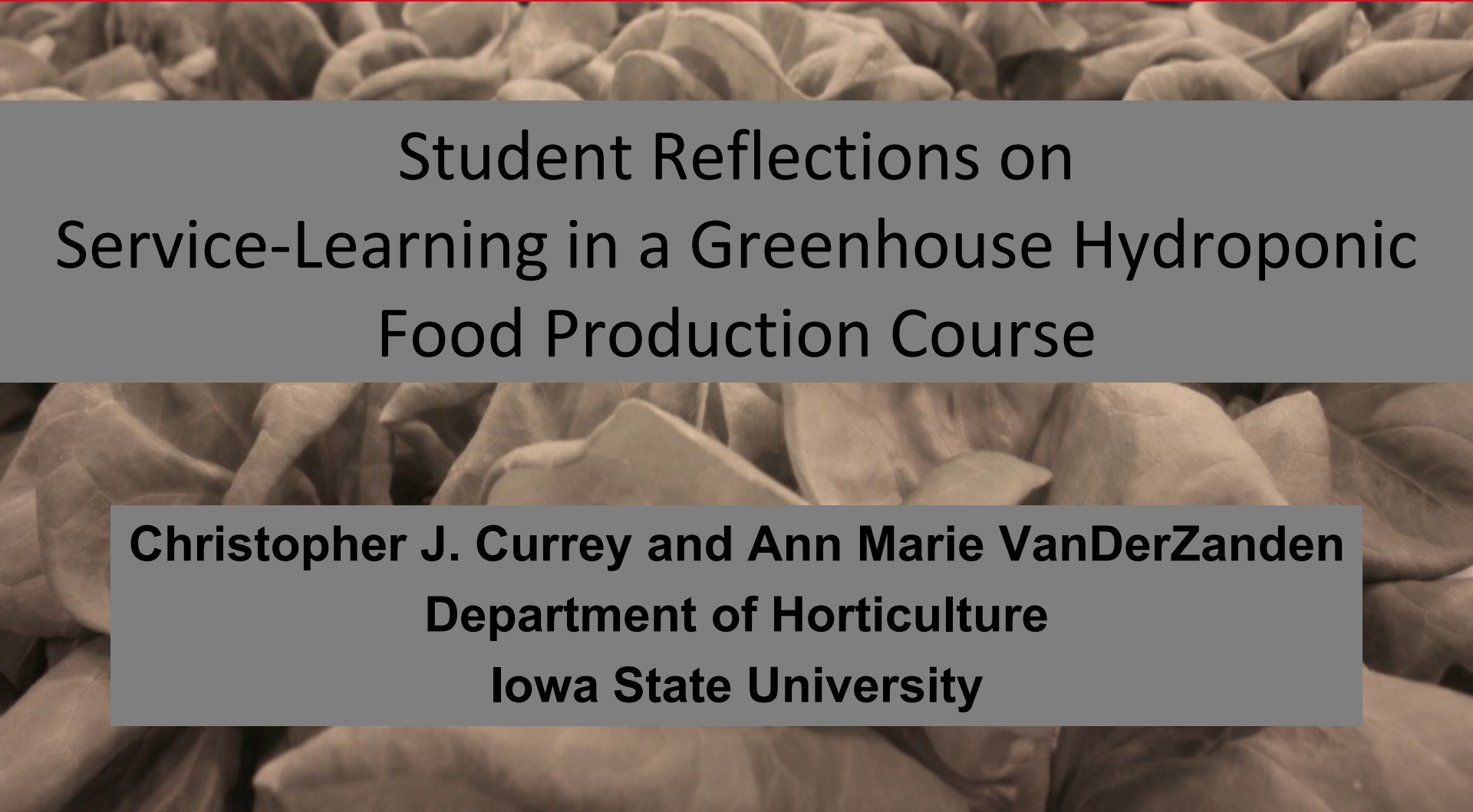




Department of Horticulture



Student Reflections on
Service-Learning in a Greenhouse Hydroponic
Food Production Course

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Service-Learning

- Educational approach that includes:
 - Community service
 - Curriculum connection
 - Reflection



Our Research Question

- Does a service-learning component impact student engagement and learning in a greenhouse hydroponic food crop production course?



HORT 331

Hydroponic Food Crop Production



Course Details

- HORT 331 Hydroponic Food Crop Production
- Fall Semesters: 2014 and 2015
- N=XXX students
- Community Partner



Food at First

"I will satisfy her poor with bread"

Psalm 132:15

Approach

- Students produced cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuces, and herbs
- Crops were harvested twice per week during laboratory periods
- Food was delivered to Food at First from mid-September to Thanksgiving

Approach

- Students completed two volunteer shifts at Food at First during the middle part of the semester
- Three different options
 1. Food bank distributions
 2. Meal preparation
 3. Meal serving and clean-up

Ready to Deliver a Harvest



Approach

- Students completed three guided reflections each with a different focus
- Reflection 1
 - **Focus:** Impressions of the service-learning project and purpose
 - **Submitted:** Week 1 following description of SL project and and presentation on food security by the community partner

Approach

- Reflection 2
 - **Focus:** Volunteer experience
 - **Submitted:** Week 8-10 after volunteer experience was completed



Approach

- Reflection 3
 - **Focus:** The overall impact of the service-learning experience including connecting course content to the production of hydroponic greenhouse crops, donating the harvested crops, and the volunteer experience.
 - **Submitted:** at the end of the semester Week 14

Reflection 1 Themes

- Enhanced awareness of local food insecurity
- Understanding of what Food at First does
- Excitement in doing the service-learning project



Reflection 1: In Their Words



Reflection 2 Themes

- Student empowerment and satisfaction in helping others
- Empowerment of food bank clients
- Increased student empathy of those without food



Reflection 3 Themes

- Individualized examples of what the service-learning project meant to the student
- Connection of how what they learned in class impacted food bank clients
- Interest in doing this type of project on a larger scale at ISU and for commercial producers

Reflection 3: In Their Words



Implications of Our Research

- The service-learning project stays in the curriculum!
- Modifications to course content and SL project based on student comments
- Future research to quantify change in student's perception over timeframe of the course

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