

Economics of Global Food Problems

Syllabus

Economics 239/ Environmental Studies 239/International Studies 239

Fall 2019

Carnegie 305

Instructor: Amy Damon

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Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday: 1:20-2:50

Office Hours: Monday 2:30-3:30 & Tuesday 10:00-11:15; or by appointment. Please feel free to email me anytime.

Preceptor: Jasmine Davidson (jdavids2@macalester.edu); Office hours by appointment.

Course Description:

This class will examine food distribution, production, policy, and hunger issues from an economics perspective. It explores and compares food and agriculture issues in both industrialized and developing countries. Basic economic tools will be applied to provide an analytical understanding of these issues. Topics such as hunger and nutrition, US farm policy, food distribution, food security, food aid, biotechnology and the Green Revolution, the connection between food production and health outcomes, as well as others related themes will be explored in depth throughout the semester. We will be collaborating with a local CSA farm to learn about agricultural production in the US.

Course Objectives:

- To learn to use economic concepts to analyze world food problems.
- To become familiar with world food problems in general and their relationship to agricultural production, development, and policies.
- Develop basic food policy analysis skills.

Prerequisites:

This course applies economic concepts to global food and agriculture issues. Students should have taken Principles of Economics (ECON 119). Students should be comfortable with concepts such as supply and demand curves, elasticities, basic consumer and producer theory.

Required Text:

Readings will be available through Moodle.

Class Requirements and Grading: Grades will be based on the following assignments and activities:

1. **Problem Sets and Response Papers (25%):** These problem sets and writing assignments will typically be extensions of the reading assignments for a given unit. They will require you to write short essay responses to analytical questions and solve problems. Additionally, there are several assignments related to your term project that will count toward your homework

grade. Late assignments will be penalized with a 10% grade reduction for each day late. After 3 days a late assignment will not be accepted.

2. **Two exams (40%: 20% each):** Two in-class exams will be given in order to assess your understanding of the material.
3. **Term Paper (25%):** This is a semester long effort to integrate and apply class concepts to a particular issue in agricultural economics. You will be able to choose a topic of your choice. You will be required to turn in portions of this paper throughout the semester. See the assignment description for more details.
4. **Class Participation (10%):** Success in this class is dependent on class participation and interaction with your peers. It is therefore necessary that you attend class on a regular basis. I expect you to come to class prepared, having done the readings. Engaged, active, and respectful participation is expected from all class participants. When formal responses are not due, I will often begin class with a write-pair-share which you will turn in at the end of the exercise. This will allow us to understand what you took away from the articles and points of confusion.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected not to cheat. Cheating includes copying another student's homework, looking at another student's paper during a test, copying another author's work without proper citation. Please do not do any of these. Doing so will result in an F in the course and more problems than the cheating is worth. Please talk to me if you have any questions about this, or if you feel so swamped that cheating looks appealing.

Accommodations: I am committed to ensuring access to course content for students. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Office of Student Affairs, 651-696-6220 to schedule an appointment and discuss your individual circumstances. It is important to meet early in the semester; this will ensure that your accommodations can be implemented early on.

Classroom Inclusivity: It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Tentative Schedule: Fall 2019

Date	Topic	Due	Readings
3-Sep	Introduction/ State of Food Insecurity		In-Class Video: State of Food Insecurity in the World 2019 (FAO)
5-Sep	Consumers and Demand for Food in the Global South		1. NAM Chapter 3; 2. Poor Economics: Chapter 2
10-Sep	Income Elasticity and Demand Theory		1. Guo, Xuguang, Thomas A. Mroz, Barry M. Popkin, Fengying Zhai. (2000). "Structural Change in the Impact of Income on Food Consumption in China, 1989–1993" <i>Economic Development and Cultural Change</i> , 48:737–760, July
12-Sep	Nutrition Transition	Response paper	1. Popkin, B. M., 1999. Urbanization, Lifestyle Changes and the Nutrition Transition. <i>World Development</i> . 27(11), 1905 – 1916.
17-Sep	Agricultural Production and Farming Systems		1. NAM chapters 7-8 2. Milu Muyanga, T S Jayne, Revisiting the Farm Size-Productivity Relationship Based on a Relatively Wide Range of Farm Sizes: Evidence from Kenya, <i>American Journal of Agricultural Economics</i> , Volume 101, Issue 4, July 2019, Pages 1140–1163,
19-Sep	Correlation vs. Causation (RCTs and reading regression output)	Problem Set 1	1. Interpreting Regression Output (link on Moodle) 2. Poor Economics Chapter 1
24-Sep	Famines - Entitlements	Term Paper Proposal	1. Sen Chapters 7: "Famines and Other Crises"
26-Sep	Economics of Famine/ International Food Aid	Response paper	1. Ravallion, Martin. Famines and Economics Source: <i>Journal of economic literature</i> yr:1997 vol:35 iss:3 pg:1205 -42
28-Sep	TRIP TO COMMON HARVEST FARM		
1-Oct	International Food Aid		1. Food Aid's Intended and Unintended Consequences.
3-Oct	US Agricultural Production and Food Marketing		1. Handbook of Agricultural Economics Chapter 5: Structural change in agricultural production; 2. Haymakers chapters 1&5
8-Oct	Guest Speaker: Lisa Moldan, Wakefield Pork	Problem Set 2	Reading on livestock in US ag. TBD
10-Oct	Local Foods & Food Marketing	Revised Proposal	1. A critic: Jayson L. Lusk, Evaluating the Policy Proposals of the Food Movement, <i>Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy</i> , Volume 39, Issue 3, September 2017, Pages 387–406, https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/pxp035 2. An assessment of the impact of food industry market power on US consumers
15-Oct	Food Waste	Response paper	1. Review: Food loss and waste in Sub-Saharan Africa <i>Food Policy</i> 70: 2017 (2) 2. Marc F. Bellemare, Metin Çakir, Hikaru Hanawa Peterson, Lindsey Novak, Jeta Rudi, On the Measurement of Food Waste, <i>American Journal of Agricultural Economics</i> , Volume 99, Issue 5, October 2017, Pages 1148–1158,
17-Oct	Agricultural Trade		1. NAM: Chapter 16 2. Clapp, J. (2017). Food self-sufficiency: Making sense of it, and when it makes sense doi://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2016.12.001 3. The Atlantic Article on Moodle
22-Oct	Exam 1		
24-Oct	Fall Break		

Topics in Consumption

29-Oct	Agriculture in Economic Transformation and Growth		1. Food Economics, Chapter 3. "The Food Sector During Economic Development"
31-Oct	Dual Burden of Malnutrition/ Term Paper check in	Term Paper Part 1	1. The World-wide growth in obesity: An economic research agenda.
5-Nov	Obesity & Overweight		1. Soda tax and the prices of soda and other drinks: Evidence from MX 2. Latin America winning the war on obesity (Washington Post)
7-Nov	Long term effects of malnutrition	Response paper	1. The Impact of Early Childhood Nutritional Status on Cognitive Development: Does the Timing of Malnutrition Matter?

Topics in Production

12-Nov	Inputs	Data assignment	1. Ten striking facts about agricultural input use in Sub-Saharan Africa Food Policy Volume 67, February 2017, Pages 12-25 MeganSheahan & Christopher B.Barrett; 2. Return to Fertilizer Duflo et al.
14-Nov	Green Revolution and Biotechnology	Term Paper Part 2	1. Freedom from Famine: The Normal Borlaug Story (http://youtu.be/IjeqOnsZp6w) 2. Economics of Biotechnology: Handbook of Agricultural Economics
19-Nov	Land Markets		1. Keswell, M., & Carter, M. R. (2014). <i>Poverty and land redistribution</i> doi://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2013.10.003 2. Carter, M.R. and A. Michuda (forthcoming). "The Distribution of Productive Assets and the Economics of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction" in M. Niskanke and J. Ocampo eds., The Palgrave Handbook of Development Economics (Springer).
21-Nov	Land Market	Peer Review	1. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/09/this-land-was-our-land/594742/ ; 2. Batterbury S.P.J. and F. Ndi. 2018. Land grabbing in Africa. In Binns J.A., K. Lynch and E. Nel (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of African Development. London: Routledge. PP 573-582.
26-Nov	Gender and Production	Response paper	1. Udry, C. (1996). Gender, agricultural production, and the theory of the household. Journal of Political Economy, 104(5), 1010-1046. 2. Akresh, R., Chen, J. J., & Moore, C. T. (2012). Productive efficiency and the scope for cooperation in polygynous households. American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 94(2), 395-401.
28-Nov	Thanksgiving		
3-Dec	Implications of Climate Change in Developing Countries.		1. Burke, M., S.M. Hsiang, E. Miguel. (2015). "Climate and Conflict", Annual Review of Economics. DOI: 10.1146/annurev- economics-080614-115430. ; 2. Edward Miguel Ted Talk (link on Moodle) 3. Noah Diffenbaugh and Marshall Burke. 2019. Global warming has increased global economic inequality. PNAS 116 (20) 9808-9813.
5-Dec	Implications of Climate Change in Developing Countries.		1. Wheeler, T. and von Braun, J. "Climate Change Impacts on Global Food Security" Science 02 Aug 2013: Vol. 341, Issue 6145, pp. 508-513 2. Podcast: the Migration Problem is a Coffee Problem.
10-Dec	Review	Final Paper	

Final Exam: December 17, 2019: 1:30pm (in our classroom)