absent.
RESEARCH PLAN	The project includes in-depth, thorough, and detailed research / investigation. Student research plan meaningfully supports clear and insightful thought process / conclusions.	The project includes thorough, appropriate, and careful research / investigation. Student research plan directly and clearly supports clear thought process / conclusions.	The project includes appropriate research / investigation. Student research plan supports thought process / conclusions.	The project includes limited research / investigation. Student research plan partially supports thought process / conclusions.	Research / Investigation is minimal or absent. Thought process / conclusions are vague, absent, or minimally connected to student research plan.
MEDIUM	Project medium is highly appropriate for chosen topic / theme(s) and provides a clear, insightful, and full expression of student learning.	Project medium is highly appropriate for chosen topic / theme(s) and provides a clear and thorough expression of student learning.	Project medium is appropriate for chosen topic / theme(s) and provides a clear expression of student learning.	Project medium is minimally appropriate for chosen topic / theme(s) and provides a partial expression of student learning.	Project medium is inappropriate for chosen topic / theme(s) and provides a minimal expression of student learning.
	90% - 100%	**80% - 89%**	**70% - 79%**	**60% – 69%**	**0% – 59%**