

Spring 2021
Resource Economics 121
Hunger in a Global Economy

Professor: Dr. Debi Prasad Mohapatra
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Teaching Assistant: Gazi Uddin (guddin@umass.edu)

Mode of Instruction: All lectures are asynchronous

Weekly Meetings: Tu 4:00PM-5:00PM

Any Questions: Please E-mail me for appointment for any other class related questions

Course Objectives:

- Explore the causes of hunger (chronic undernutrition) from an economic perspective.
- Understand how population growth and economic development are increasing demand for food.
- Assess the prospects for food supply to meet needs at affordable prices, while sustaining the environment and responding to climate change.
- Evaluate how our global economy, where increased trade links even the poorest urban and rural residents in developing countries to market forces, affects hunger.
- Discuss policy choices. What policies are effective and which would you choose in order to improve food security for poor families around the world?

Mode of Instruction:

I will teach this course in hybrid mode with both synchronous and asynchronous components.

1. *Lectures* - The asynchronous component contains recordings of lectures. Additionally, there will be online quizzes, home works, and case works.
2. *Weekly Meetings* - Weekly meetings will be devoted for discussions and interactions where I will clear any doubts that students may have. While the structured content will be discussed in recorded lectures, the content of meetings will help to further clarify questions/confusions.
3. *Additional office hours* – You can also schedule one-to-one meetings with me by sending me an email.

Why ResEc 121 is a General Education Social & Behavioral Sciences- Diversity Global (SB-DG) Course:
(see <https://www.umass.edu/gened/objectives-designations/learning-objectives>)

As a General Education course, our goal is to address fundamental questions, ideas, and methods of analysis in the social sciences; apply these methods of analysis to the real-world problem of hunger; and stretch our minds. Economics as a social science provides us with basic analytical tools with which to look at the world. These tools can help us to understand why hunger exists and is persistent around the world. But they do not provide complete answers or perspectives and part of our job is to recognize their useful applications *and* their limitations. We do this through critical thinking using data to analyze food supply and demand and then writing about and discussing what we know as well as what we want to know. Students in this class will learn interdisciplinary theories and knowledge necessary to comprehend hunger related issues from diverse social, cultural, and political perspectives. Our global focus is on hunger where it is most prevalent in Africa and Southern Asia; where it is present but declining, for example in East Asia and Latin America; and where it persists at significant levels in developed countries in Northern America and Europe.

Required Reading:

1. *The World Food Problem: Toward Ending Undernutrition in the Third World*. Howard D. Leathers and Phillips Foster. 5th Edition. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2017
2. *2020 World Population Data Sheet*. Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Washington, DC. Available online to download and print the pdf available on moodle
3. Other readings as assigned. Available on MOODLE (our on-line course site).

MOODLE Course Site:

1. Go to: <https://moodle.umass.edu> and log in by entering your OIT NetID and Password at the upper left. After log in, under My Courses click on RES-ECON 121.
2. What will you find on our course MOODLE site?
 - Any class related announcements
 - Assignments of All Types
 - Week by Week Modules
 - Every week—Lecture Slides and Lecture Videos will be posted
 - Weekly Quizzes

You are responsible for reading the assigned readings and watching the videos every week. You are also responsible for checking Moodle for updates, class materials, homework, due dates, etc. Hence there will be no excuses for not knowing what is or will be happening in the course.

Check Moodle Regularly!

Academic Honesty Policy:

While you are welcome to discuss individual work assignments with your colleagues, I expect the writing and reasoning in your individual work to be your own. If I find that you have cheated on any aspect of the course, I will pursue the matter to the fullest extent possible under the procedures outlined in the academic policy: http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy

Accommodation Statement:

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. Finally, **if you are experiencing disruption in learning because of COVID19 related issues**, please let me know so I can find a way to accommodate you.

Course Outline:

1. What is Hunger and Who Are the Hungry?
 - Extreme Undernutrition: Famine
 - Defining and Measuring Undernutrition
2. The Basic Economics of Food Demand and Supply
 - Tools for Analyzing Food Markets
 - Applying the Tools to Study Undernutrition
3. How Much is World Food Demand Going to Grow Due to Population and Income Growth?
4. Can World Food Supply Meet Demand?
5. Approaches to/Policies for Fighting Hunger
 - Demand Side: Raising Incomes, Changing Demographics, Subsidizing Consumption
 - Supply Side: Direct Subsidies, Access to Credit, Technological Change
6. An End to World Hunger?

Course Work Overview—The Weights and Dates Making Up Your Final Grade:

	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Cases (1-4)	25%
Due dates course schedule 11:59 PM EST on dates listed in course schedule below	
The World Now Discussion Postings (best 4 of 5)	5%
Due at 11:59 PM on dates listed in course schedule below	
Weekly Quizzes	5%
The scores are on participation	
Exam 1	20%
Tentatively scheduled for March-9	
Exam 2	20%
Tentatively scheduled for April-13	
Cumulative Final Exam	<u>25%</u>
TBD	
	100%

Grading Table

Final grades will be calculated according to the following minimum cutoff points:

A = 94, A- = 90, B+ = 87, B = 83 B- = 80, C+ = 77, C = 73, C- = 70, D+ = 65, D = 60 and F < 60.

Details of What You Do in Each of the Course Elements (See MOODLE for Additional Details)

❖ Cases:

In the cases, you do individual research, problem solving, written interpretation of readings, discussion of opposing sides of food issues, and development of your own opinions.

❖ The World Now:

You will contribute to **discussion forums** by posting material on current food issues and commenting on posts by other students. Topics will include global hunger, economic, and trade stories.

❖ Weekly Quizzes: **(Mostly for Participation)**

Weekly quizzes are made up of a number of multiple-choice questions based on the materials covered in the week. Most of the points from weekly quiz will be from participating in the quiz (it will be made clear while attempting the questions).

❖ EXAM 1 (20%), EXAM 2 (20%), and the cumulative FINAL EXAM (25%):

Our exams will have multiple choice, short answer and essay format questions.

No makeups will be given on any exam unless prior approval to reschedule it has been given by Dr. Mohapatra.

The Respectful Learning Environment

In this challenging time, we are all responsible for maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning and discussion. In order to assure that we all have the opportunity to gain from time spent in the virtual classroom during the meeting days, I propose these standards for creating a respectful learning environment.

- The instructor, teaching assistant, and students notice and respect each other.
- Respect includes appropriate humor, enjoyment, or other indications of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community.
- We are on time for class: no late arrivals and no packing up early.
- We avoid disruptions during class such as private conversations, using cellphone for something other than current class related work.
- We avoid language that is racist, sexist, or homophobic or in other ways may exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

Key Dates (Subject to revision)

Exam 1 :	March 9, 2021
Exam 2 :	April 13, 2021
Final Exam:	In May (to be announced)
Casework Due Dates:	(i) Feb 22 – casework 1
	(ii) Mar 24 – casework 2
	(iii) Apr 7 – casework 3
	(iv) Apr 28 – casework 4

Course Schedule (subject to revision)

Week 1 (Feb 2, Feb 4): Thinking about Hunger in a Global Economy

Reading: WFP Preface & Ch 1 & Ch 2

Week 2 (Feb 9, Feb 11): Famine - Extreme Levels of Undernutrition

Assignment: Discussion Forum Post 1 due Mon Feb-8 11:59PM

Reading: WFP Ch. 3, Ch. 4, & Ch. 5

Quiz: Quiz for week 1 and 2 due by Friday Feb 12

Week 3 (Feb 16, Feb 18): Measuring Chronic Undernutrition

Reading: WFP Ch. 15 & Ch. 6 & SOFI

Quiz: Quiz for week 3 due by Friday Feb 19

Week 4 (Feb 23, Feb 25): Prevalence of Chronic Undernourishment in the World

Assignment: Case 1 due Mon Feb-22 11:59PM

Reading: WFP Ch. 7, p. 97-119

Quiz: Quiz for week 4 due by Friday Feb 26

Week 5 (Mar 2, Mar 4) : Using Economic Tools to Understand Change in Food Markets

Reading: WFP Ch. 7, p. 110-119

Quiz: Quiz for week 5 due by Friday Mar 5

Week 6 (Mar 9, Mar 11):

EXAM 1 on March 9th

Week 7 (Mar 16, Mar 18): Price Elasticity, Supply Elasticity, and Food Price Spikes

Food Demand: The Dynamics & Economics of Population Growth

Reading: WFP Ch. 7, p. 119-124, WFP Ch. 8, p. 121-132; World Population Data Sheet

Quiz: Quiz for week 7 due by Friday Mar 19

Week 8 (Mar 23, Mar 25): Income Growth and Predicting Overall Food Demand Growth

Assignment: Discussion Forum Post 2 due Mon Mar-22 11:59PM

Case 2 due Wed Mar 24 11:59pm

Reading: World Population Prospects, WFP Chs. 9 & 10 & “UN Raises Projected World Population”

Quiz: Quiz for week 8 due by Friday Mar 26

Week 9 (Mar 30, Apr 1): Predicting Future Demand, Economic Growth, & Turning to the Economics of Supply

Reading: WFP Ch. 8, Chs. 11, 12, 13 & 14
Quiz: Quiz for week 9 due by Friday Apr 2

Week 10 (Apr 6, Apr 8): The Future of Agricultural Production & Turning to Policy to Reduce Hunger

Assignment: Discussion Forum Post 3 due Mon Apr-5 11:59PM
Case 3 due Wed Apr 7 11:59pm
Reading: "Genetically Engineered Crops", Controversy over World Food Prize & WFP Ch. 16
Quiz: Quiz for week 10 due by Friday Apr 9

Week 11 (Apr 13, Apr 15): Policy to Reduce Hunger; Demographic Policies

EXAM 2 on April 13th

Week 12 (Apr 20, Apr 22): Policy for Reducing Hunger; Policies to Increase the Purchasing Power of the Poor

Reading: WFP Chs. 19, 20, 21 & 22; "How India Feeds...", "Brazil Makes Headway..." & "Our Battle to End Hunger"
Quiz: Quiz for week 12 due by Friday Apr 23

Week 13 (Apr 27, Apr 29): Policies to Reduce Hunger; Issues Regarding Food Subsidies & Food Aid

Assignment: Discussion Forum Post 4 due Mon Apr-26 11:59PM
Case 4 due Wed Apr 28 11:59pm

Week 14 (May 4): Last week: An End to World Hunger? What Will It Take?

Assignment: Discussion Forum Post 5 due Mon May-3 11:59PM

FINAL EXAM: To be announced