INTD 497-01: Rural development and food security
Preliminary Fall 2013 Syllabus

Instructor: Karen McAllister
Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID), McGill University
Email: karen.mcallister@mcgill.ca
Office phone: (514)398-7386
Time of class: Fridays, 11:35-2:25
Class location: Leacock 110
Office location: Room 210, Peterson Hall, McTavish Street
Office hours: Wednesdays, 3:45-5:30

Course description:

This course will cover issues related to rural development and food security. Topics that will be covered include the basis of farmer decision-making and diversity of rural livelihoods, famine and food insecurity, and the combining of scientific and local knowledge for rural development (particularly participatory projects for development). The importance of customary and formal property rights to land and resources for supporting rural livelihoods will be examined, leading to a review of contemporary threats to local land rights arising from “large scale land acquisitions” for agro-industries and the emergence of new social movements to resist displacement from these developments. This course is intended to build critical research and presentation skills, and students are encouraged to follow their specific interests and may write research papers about countries and issues relevant to the theme of the course but not specifically covered in the course material. Students who have experience working with rural development projects are encouraged to build on this experience for their term papers. Seminars will be supplemented by films and guest lecturers when appropriate.

This is a 400 level seminar class intended for final year IDS students. The class will be run like a graduate seminar, and will require active student participation. Students will be expected to come prepared with discussion questions and comments on the class readings, and to take turns presenting the course readings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Class topic</th>
<th>Assignment deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 6</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 13</td>
<td>Peasant decision making and rural livelihoods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 20</td>
<td>Food security, poverty and famine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 27</td>
<td>Contested knowledge and environmental narratives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 4</td>
<td>Participatory rural development: IUARP project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Scientific and local knowledge for rural development</td>
<td>Paper proposal due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>Property, land tenure and land reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Enclosures, dispossession and displacements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Agrarian transitions and rural resistances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
<td>Last day for midterm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Term Paper due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade Distribution and Assessment:**

Class Participation: 20%
In-class presentation/discussion of one reading: 5%
Mid-term assignment: 15%  (can be passed in any time on or before November 15)
Abstract/paper proposal and reference list: 5% (due October 11th)
Final term paper: 45% (Due December 4th)
Final paper presentation: 10%

**Participation:** The class will require active student participation. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to class, and to come prepared with discussion questions and ideas. Participation is graded on attendance and thoughtful engagement in class discussions.

**In class presentation/discussion of one reading:** At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up to present one of the readings during the term. These presentations should be about 10 minutes (no longer than this) and should summarize the important points of the article and end with a question for discussion about the reading presented or about the theme of all the readings for that week. These presentations will be made in front of the class, and you are allowed to use power point or the blackboard if you want (but not necessary). No more than 4 power point slides if you decide to use this.

**Mid-term assignment:** The mid-term assignment is a short analytical paper (4 pages, double spaced) that is based on one week’s set of readings – the choice of which week is up to the student. Any set of readings can be chosen except for the class on IUARP and participatory development projects. This assignment is not a summary, but an analytical comparison, review and critique of the different perspectives or arguments of the articles assigned for that one week, focusing on a central issue that the articles address. The midterm can be passed in at any time during the semester (ideally, you should try to pass it in the week after the readings are discussed,
but I am flexible about this). THE FINAL DEADLINE TO PASS THESE IN IS NOVEMBER 15.

Abstract/paper proposal plus reference list: A one page (double-spaced) abstract/paper proposal in addition to a preliminary reference list (10-15 references) describing your proposed paper topic. This is to get you started on the research early, and so I can give you some feedback if necessary. Paper topics should be approved in advance with the instructor.

Final term paper: This is a research paper of about 4000 words (about 12 pages double-spaced, not including references). The paper should address some issue related to rural development and food security. The choice of topic will depend on the specific interest of the student, and can focus on issues or countries that have not been covered in the class but are related to the theme of the seminar. The final paper is due on DECEMBER 4.

Late papers and assignments will be penalised one half-grade per day (e.g. a paper that is one day late would go from an A to A-).

Mini-conference: The last 3 classes of the semester will take the form of a mini-conference in which each student will give a formal 10 minute presentation of their term paper topic. Paper presentations will be organised into panels of similar topics, and time will be given for questions and discussion.

Statement on Academic Integrity:
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Course materials:

A course pack of required readings will be available at the McGill Bookstore.

Journal articles are available electronically through the McGill library, and links to articles and electronic books will be posted on webCT. The readings listed as optional in the syllabus are not necessarily posted on webCT and will not be discussed in the seminars, but students who are writing papers on related topics and want further reading material might find these articles useful.
Class schedule:

September 6: Introduction

September 13: Peasant decision making and rural livelihoods


Other readings of interest on this topic (not required):


September 20: Subsistence security, poverty and famines


**Other readings of interest on this topic:**


**September 27: Contested knowledge: Environmental narratives and rural development projects**


**Other readings of interest on this topic:**


**October 4: Participatory rural development: The Integrated Upland Agriculture Research Project (IUARP)**

Selection of original documents and reports from the Integrated Upland Agricultural Research Project (IUARP), a development project that involved ethnic minorities in upland Laos. IUARP will be used to provide an example of how similar projects are designed and implemented, and analysed and critiqued according to what has been learned in earlier course materials. These will be available on webCT.


Optional:


October 11: Scientific and local knowledge


Other readings of interest on this topic:


October 18: TBA
October 25: Customary and formal property rights


Optional:


November 1: Enclosures, displacements and trans-national land grabbing:


Two other articles on transnational land grabs TBA

November 8: Agrarian transformations and rural resistance


November 15: Student mini-conference
November 22: Student mini-conference
November 29: Student mini-conference

December 4: final paper is due