

## **Assessing the Community Nutritional Environment**

In this assignment you will learn the methods and strategies for assessing the Nutritional environment in specific neighborhoods in NYC. To conduct your assessment you will follow the guidelines summarized in the online course lecture and materials called, “*Nutritional Environmental Measurement Survey*”(NEMS) created by the University Pennsylvania’s Built Environment Assessment Training Institute or BEAT. The BEAT institute offers an online training in assessing both the nutritional environment and the physical activity environment. We will focus our attention on the nutritional environment and borrow some of the strategies and tools presented in the BEAT institute course. First an introduction to BEAT and NEMS will be presented in class, along with a PowerPoint slide presentation that will be available in our Canvas Course Website (Look in the Term Paper Folder in Canvas course website). Additionally we will be using the online data entry system that has been created by NEMS and utilized software in the online CounterStore Audit Center website. You have all been enrolled as Nutrition Auditors into CounterStore and will receive specific instructions via SFC email that gives you information about entering data into the online audit data collection system as well as which food establishment(s) or Restaurant(s) you have been assigned to assess or conduct your audit. Again the specific Restaurant that you will audit will be randomly assignment to you and will be communicated to you via SFC email. We will also spend some class time to review and answer any questions.

After we had an opportunity to introduce the NEMS tool in class and had a chance to review the materials regarding use of the NEMS Tool, you are ready to conduct an analysis of your Assigned Food Service Establishment (FSE) or Restaurant. Your FSE will either be, a Fast Casual or Sit-down Dining, as defined in the learning module and discussed in class. You will use the assessment tool or survey (check-off list) provided in the Term Paper Folder, print out, and follow the guidelines presented in instructions (also in the Term Paper Folder) to assess your chosen food establishment. Finally after collecting your data you will upload the information into CounterStore online database. Any doubts or questions about this??s email me at [mcongo@sfc.edu](mailto:mcongo@sfc.edu)

**After you conducted your NEMS assessments of your assigned food service establishments you should submit the following with this Term Paper assignment:**

- 1. Locate your chosen food establishment on Google Maps and print out a copy of the map and identify your food establishment, along the surrounding streetscape. Include the Names, Addresses, Phone # or Website (if available) of your study restaurant.**
- 2. Include an original copy of the menu showing the name and address of the FSE**
- 3. Include an original hand written copy of your completed NEMS- R score/data sheet with your HW submission.**
- 4. Provide a one to two-paged, typed summary of your findings, and based on the results of the NEMS tool, about the nutritional value of your chosen establishment. Explain where the FSE supports wholesome nutrition and contributes to local food security and also areas where it does not contribute to neighborhood food security, and provide justification for your answers. You may submit any other supportive information or data that you collect in your “field investigation” (think of yourself like a “detective”, so photos, interviews, and other evidence that supports your conclusion may be added to your paper write up). Finally, suggest a rating or grading system (A, B, C, etc.) using the NEMS tool results, and all of your supportive evidence, to determine how you rate or grade your chosen FSE? What’s your overall justification for the grade?**

Good luck, check the syllabus for the due date

## Partial Sample Student Submitted Assignment

Summary of Site Visit to Shake Shack

TKS Prof C

Many students like myself are always looking for food options that are affordable and high quality. I grew up eating at McDonalds. There was actually a McDonalds about a 1000 feet from the main entrance of my high school! I always looked forward to that little prize inside, but as time went on, I noticed that there were better quality hamburgers at other eating venues. Shake Shack fits the profile of a higher end McDonalds, with a more sophisticated menu, which includes wine and beer to attract older adults.

The Shake Shack I visited last week is located in an area that is bustling with activity. The neighborhood has a mixture of commuters, residents from the community, people that work in the courts, and of course, students from the nearby colleges. I observed several families at the time of my visit but not too many seniors. I found the restaurant to operate efficiently and the atmosphere is more minimalist, in terms of dining room design. People seemed to eat and leave fairly quickly, and not continue to stay on with long conversations with one another.

The menu is fairly straight forward and the restaurant does not bundle food in a combo-type meal. You can order a burger as a single or a double, which infers that you can order a large or a small. There are 4 options of Hot Dogs, 2 types of French Fries, with or without cheese, Shakes, of course, and Custard as dessert. They also have a "Doggie" menu, however do not

have a dedicated Children's menu. The menu has only one Vegetarian option, a Mushroom Burger, but is not any lower in calories than a single hamburger. There are no salads. There is both beer and wine, diet and regular soda, lemonade, and organic teas. They are also promoting some high calorie shakes and desserts for the holiday.

Shake Shack did not offer any advertisements which encouraged overeating and was a bit surprised that Nutritional values were only available on line. They do have the calorie counts, as required by NYC law, but it is in a lighter gray, so it does not really stand out in a pronounced way. You can order on line, and your food will be ready to be picked up, but most just ate and left.

The interesting about Shake Shack is that they have a slogan "Stand for Something Good", but it has nothing to do with Nutrition. They have a display that demonstrates how they use local products for the tables and chairs, made of recyclable material, and that some of furniture is made in Brooklyn. They also emphasize the ingredients are hormone free, all beef, antibiotic free, and the tea is organic. They also are part of the 1% of the Planet to help keep our waterways clean when you buy a bottled water, but the campaign is not related to nutrition.

The success of this Shake Shack is due to the location and population it serves. The restaurant seems to cater to people that want to eat a higher quality hamburger after work or school, maybe have an alcoholic drink, but do not want to wait for a waiter or waitress serve them. The demographic is people on the move with money to spend for the higher quality food, and maybe indulge in a unique dessert or shake. Overall, Shake Shack offers low nutritional value at its restaurant, and offers only a few healthy options in its menu.