APEC 1905

A Sustainable Global Food System (3 credits)

Fall 2014
3:35pm – 6:05pm, Tuesdays
Room 255, Blegen Hall

Instructor: Ben Senauer, Department of Applied Economics
Office: Room 332G, Ruttan Hall, St. Paul Campus
Office Hours: 1:00-3:00pm Thursdays, by appointment, and 6:05-6:15 pm immediately after class
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Course Overview:
The current global food system is not sustainable due to increasing regional water scarcity; its dependency on fossil fuels, other limited resources, and industrial chemicals; distributional inequities; and the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change. Meanwhile, the demand for food due to population growth and rising incomes will continue to increase. In this seminar, we will explore the structure and elements of a truly sustainable system, which would provide food for all and protect, or even enhance, the environment. The seminar will include videos, in particular from the BBC’s “The Future of Food” and PBS’ “Food for 9 Billion”, taped interviews with some foremost experts, and carefully selected readings from the textbook and some short additional articles. The seminar will stress discussion, small team projects, and other forms of active engagement. Developing a sustainable system will require using advanced science and technology, as well as traditional and organic farming approaches. Because of greater local weather extremes resulting from climate change, such as droughts, a globally interconnected system will be critical to responding to regional food shortages through trade and assistance.

Parts of our class discussions throughout the term will be dedicated to helping you make your transition to and navigation of the University a smooth one.

Faculty Bio:
Ben Senauer’s work has focused on the U.S. and global food systems, with research on topics like reducing global hunger and classes such as agricultural and economic development. He has become increasingly concerned about the impacts of agricultural and economic growth on the environment, and the effects of environmental degradation, especially climate change, on agriculture. His most rewarding activities at the University include his teaching and his work on major overseas development projects, particularly those in Bangladesh, Morocco, and Poland. He enjoys just about any outdoor activity, including hiking, biking, mountain skiing, sailing, and international travel.

Goals and Objectives:
- Have mastered a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry related to developing a global sustainable food system.
- Have been assisted in making the transition to the University.
- Can better identify, define, and solve problems.
Can better locate and critically evaluate information.
Can communicate more effectively.
Have acquired better skills for life-long learning.

Required Texts:
Gordon Conway, “One Billion Hungry: Can We Feed the World,” 2012. Available in paperback in the Campus Bookstore and on Amazon for $18.95, also in Kindle for $13.99.

Words of Encouragement and Course Expectations:
I will do everything I can to make APEC 1905 an interesting and rewarding experience for you. You can help facilitate this process by taking a few important steps.

Attendance and Etiquette: Class attendance is very important. Be in class because you want to be here and please arrive on time. Give attention and respect to your classmates and your instructor. If you know you will miss class, you are to inform me in advance. If you miss more than one class session without consulting me in advance, your final grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade (e.g., “A” to “A-”). For each additional absence beyond one, your final grade goes down by one-half letter grade for each day missed.

Also, I ask that you do not use any electronic device for non-course purposes during class. We will have one scheduled 10-minute break during class.

Course Readings: It is important you do the assignments prior to each class session. Class activities and discussions assume background knowledge from the assigned readings and videos. Your experience in APEC 1905 as an active learner and participant will be enhanced through your familiarity with the assignment for each class period.

Group/Team Work: You will be assigned to a group or team. You should share your e-mail address with other group members, and numbers for texting.

Grading and Course Assignments: My plan is to have a distribution of final grades ranging from “A” to “B.” You will receive at least the grade of “B-” if you attend all classes and make a conscientious effort on all assignments. From my own experience, the best classes you will take and remember in college are both challenging and fun; the two do not have to be mutually exclusive. I want 1905 to be one of these classes for you.

Course Grade:
Course grades will be based on the following weights:
  Attendance and active participation 33.33%
  Quizzes, written assignments and team-led discussions 33.33%
  Major team project: group presentation and Extra Credit Paper* 33.33%
*20 minute team presentation and 6-8 page, double-spaced paper with separate page of references.

There will be no midterms or final.

Class Schedule: ApEc 1905:
There will be changes in the future schedule, topics and assignments to improve the learning experience, especially later in the semester.

September 2:
   Welcome and Introduction  
   A Traditional Sustainable Farming System  

September 9: The Industrial Food System  

September 16: Local Food Systems  

September 23: Current Food System Problems  

September 30: Sustainable Food Systems  

October 7: Appropriate Technology  

October 14: Appropriate Technology Varies  

October 21: GMO’s, Genetic Engineering and Traditional Breeding  

October 28: Organic Foods and GMO Labeling  

November 4: Resource Scarcity  

November 11: Climate Change and Agriculture  

November 18: Climate Change and Agriculture (Continued)  

December 2: Team Topic Presentations  

December 9: Extra Credit Papers on Team Topic are due
Student Conduct Code:
The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:
Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html.

There will be no use of electronic devices during class until the instructor requisites it.

Scholastic Dishonesty:
You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.
Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:
Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:
Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html

Notes will be handwritten and computers may only be used if permission is individually requested by a student.

Grading and Transcripts:
The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

- A 4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- A- 3.667
- B+ 3.333
- B 3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B- 2.667
- C+ 2.333
- C 2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- C- 1.667
- D+ 1.333
- D 1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html.

Sexual Harassment:
"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is
not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:
The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf

Disability Accommodations:
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.
If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/

Mental Health and Stress Management:
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility: for courses that do not involve students in research
Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost. [Customize with names and contact information as appropriate for the course/college/campus.]
* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".