

International Agribusiness Studies

(Spring/Summer 2020)

Overview and Purpose of the Course:

This course provides a comprehensive analysis of social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental issues surrounding specific agricultural products along the agri-food value chain (a flow of food from upstream to downstream). For this purpose, we take various approaches to commodity systems analysis as a common theoretical and analytical framework, whereby we critically verify their effectiveness and versatility of the framework based on concrete examples.

Course Goals:

Through this course, students can gain critical insights into various aspects of agricultural products and agri-food industries that are often overlooked in business management and industry studies.

Detailed Schedule:

This course consists of 7 classes (on alternate Mondays), each of which is held from 13:30 till about 16:30.

#0: self-study, #1: May 11, #2: May 25, #3: June 8, #4: June 22, #5: July 6, #6: July 20, #7: July 27

Before starting the online course (#0), a sketch of the development of critical agri-food studies will be given as a background of commodity chain analyses.

- Buttel, F. H. (1996) 'Theoretical issues in global agri-food restructuring'. In: D. Burch, R. E. Rickson and G. Lawrence eds. *Globalization and Agri-Food Restructuring*, Avebury.
- Buttel, F. H. (2001) 'Some reflections on late twentieth century agrarian political economy', *Sociologia Ruralis* 41 (2): 165-181.

In the first class (#1), we will get a whole picture of food chains research as outlined by Bill Pritchard, including those in: agricultural economics and agribusiness studies; political economy traditions; and poststructural approaches, without going into detail at this stage. Out of these, the political economy traditions (e.g. commodity systems analysis, global value chains, and global production networks) as well as the poststructural approaches (e.g. cultural-turn, consumption-turn) will be studied later together. In the latter half of the class, we will learn one of the most influential approaches of commodity chain analyses, a Commodity Systems Analysis framework developed by William H. Friedland, and examine how this approach has challenged us to look into commodities and commodity chains from a social relations perspective.

- Bill Pritchard (2014) 'Food Chains'. In A. Murcott, W. Belasco and P. Jackson eds. *The Handbook of Food Research*, Bloomsbury: 167-176.
- Friedland, W. H. (1984) 'Commodity systems analysis: an approach to the sociology of agriculture', *Research in Rural Sociology and Development* 1: 221-235.

In the second class (#2), we will continue to learn the Commodity Systems Analysis framework, but with a focus on how it has been modified and enriched while being challenged by other approaches.

- Dixon, J. (1999) 'A cultural economy model for studying food systems', *Agriculture and Human Values* 16: 151-160.
- Friedland, W. H. (2001) 'Reprise on Commodity Systems Methodology', *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food* 9 (1): 82-103.
- Friedland, W. H. (2004) 'Agrifood globalization and commodity systems', *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food* 12: 5-16.
- Friedland, W. H. (2005) 'Commodity systems: Forward to comparative analysis'. In N. Fold and B. Pritchard (eds), *Cross-continental Food Chains*, Routledge: 25-38.

In the third class (#3), we will turn to another strand of the political economy traditions, Global Value Chains and Global Production Networks approaches.

- Gary Gereffi, John Humphrey, and Timothy Sturgeon (2005) 'The governance of global value chains'. *Review of International Political Economy*, 12(1): 78-104.
- Jeff Neilson and Bill Pritchard (2009) 'Re-inserting Place and Institutions within Global Value Chain Analysis'. In: J. Neilson and B. Pritchard, *Value Chain Struggles: Institutions and Governance in the Plantation Districts of South India*, Blackwell Publishing: 27-65.

In the fourth class (#4), we will relativise and enrich our understanding of commodity chain analyses by broadening disciplinary perspectives and methodologies, especially taking into consideration the literature in geographical and cultural studies.

- Collins, J. L. (2005) 'New Directions in Commodity Chain Analysis of Global Development Processes', *Research in Rural Sociology and Development 11 (New Directions in the Sociology of Global Development)*: 3-17.
- Hughes, A. and S. Reimer (2004) 'Introduction'. In A. Hughes and S. Reimer (eds), *Geographies of Commodity Chains*, Routledge: 1-16.
- Goodman, D. and E. M. DuPuis (2002) 'Knowing Food and Growing Food: Beyond the Production-Consumption Debate in the Sociology of Agriculture', *Sociologia Ruralis* 42(1): 5-22.

In the fifth to sixth classes (#5, #6), we will take some specific commodities as examples to dig deep into complexities and contradictions of globally expanding agri-food commodity chains. There are tentatively two options:

- Weir, K. A. (2014) *From Jicama to Jackfruit: The Global Political Economy of Food*, Paradigm Publishers.
 - Introductory chapters, Spices, Cocoa beans
 - Soy, Tomatoes, Tuna
 - Conclusion → #7

In the final class (#7), we will wrap up the course by letting the students share what they will have learned and giving comments to each other's statements.

In each class one or two students are assigned to prepare an analytical summary (see below) of required reading materials. For #5-6, because the textbook is too simple and easy to just read through chapters, assigned students are strongly encourage to dig deep into the commodity of the chapter (or other commodities to be compared) and present something addition so that we can stimulate discussion and deepen our understanding of those commodities.

Analytical Summary:

- 1) Summary --- identify and summarise the key arguments or main points of the assigned reading(s). Not descriptive, but analytical. Not exhaustive, but picking out important key arguments or main points, and briefly explain them. Also, in some cases, outlining the structure (the logic of author's argument), without detailing the content, is important.
- 2) Integration --- pick one or two ways in which the authors' arguments or the topics of the assigned readings relate to one another or relate to something that has been ever studied by the students or also to the reality of their own country or region. Look for similarity or difference, and generate connections, contrasts or comparisons between them.
- 3) Question/Reactions --- identify questions that we could discuss in the class. Also, students can raise specific questions about which parts of the reading did not make sense. Possible to raise objections (to content, style, politics, methods, etc), argument, praise, or any other reactions the students have while reading.

International Political Economy of Agriculture

(Autumn/Winter semester, 2020)

Course Objectives and Goals:

This course provides a comprehensive and critical view on the development and current status of agriculture and food governance at the global, national and local levels by referring to various theoretical frameworks and concepts of international political economy and agri-food sociology, especially with a focus on the unequal relationship between various actors. We will discuss issues and prospects of agriculture and food governance from the perspectives of concepts, discourses and movements over “sustainable development” and “food sovereignty”.

Through this course, students will acquire critical and interdisciplinary approaches to social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental issues surrounding agriculture and food, and gain insight into fundamental social science issues such as “structure and agency” and “discourse power”.

Detailed Schedule:

This course consists of 8 classes (on alternate Mondays), each of which is held from 13:30 till about 16:30.

#1: October 5 (till 15:00), #2: October 19, #3: November 2, #4: November 16, #5: December 7, #6: December 21, #7: January 18, #8: February 1 (till 15:00)

#1 (10/5) Guidance

Every year, textbooks used in this course are different, but we use introductory books with high international recognition as textbooks so that even beginners of agri-food studies or international political economy and sociology can learn effectively. Because of this, the outline of what we have learned in the previous years will be provided at the beginning of this first class so that all the participants can share the overarching aims and themes, as well as disciplinary background of the course. In this semester, we are going to read the following textbook together:

Jessica Duncan, Michael Carolan, and Johannes S.C. Wiskerke eds. *Routledge Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems*, Routledge, 2020.

Chapter 1. Regenerating Food Systems: A Social-Ecological Approach

- In the first class, the outline of the first, introductory chapter, including the structure of the whole book, will be briefly introduced, then each of the participating students will be assigned to of which chapter s/he is going to prepare an analytical summary (see below) and present in the following classes.

#2 (10/19)

Chapter 2. A Political Economy for Regenerative Food Systems: Towards an Integrated Research Agenda

- This chapter shows a normative and integrated research agenda for regenerative food system, building on theories and practices of decolonization, feminism, post-capitalism, co-production of knowledge and nature, and engaged scholarship so that a traditional political economy approach can be revalued and enhanced.

Chapter 6. Traditional Food, the Right to Food and Sustainable Food Systems

- This chapter shows how existing international right-based approaches and frameworks can function to support Indigenous and traditional food knowledge, which is needed for regenerative food systems.

#3 (11/2)

Chapter 7. Co-Creative Governance of Agroecology

- By taking a case study of FAO regional symposium on agroecology, this chapter argues that policies for regenerative food systems should be participatory and co-creative involving a diverse of stakeholders.

Chapter 12. Linking Small-Scale Fishing and Community Capitals: The Case of Atlantic Cod

- This chapter, by looking at the management of fisheries, considers food systems as a part of complex environmental and human systems, or social-ecological systems.

#4 (11/16)

Chapter 13. Food and Markets: The Contribution of Economic Sociology

- This chapter places the discussion on agri-food markets within the broader scope of economic sociology, offering a heterodox reading of the markets as social networks, institutions, culture, or field (social arena), and expand the explanatory potential of markets. The nested market approach is among others.

Chapter 16. Financing Food System Regeneration? The Potential of Social Finance in the Agrifood Sector

- This chapter examines how social finance could potentially support more regenerative food systems in the context of financialisation in the agri-food sector.

#5 (12/7)

Chapter 17. Citizen Entrepreneurship: The Making, and Remaking, of Local Food Entrepreneurs

- This chapter thinks about regenerative food systems through the concept of entrepreneurship, questioning how locally-facing business owner-operators understand their roles as entrepreneurs, particularly in relation to their respective local communities.

Chapter 18. Coffee Micro-Mills in Costa Rica: A Non-Cooperative Path to Regenerative Agriculture?

- This chapter (re)examines the potential for individualised market-based strategies to contribute to the pursuit of regenerative agriculture against the background of the emergence of social/environmental certification schemes under the initiatives of cooperatives.

#6 (12/21)

Chapter 24. A Digital "Revolution" in Agriculture? Critically Viewing Digital Innovations Through a Regenerative Food Systems Lens

- By taking a look at the emerging trend of digital agriculture, the chapter argues that, in the current economic and legal order, these innovations do not yet support regenerative purposes, but rather are reproducing social and cultural food system challenges. Still, it is argued that there is an opportunity to shape digital innovations and their infrastructures for a diversity of food system actors.

Chapter 26. Rural-Urban Linkages

- This chapter considers the significance of rural-urban linkages in current and future food systems, and provides four different scenarios for rural-urban interactions in sustainable food futures. The potential and limitations of different approaches are also discussed.

#7 (1/18)

Chapter 28. Urban Food Planning: A New Frontier for the City and Regenerative Food System Builders

- By taking a foodshed approach to food-city co-evolution, this chapter presents ten reasons why planning for regenerative food systems is a vital new frontier in city planning and agri-food planning more broadly.

Chapter 30. Controversies Around Food Security: Something Difficult to Swallow

- This chapter critically reviews the discursive processes by which food security ideas are constructed, which also reflect disputes between different social groups and inform the formulations of policies and responses to the phenomenon of food insecurity.

#8 (2/1) - Wrap-up and feedback

We will wrap up the course by letting the students share what they will have learned and giving comments to each other's statements.