FOOD-GE 2283 Advanced Topics: Agricultural Globalization

Fall 2016
Tuesday 4:55-6:35
TISC LC5

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Office hours:
Wednesday 4-6pm by appointment via the dept. main number: 212-998-5580

Course Description and Objectives
This course examines the process of agricultural globalization and its effects on the process of rural and agricultural development in the global south. Specifically, we will analyze the incorporation of agricultural producers and processors in developing countries into the supply chains of global food brands and retailers. Our goal is to identify how globalization is shaping institutions that govern agricultural production and trade at the global, national, and local level. In turn, we will ask how these institutions shape economic development outcomes for peasant and family farmers and agricultural laborers in poor and middle-income countries, who are among the most vulnerable actors in the global economy.

The course is divided into three sections:

Part I, Macro-Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Overview, will review the theoretical literature on the role of agriculture in economic development and on the empirical shift from national to global orientations in agricultural development.

Part II, Globalization along the Value Chain, will examine the globalization of retail, food processing, farming and land markets, agricultural labor, and farm inputs.

Part III. The Globalization of Specific Agri-Food Industries and Value Chains, will study the globalization of the aquaculture, animal feed and livestock, traditional tropical commodities and fresh produce industries.

Required Books
FOOD-GE 2283 Advanced Topics: Agricultural Globalization

Assignments

Personal Introduction Essay (1 Page):
Write a single page that tells me who you are, why you are interested in this course, how you came to be interested/engaged in food studies, and what your broader career, professional, and/or academic ambitions are.

Weekly Arrow Diagrams (1 Page):
For each meeting, except the first class and the film showing, please pick one of the assigned readings. Answer each of the following questions with one sentence each:
1. What is the main question the reading is trying to answer?
2. What is the context in which that question is important? What motivates the question?
3. What main argument or answer to that question does the author pose?
4. What evidence does the author offer to support that argument?
Create an arrow diagram that breaks down the text’s central argument into a causal chain. These should be submitted electronically by the beginning of each class session. Additionally, two students will be expected to present their diagrams to the class each week. For an explanation of how to create an arrow diagram, see Chapter 1 of Van Evera’s Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science (available on the course website).

Preliminary Data Analysis Assignment (3-5 pages, Due Nov. 11):
In this assignment you are required to describe and analyze empirical data about global agricultural production, trade, and consumption. You must choose one of the following options:
1. Pick two agricultural commodities of different types. Using the FAO tradeflows visualizer and consumption data from the USDA and the UN Comtrade database, determine and describe the extent of global integration of the U.S. market for those commodities. How much of what the U.S. consumes is produced domestically? How much is imported? How much of what is produced domestically is consumed in the U.S.? How much is exported? Who are the U.S.’s main trading partners for this commodity?
2. Pick four developing countries. Using the data visualizer and Statistics on Public Expenditures and Economic Development from IFPRI, describe what has happened over the last decades to the absolute level of government expenditures on the Agricultural Sector. Describe what has happened to agricultural expenditures relative to all public expenditures. Has it increased or decreased? Has the change been steady or discontinuous?
3. Pick four coffee-exporting countries, two that export primarily Arabica and two that export primarily Robusta beans. Using data from FAOSTAT and UNCTAD databases, describe the relationship between global commodity prices and producer prices in these four countries over time. How much of the global price do producers get paid? Has this changed in the period characterized by agricultural globalization and the rise of high quality niches?

Film Response Paper (6 Pages, Due Dec. 2):
This assignment is an opportunity to integrate the theoretical and analytical insights you gain from the course readings by applying them to a real-world phenomenon: the development of the global coffee industry as represented in the 2007 Documentary Film Black Gold. Please interpret, evaluate, and critique the film’s political and economic analysis of agri-food globalization on the basis of the readings and discussion we have had in class. Within the six pages of writing, you must cite at least one reading form each of the course meetings held before the film viewing.
Final Data Analysis Assignment (10-12 pages):
This assignment requires you to develop an argument to explain the empirical observations you made in the first assignment. You must
1. offer an explanation of the data variation that you observe across cases or over time,
2. collect and synthesize other qualitative and quantitative data from secondary sources to support your argument,
3. and qualify your argument and the data you use to support it, pointing out the limitations of the data and proposing alternative explanations for the variation you observe.

Alternative Assignment
You may also propose an original research paper on the topic of agri-food globalization as an alternative to the data analysis assignments. You must get my approval for your topic in the first two weeks of the semester, submit a 5-6-page prospectus in place of the preliminary assignment, and turn in the completed paper instead of the final assignment.

Grading:
20% Class Participation
20% Weekly Arrow Diagrams
20% Film Response Paper
15% Term Paper Prospectus
25% Term Paper

A Note on Assignments and Grading:
This is a discussion-based seminar class. It is essential that you carefully complete the assigned readings and be ready to discuss them in class. Your participation grade will assess your weekly contributions and your arrow diagram presentations. I will penalize your arrow diagram grade by a full letter for each missing assignment, and any late assignments will be penalized by a full letter grade. Please label all assignments with your name and page numbers and submit them as PDFs.

Useful Websites for data and non-academic reports on agricultural globalization:

- ACDI VOCA Value Chains Publications [http://www.acdivoca.org/site/ID/ourwork_valuechainspublications]
- Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research [http://www.cgiar.org/]
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. [http://www.fao.org]
- Food First Institute for Food and Development Policy [http://www.foodfirst.org/]
- Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy [http://www.iatp.org/]
- International Food Policy Research Institute [http://www.ifpri.org/]
- International Fund for Agricultural Development [http://www.ifad.org/]
- Sustainable Food Lab Toolbox [http://www.sustainablefoodlab.org/toolbox/toolbox]
- Tufts Global Development and Environment Institute [http://ase.tufts.edu/gdae/]
- USDA Foreign Agricultural Service [http://www.fas.usda.gov/]

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

- The highest standards of academic integrity are expected of all students. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, fabrication, tampering and plagiarism.
- You must reference all responses. To answer questions completely, students should research responses and use available resources (including textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, and credible websites). Sources must be documented with proper citations. Failure to properly cite references will result in academic penalties.
- All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available at: (http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity).

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES: Any student attending NYU who needs a reasonable accommodation based on a qualified disability should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980, 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html). Please present a letter from the Moses Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for the appropriate accommodations.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT: New York University has guidelines for the rules governing education records of students. Refer to the following website for more information (http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/FERPA.html).

NYU ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY: NYU is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free of bias, prejudice, and harassment. For more information, refer to the following website (http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/ahp).
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Class Topics and Readings:

6 September - Introduction to Course:

In this introductory meeting, we will discuss the public debate over agricultural globalization and its relationship to the academic study of the subject. We will also go over the course syllabus and take care of any administrative or scheduling issues.

Readings:

“Food from Our Changing World: The Globalization of Food and How Americans Feel About It” Results of a Nationally Representative Survey.  
http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/wimberley/Global-Food/foodglobal.pdf

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/04/26/attention_whole_foods_shoppers?page=0,0


http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/TWG20ResurgenceMar10.pdf

Listen:

http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2013/07/22/202969075/ETHIOPIAN-COFFEE-CINDERALLA-STORY

Assignment: In addition to completing the assigned readings before class, please come ready to give a 2-3 minute introduction about yourself, what your professional and academic interests are, and what you would like to get out of this class.
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Part I. Macro-Theoretical Perspective and Empirical Overview

13 September - Globalization, Institutions, and Agriculture

This class examines the debate about globalization in general and introduces distinct perspectives and analytical frameworks used in its study. A key cleavage in this debate is among those that view globalization as a process driving economic, institutional, and cultural convergence among distinct societies and those that predict national divergence in the face of globalization. Caporaso and Madeira provide an introduction to these debates. Krugman provides a clear introduction to the mainstream macro-economic perspective. Goodman provides a preview of how they have been incorporated into the study of agricultural globalization and of the questions we’ll examine over the semester. As you do the reading, notice what makes these perspectives distinct. What are the main assumptions behind each? What are the key variables in each perspective? What is the unit of analysis?

Readings:
   Chapter 2. “Theories of Global Political Economy” pp.48-60
   Chapter 3. “Domestic Responses to the Pressures of Globalization” pp.65-72

   Chapter 2: Economic Models: Trade-Offs and Trade. 26-29
   Chapter 5: International Trade. 127-153


Suggested:


Assignment: Please hand in your introduction essay and your arrow diagram electronically before class begins.
20 September - Agricultural Modernization and National Development: Theoretical Accounts

This class examines theories of the role of agriculture plays in the process of national economic development. The readings reflect the modernization theory perspective that dominated social science and development policy in the mid-twentieth century. It viewed national societies as more or less closed systems and predicted that poor countries would repeat the development process experienced by the U.S. and Western Europe. The suggested readings offer an extension and a critique of modernization theory by focusing on the role of commodity exports in the process of economic development.


Suggested:


Assignment: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.

This class examines the empirical and historical experience of national agricultural development and modernization in developing countries during the twentieth century. Bates and Grindle offer explanations of why States discriminate against agricultural development and smallholders in particular. Fox, Kay, and Skocpol examine partial exceptions to this tendency. Think back to the political economy approaches introduced in our second class. How well do institutional, domestic politics, international relations, or economic approaches explain the variation in these cases?


Suggested:

Assignment: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.
4 October - Agriculture, International Trade, and Shifting Food Regimes

This class examines the shift from national agricultural development toward international agricultural restructuring and globalization that occurred after the 1970s. This involved reducing trade barriers as well as eliminating or reforming many of the state structures and policies geared toward supporting nationally integrated agriculture. Friedman and McMichael and Hopkins provide two different explanations based on the international economic relations of food. Kenny et al. and Vail focus on the U.S. and Swedish cases. And the Pritchard and OECD give some more recent international empirical perspective. Use these readings to consider how national agricultural policies have evolved since the 1970s and what the effect has been on the international organization of the agrifood industry.


Suggested:


Assignment: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.
11 October - Agricultural Globalization and Global Value Chains

This class introduces the Global Value Chain perspective on globalization, which focuses especially on the role of multinational companies in coordinating international trade and shaping the process of economic development. Bair reviews the origins and development of this perspective, Gereffi et al. provide a theory of economic development based on “upgrading” within GVCs, Milberg and Winkler provide an empirical evaluation of that theory, and Ponte examines the relationship between quality conventions and the governance of GVCs. Compare these theories and the empirical phenomena they examine to those focused on national and fordist agriculture. What has changed? What effects does this have on agricultural development?


Chapter 1 “The Age of Global Capitalism” pp.1-33
Chapter 4 “Global Value Chain Analysis” pp. 86-94


**Suggested**


**Assignment:** Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.
Part II. Globalization along the Value Chain
18 October - Supermarkets and the Globalization of Retail and Processing

These readings examine the “supermarket revolution” driven by multinational food retailers. As you read you should ask, empirically, how advanced is the globalization of food retail and processing? In what ways are global retail and food companies driving convergence in national food systems? What are the sources of persistent national diversity in the processing and commercialization of food?


Suggested:


Assignment: Data analysis assignment due in class today along with your weekly arrow diagram.
25 October - The Globalization of Agricultural Input Industries
The globalization of the agricultural input industries is among the most contested aspects of agri-food globalization. To what extent do we observe international convergence in the structure and regulation of these industries and why? Sorj and Wilkinson provide background. Wilkinson and Castelli, Li, and Zwanenberg et al. examine the relationship between foreign and domestic companies in the input industries of Brazil, China, and Argentina. Falkner and Gupta, Filomeno, and Wilkinson and Castelli discuss the regulation of intellectual property and biosafety in the seed industry in multiple developing countries. McAfee and Scoons examine political responses to the adoption of GMO technologies. How do the capacities of these different States and domestic political actors shape the globalization and regulation of their input industries?


Suggested:


Assignment: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.
1 November – Farming and Financialization

The globalization of farming in developing countries has two major and intertwined dimensions: the growth of international trade in farm products and increased investment and participation by financial organizations in land, agricultural production, and trade. Today’s readings provide perspectives to evaluate the development effects of these changes, which turn largely on the question of the ownership and control of land. Under what conditions is foreign investment in farming and land likely to create local development benefits? How common are these conditions? What are the alternatives?


Cash Crops With Dividends: Financiers Transforming Strawberries Into Securities - NYTimes.com [GROUP A]


Suggested:


Assignment: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before
8 November - Farm Labor and Globalization

Agricultural labor is among the most vulnerable groups in the global economy. Globalization generates new demands for quality, safety, flexibility and low cost, and the burden often falls on workers. Today’s readings examine the effects of agricultural export growth on agricultural workers. Aparicio et al. and Damiani describe high-road labor strategies that have arisen in Brazil and Argentina, while the other papers describe low-road strategies that rely on exploited labor. What do the readings suggest about the conditions under which farming enterprises and landowners likely to adopt one or the other strategy?


**Assignment**: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.

**Preliminary data analysis assignment due Friday November 11 11:59pm**
Part III. The Globalization of Specific Agri-Food Industries and Value Chains.

15 November - Traditional Tropical Commodities

Traditional tropical commodities have been produced and consumed as part of global economic circuits since the colonial period. They are generally consumed in highly processed forms that have created a clear global division of labor between consuming and producing countries. Talbot examines the history of the global coffee chain over the twentieth century. Cafaggi examines more recent experiences of coffee value chain governance in Brazil. Fold analyzes the governance of the contemporary cocoa chain. What do contemporary developments in these industries teach us about the difference between earlier and current processes of globalization? How has the regulation of coffee and cocoa evolved over time? How does it compare to the way that durable foods and meat complexes were regulated according to Friedman and McMichael in the second food regime? What and which actors are driving changes in the global governance of traditional tropical commodities?


22 November - *In Class Film Showing: Black Gold (2007)*

You will receive additional instructions for the film viewing and your paper assignment before class.
29 November - Grains/Feed/Animal Protein

Today’s readings examine the animal protein chain. Poultry, farmed fish, and livestock all rely on similar grain-based feed inputs and are increasingly integrated. As you read, ask, how advanced is global integration in the animal protein chain? Is there an international division of labor? Or has this remained a national industry? What is the role of MNCs, specific governments, domestic capital, finance and other groups in driving globalization of the animal protein chain?


**Suggested:**
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWtBayK8WA&feature=youtu.be


*Assignment:* Please hand in your film response paper electronically before class.

**Film Response Paper Due Dec. 2 11:59pm.**
6 December - Fresh Produce
Today we will examine the fresh produce GVC and spend the second half of the class wrapping up with final reflections on the course. Fresh produce has been among the more recent food products to globalize. It is consumed in a less processed state and is highly perishable. How do these features shape the global value chain for fresh produce? What do Friedberg’s comparison of green bean exports in Burkina Faso and Zambia and Raynold’s examination of the Dominican Republic teach us about the governance of global value chains and its determinants? More broadly, what observations and new questions do you take away from the course overall? What were the biggest surprises you encountered?

Chapter 4. “Zambia: Settler Colonialism and Corporate Paternalism” pp.93-127 [GROUP B]


Suggested:


*Assignment*: Please hand in your arrow diagram electronically before class.

*Final Data Analysis Papers Due December 20, 11:59pm.*