NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Spring 2015 PADM-GP 4250 (2 credits)

Mondays 4:55-6:25  GCASL 369

Instructors:  John Gershman
Email: john.gershman@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-4:00 and by appointment

This class provides students with an introduction to the politics, economics, and policies associated with the global crises of hunger, malnutrition (under and over-nutrition), and food security. While the analytical perspectives provided will be comparative and historical, the course intends to ground discussion with practical exposure to the contemporary context of Ghana. Students will have an opportunity to have several field experiences in Ghana. The goals of the field experiences is for students to talk with organizations about the rationales for their current programs, to learn how the programs were designed, and to document what types of outcomes and impacts have been measured and evaluated. A particular focus is on the politics of these programs, both internally within communities and with respects to engaging other actors (supply chains, the public sector, etc). During this time, there will be additional sessions for students to share their field experiences with one another and reflect on how the material learned in the classroom can be used in practice. Prior to the course (and during the course itself) we will also facilitate contacts with organizations for students interested in pursuing longer internships over the summer in Ghana.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Explain various perspectives on the origins of the contemporary global food crisis as well as the state of knowledge regarding the inter-related food, fuel, and finance crises
- Be conversant with key terms in the field of food security and political economy of hunger and malnutrition
- Understand issues associated with the current food aid regime
- Understand the ethical issues associated with rights-based and welfarist approaches to food security

GRADES
There is no curve in this course. Everyone may receive an A or everyone may receive an F.
This course will abide by the Wagner School’s general policy guidelines on incomplete grades, academic honesty, and plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity.

Incomplete Grades: http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/incompletes.php
Academic Honesty: http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/
Course Requirements:

The requirements are class participation (30%), a simulation exercise (30%) and a long paper (45%).

1. Participation: (30%) The course depends on active and ongoing participation by all class participants.

   a). Class Participation Class participants are expected to come to class having read and digested the assigned readings and prepared to engage the class, with questions and/or comments with respect to the reading. Students are expected in particular to bring questions about the reading (were there concepts, data, or arguments that were unclear? Does the analysis travel to different contexts? What are the limits of the analysis in terms of space and time? Are the researchers asking the right questions?)

   Before approaching each reading think about what the key questions are for the session and about how the questions from that session relate to what you know from previous sessions. Then skim over the reading to get a sense of the themes it covers, and, before reading further, jot down what questions you hope the reading will be able to answer for you. Next, read the introduction and conclusion. This is normally enough to get a sense of the big picture. Ask yourself: Are the claims in the text surprising? Do you believe them? Can you think of examples of places that do not seem consistent with the logic of the argument? Is the reading answering the questions you hoped it would answer? If not, is it answering more or less interesting questions than you had thought of? Next ask yourself: What types of evidence or arguments would you need to see in order to be convinced of the results? Now read through the whole text, checking as you go through how the arguments used support the claims of the author. It is rare to find a piece of writing that you agree with entirely. So, as you come across issues that you are not convinced by, write them down and bring them along to class for discussion. Also note when you are pleasantly (or unpleasantly) surprised, when the author produced a convincing argument that had occurred to you.

   There will be extensive case discussions in class and students are expected to participate actively and constructively.

2. Simulation (30%) You will be part of a team who will prepare a brief (2-3 pages, single spaced) memo as a contribution to a real-time bargaining process at a Global Summit on Food Security and engage in the simulation. More details to follow at the second class.

3. Long Paper (40%) You have several options for writing the long paper (10-12 pages). You can write a policy memo, a white paper, or a research paper on a food security issue (and it may be related to your simulation assignment if you wish). Or you could do a commodity chain analysis of a particular commodity. Or if you have another idea, pitch it to me. I am happy for students to write papers that may be of direct use in your work or internship. All proposed paper topics should be submitted by Friday April 10 at 5:00 PM. [An Assignment tab on NYU Classes will be created for a one page outline of the project, including basic topic, initial list of resources, and the type of paper. Please feel free to speak with me about topics]. The final paper is due by 9:00 AM on Monday, May 18 through NYU Classes.

Late Policy. Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency. This is out of respect to those who have abided by deadlines, despite equally hectic schedules. Papers handed in late without extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per DAY.

Grading Breakdown:
Class participation (30%): Simulation (30%) and Long Paper (40%).
**Prerequisites:** A basic statistics course (CORE-GP.1011), including some regression analysis, a basic microeconomics course (CORE-GP.1018), and Introduction to Public Policy (CORE-GP.1022) or permission of the instructors.


Monday, March 30: Famines and Food Aid

Monday, April 6: Rise of a Global Food Economy: Corporations, Trade, and Food Aid

Monday, April 13: The Crisis of Fish

Monday, April 20: Which Green Revolution?

Monday, April 27: Climate and Food Security, Guest Lecture

Monday, May 4: Social Movements, Human Rights, Food Sovereignty and Food Security

Monday, May 11: Simulation

Definitions and Key Concepts:
Hunger, Malnutrition, Food Security, Famine

• Can you identify the implicit frames for the issue of hunger or food insecurity the readings project? What are the (implicit or explicit) diagnoses and prescriptions represented? Do they disagree on the data or the analysis of the data? What are the key areas of disagreement and common ground?

Goals:
• Spend some time on getting clear with respect to definitions of hunger, food (in)security, etc. and the significance of debates over those definitions as guides to policy.
• Explore and understand the normative and analytical disagreements and commonalities among the main policy-relevant approaches to understanding to issues of chronic malnutrition and hunger as well as the recent interwoven crises of food, fuel, and finance.
• Discuss the goals and objectives for the paper assignments for the course

Required Readings:
Norman Borlaug Interview

Chris Barrett, Measuring Food Insecurity, Science (Feb 2010) [NYU Classes]

Lester Brown, 10 Things to Know About Food
http://www.earthpolicy.org/books/fpep/10_things_to_know_about_food_on_world_food_day

Economist Special Report, The Nine Billion People Question [NYU Classes]

Jonathon Foley, Changing the Global Food Narrative

Joan Gussow, “The Incompatibility of Food and Capitalism,” Snail #2&3 (Aug, 2002) [NYU Classes]

Monday, March 30: Famine and Food Aid

Required Readings:


USAID, Food Aid Reform
http://www.usaid.gov/foodaidreform

Alliance for Global Food Security
www.foodaid.org
(sample from resources page (fact sheets) and also look at their Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/foodaidworks)

Monday, April 6: Actors in the Global Food System: Supermarkets, Global Commodity Chains

Required Readings:

Jennifer Clapp, Food, Chapters 2-5

Reardon and Timmer, TBD


Eric Holt-Giménez, Ian Bailey, and Devon Sampson, Fair to the Last Drop: The Corporate Challenges to Fair Trade Coffee [NYU Classes]


Monday, April 13: Fish

Required Readings:
Selections: On the Line [NYU Classes]


Monday, April 20: Which Green Revolution?

Required Readings:

Robert Paarlberg, “Attention Whole Foods Shoppers” Foreign Policy.com
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/26/attention_whole_foods_shoppers

See response by Anna Lappe, “Don’t Panic, Go Organic,” and scroll down to read other responses to both pieces, including Paarlberg’s response to Lappe
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/lappe?obref=obinsite

Roger Thurow, “The Fertile Continent,” Foreign Affairs (Nov-Dec 2010) [NYU Classes]


AGRA Strategy [NYU Classes]

A Viable Food Future, pp. 1-50 [NYU Classes]
Sophia Murphy, Land Grabs and Fragile Food Systems [NYU Classes]

Monday, April 27: Climate and Ag, Guest Lecture Which Green Revolution for Africa?

Required Readings:
TBD

Monday, May 4: Social Movements, Human Rights, Food Sovereignty and Food Security

Required Readings:
Jennifer Clapp, Food, Chapter 6
Belo Horizonte Video, Right to Food
http://www.urgentevoke.com/video/the-human-right-to-food-how
Eric Holt Gimenez and Annie Shattuck, “Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation?” Journal of Peasant Studies, Jan 2011 [NYU Classes]

Monday, May 11: Simulation Conclusion

Additional Reading

Additional (optional) readings are included in order to provide students with a larger bibliography of key materials and resources in the field. This may be helpful if you are interested in a particular topic and would like to explore it in more depth, as an initial starting point for papers, or simply as a reference for things you should get around to reading in your career.

Additional Reading related to Global Perspectives on Hunger and Food Security—Definitions, Concepts, Issues and the Food Crisis:

USDA-ERS, Food Security Assessment, 2010-2011 (July 2010) [NYU Classes]
Warren Belasco, Meals to Come: A History of the Future of Food, Chapters 1 and 2 [NYU Classes]
Raj Patel, Stuffed and Starved
UN Food Security Crisis Portal
Other coverage of the 2008 food, fuel, and finance crisis
http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/ourfoodourfuture/

IFPRI’s Food Security Portal
www.foodsecurity.org


Micronutrient.org
http://www.micronutrient.org/english/view.asp?x=582

Helen Epstein, “Cruel Ethiopia” New York Review of Books


Alex de Waal, “Retreat from Accountability: Neoliberalism and Adjustment,” in Famine Crimes, pp. 49-64.


**Additional Reading related to Actors in the Global Food System—Supermarkets and Global Commodity Chains:**


CADTM, *Getting to the root causes of the food crisis* [NYU Classes]


*Food Rebellions* By Eric Holt-Gimenez and Raj Patel


**Additional Reading related to Alternative Food Security Strategies—National Policies, Social Movements, the Right to Food, and Food Sovereignty:**

Jean-Denis Crola, *Aid for Agriculture: Turning Promises into Reality on the Ground: Co-ordinating Donor Interventions in Three West African Countries*

Action Aid and Food First, *Smallholder Solutions* [NYU Classes]

Improving the proof: Evolution of and emerging trends in impact assessment methods and approaches in agricultural development

