University notices:
1. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person – be it a world-class philosopher or your roommate – without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

This course meets each Wednesday from 6:10 to 9:00pm.

This syllabus is subject to change. When in doubt, please ask me.

Core Competency Statement
This course teaches concepts and skills that have been identified as core competencies for a degree in SID:

Sustainable Development Statement
This course will familiarize students with the interconnectedness of agricultural policy and planning, food policy, and nutrition policy and outcomes of nutritional status. We will explore the definition of "hunger", the definition of "malnutrition", 


from both a personal point of view as well as statistical. The planning and analytical process of defining nutrition problems at the village and household level will be discussed. Appropriate technologies and techniques will be presented to resolve food security problems.

Separate classes will deal with the agricultural decisions made at the farm level and how they are influenced by the international commodity markets, and the nexus between the food supply and food consumption at the household level.

Finally, the issue of biotechnology and the development of genetically modified seeds and animal species will be framed within the context of their effects on the environment and the overall food supply.

**Objectives:** The primary objectives are:

1. To expand awareness of how decisions are made to address problems of food security and nutrition.

2. To develop skills in the field of agricultural and food policy to evaluate whether or not programs are appropriate for guaranteeing food security and combating malnutrition.

3. To increase the understanding of the complexity of factors involving new biotechnologies and their overall impact on both international trade and domestic consumption.

**Gender Perspective Statement**

This course incorporates a perspective on gender as follows:

Particular attention will be devoted to rates of malnutrition, morbidity, and mortality comparing female and male populations.

**Course Requirements**

1. Attendance at all sessions; prompt arrival.
2. Preparation of all readings.
3. Participation in class discussions and any small group work.
4. Timely submission/presentation of assignments.
5. Team presentation of final project.
6. Helpfulness to other students.

**Your grade will be calculated as follows**

Participation in class discussion: 1/3
Oral presentation of research articles: 1/3
Team Presentation of final written project 1/3
At the 4th class, you should present to me your idea on the team project
You will receive early feedback on your performance
Students with excessive absences will be notified on an individual basis, first verbally and then in writing after the fourth session.

My make-up policy for late papers or missed exams
Late assignments will only be accepted with a valid excuse. Otherwise, your grade will be lowered.

CLASS SESSIONS

Class One: Wednesday; March 11, 2015
Introduction to The Production Of Food Based Farming Systems
Introduction to the production of food, based on farming systems in various countries. The trade-offs of crops for fuel vs. food will be examined. A case study will be presented linking Mexican coffee farmers and its dependency on the Commodity Exchange in New York for determining prices. The Fair Trade movement will be discussed and its attempt to positively affect the well-being of small cash crop farmers.

Readings:

2. “Life of P” Mother Jones, March/April 2013 p. 68
7. Wall Street Journal, Commodities Page, day of class

Class Two: Wednesday; March 18, 2015
Exploration of the Definition of "hunger" and "malnutrition"
This class will explore the definition of "hunger" and the definition of "malnutrition." We will examine these concepts from both a personal as well as a statistical perspective. Each student will be expected to convert the food values into calories and nutrient intake. Also, a simulated village survey will be carried out to characterize a village as to its incidence of malnutrition.
Readings:


5. Charts and tables will be distributed showing how they are applied in the field for determining malnutrition.


Class Three: Wednesday: March 25, 2015

The Use of Technology as a Fix for Nutritional Problems

The class will look at the attempt of Western Societies to use technology as a “fix” for nutritional problems without considering the social context in which the technology is to be introduced.

Readings:


Class Four: Wednesday; April 1, 2015
Pros and Cons of Genetically Modified Seeds.
This class will discuss the pros and cons of genetic engineering and the production of genetically modified organisms. Be prepared to discuss the following articles:

Readings:

Class Five: Wednesday; April 15, 2015
Ethical Considerations of Food Aid
We will look at the complexities of dealing with programs to combat malnutrition and hunger and the ethical consequences of using "triage" both in the household and in geographical regions to decide who gets the food and food aid.

Readings:


**Classes Six & Seven: Wednesday; April 22, 2015 and TBD**

**Team Presentations**

- Assignment: Choose a country in Asia, Africa, or Latin America.
- Design a system concept and plan for implementation of an animal or plant protein production project (milk, eggs, meat, lentils, chickpeas, etc.) that addresses the issue of "food security" in a country of your choice.
- The plan must be phased to take advantage of existing technologies as well as the development of future technologies.
- The plan must account for both technical and non-technical aspects.
UNITED NATIONS Millennium Development Goals

Adopted by the United Nations in 2001 as key targets for the developing world, the Millenium Development Goals seek to free men, women, and children from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty. These goals are also commonly accepted as a framework for measuring development progress.

The eight MDGs are:

1. Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, AND OTHER DISEASES
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Leading Questions:

1. Problem definition: What is the actual problem?
2. What is needed? Where do you start?
3. Funding: Who pays? What is reasonable?
4. What can realistically be done in three years? How should it be implemented?
5. What technologies are feasible now? What should be developed immediately?
6. What non-governmental organizations and governmental organizations are currently available?

PRESENTATION: A 20-25 minute presentation containing your 3 year plan for the "best" solution to guarantee "food security" in the country of your choice. The presentation should include:
1. Where you started and why.
2. The issues you traded off in the development of your plan.
3. Your specific plans for technology, infrastructure, and political development.
4. Your priorities that you will pursue.

Examples of previous proposals: