Overview
This section of English 121: Composition will focus on the relationship between food and environment. Students will read, write and discuss topics centered around direct service learning experiences performed alongside the course. Our studies will include examination of the rhetoric surrounding issues most relevant to the community partners selected for this course by the Carlson Center. Topics might include: public health, food education, government programs and legislation, marketing, packaging, production, sustainability, research in the field of nutrition, as well as commonplace exchanges about the topic of food (both at the service locations and in the students’ day-to-day lives). The primary goal is for students to be able to engage in and reflect upon the topic of food and environment through their writing and to do so in a variety of genres for a variety of audiences. In order to achieve this, we will spend as much time analyzing the language and rhetorical decisions surrounding each issue as the issue itself. The current political and cultural climate combined with carefully selected course readings will provide students with ample material to place in dialogue with their service learning experiences. Students will be expected to make connections between those service experiences and broader contexts—local, national, global, public, private, scholarly, rhetorical, etc. Students will learn to consider the issues at hand from an array of perspectives, to engage in productive dialogue, and ultimately to craft persuasive arguments on specific food-related and environmental issues.

Role of Service-Learning in the Course
Metacognitive reflection upon service learning experiences will play a large role in the course, helping students to locate and cultivate their own personal and academic stakes related to the course topic, as well as to develop and articulate an understanding of the role their respective service organization plays in relation to the course topic. In this way, the service learning aspect of the course will function as the primary content for discussion and writing. Through practice, students will learn to make connections (and perhaps illuminate discordances too where applicable) between the tangible work they observe and participate in at their service learning organizations and the arguments laid forth in their writing for the course. In short, placing service learning at the center of the course will enable and encourage students to compose dialogues and arguments that matter.

Assignments Related to Service-Learning
Students will complete two sequences of assignments, the first of which will be inquiry-based. Writing in a variety of genres, students will have the opportunity to further research, analyze and reflect upon course texts, discussions, and the service learning experiences themselves. Students will then use that inquiry as the foundation for persuasive writing and content creation in the second half of the class. As stated above, students will spend time engaging with a variety of rhetorical strategies, enabling them to produce writing that matters and that is designed to reach and persuade its intended audience. During the second half of the course, students will have the opportunity to organize a hypothetical or actual event and to create realistic, persuasive content for that event. This assignment will not only give them the opportunity to apply specific rhetorical strategies of the students’ choosing to an authentic writing context, but may also empower the students as their expertise in the topic (developed through both the classroom and service learning aspects of the course) will cast them as individual agents of change in their community.