

## **Group Project: Product Lifecycle Video (with Individual Research Report)**

### **Milestones and Due Dates (100 points total):**

April 15 (Wed.) – Form Groups for Video Project; Brainstorm Ideas for Product Lifecycle

April 22 (Wed.) – Video Proposals (15 points)

May 6 (Wed.) – Individual Research Report Due (35 points)

**May 13 (Wed.) – Video Production Plan (15 points) [CHANGED DUE DATE & Points]**

June 1 (Mon.) – Final Video Presentations (35 points)

**Please read the assignment all the way through so you understand the big picture.**

**Overview:** In the book the *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and in the film *King Corn* we were introduced to the idea of finding out about where our food comes from. In this project you will be doing something similar for a non-food material consumer product. Your group will pick a product (not overlapping with what other groups choose) and discover what you can about what is involved in getting this product to consumers and where it goes after they are done with it. To break this problem down, your group will assign each member one or more parts of the lifecycle to research. At a minimum you should consider the following parts of a product lifecycle:

- Extracting and acquiring the raw materials (including transportation)
- Manufacturing
- Packaging
- Transporting
- Marketing and advertising
- Consumer use
- Post-consumer use, recycling, and/or disposal

Each of these parts of a product's lifecycle may have associated economic, environmental, and social costs. Your task is to create a short (10 minute) video that educates your audience about these often hidden costs. (In a similar way to how *Omnivore's Dilemma* and *King Corn* provide a richer understanding of Corn.) Note that there are more parts than there are group members so you will have to decide which are likely to involve more research and how to group them. How you break down these parts may depend on your choice of product.

Once assigned each group member will research their part(s) of the lifecycle individually and write a short (2-3 page) report on their findings. This report should be as quantitative as possible concerning the various economic, environmental, and social costs of this part of the lifecycle. This information will then be used by the group to plan the content of the video. The video should educate its audience about the lifecycle and sustainability impacts of its focal product, but can also be creative about how this information is conveyed.

**More details on milestones and deliverables on the back...**

**April 15 (Wed.) – Form Groups for Video Project; Brainstorm Ideas for Product Lifecycle**

For this project you will be allowed to form your own groups of 4 students (2 groups in 5pm mentor session will be groups of 3). You should brainstorm ideas for which product to study and come up with a few possibilities in case there is overlap with other groups. Begin to discuss how you will divide up the product lifecycle.

**April 22 (Wed.) – Video Proposals (15 points)**

Turn-in (one per group) a 1 page proposal that clearly states which product your group will study and which members are assigned to research which parts of the product's lifecycle. In addition, write a short description of any ideas you have for how to organize your video and how to present your material.

**May 6 (Wed.) – Individual Research Report Due (35 points)**

Do library research (in person or over the web) on your individual part(s) of the lifecycle. As much as possible, find out the factual details, including quantitative information about your product. Then write a 2-3 page report on what you found out. Where appropriate you may want to include graphs or other visual displays of quantitative information (not part of page count). Be sure to document where you get your information both in in-line citations and a Reference section at the end (using proper citation style—APA is preferred but other established styles are acceptable if you use them consistently.) Be sure your report has a clear introductory paragraph that includes what product you are researching and which parts of the product lifecycle you are focused on. Your main question is: What are the costs: environmentally, economically, and socially? To help you get started on this you may want to think about answering some of the journalist's standard questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? For example: Who is doing the work? Who benefits? Who doesn't? What materials are used? Where in the world is this done and under what conditions? Is the work seasonal? Why is it done by those people, in that location, using those materials? How is this decided? How is it accomplished? Etc.

**May 13 (Wed.) – Video Production Plan (15 points)**

Turn-in (one per group) a proposed organization of your video. This should include an outline of planned shoots and how long each will take. All group members should have some time in front of the camera covering their part of the lifecycle. Feel free to be creative, but also think about conveying your message clearly. For inspiration you might think about some of the hand-drawn graphics used effectively in *King Corn* to explain complicated issues. (Do NOT attempt to do anything too fancy and difficult such as the stop action animation used in *King Corn*.)

**June 1 (Mon.) – Final Video Presentations (35 points)**

Before class your group must post your video to youtube.com or on your PSU website and send me a link. Each group will have 10 minutes for their video and 5 additional minutes to answer questions or explain more about your product and/or your experience in making the video.