AREC 460: Agriculture and Resource-based Economic Development  
Colorado State University  
Spring Semester 2015  
9:30-10:45 TR,  
C360 Clark Building  
Dr. Andy Seidl, Professor  
Contacts:  
B311 Clark Building. T: 970-491-6951. E: Andrew.Seidl@colostate.edu  

Office hours:  
Tues & Thurs 2:00-3:00 pm and by appointment.  

Course Materials: The course Canvas website will be used to post video lectures, assignments and course notes. Please use the email address Andrew.seidl@colostate.edu with ‘460 HW’ and YOUR LAST NAME in the subject header to submit homework.  

Description:  
This course involves economic insights into food and nutrition security in developing countries, focusing on agricultural and natural resource management issues at the national and sub-national scale. The course hopes to shed light on the economic drivers that result in poverty and hunger that plague some 3/4 of the Earth’s population and to propose some local, national and international policy solutions. Although we focus on international agricultural and natural resource development issues, many of these challenges can be observed in rural Colorado as well.  

The perspective of the course is of development as managing scarce capitals toward improvements in human wellbeing. Agriculture and natural resource-based economic development are a part of a rural development portfolio dependent upon the rational management of the locally available resource base (focus on natural, financial and human capital). In addition, the class will engage in a discussion of the Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals, and progress toward achieving these global goals at the national scale.  

Prerequisite: AREC/ECON 306 or consent of instructor.  

Learning objectives:  
Students will be able to:  
• Critically discuss the drivers of natural resource-based economic development  
• Critically discuss the principal economic development opportunities and constraints presented to natural resource dependent communities in Colorado and in developing countries.  
• Identify the opportunities and constraints faced by Colorado communities and communities in developing countries when considering agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining, oil and gas, and other contemporary resource based economic development engines for the communities  
• Discuss current international efforts to improve the measurement and monitoring of environmental quality and quantity and their role in economic development and poverty reduction.  

Text/materials:  
Principal text:  
http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/2894093/9780415658225?__hdv=6.8
Supplemental readings:


Evaluation:
The class will be graded in the following manner:
A >90%  B>80%  C>70%  D>60%  F<60%

Performance on the following work will comprise the evaluation:
1) Book review: 10%;
2) Homework (Problem sets; Public address write ups): 15%;
3) Midterm examinations (2): 25% each;
4) Group project: 25%.

1) Book review: Students will review ‘A new blueprint for a green economy.’ The book review will be no more than 1,500 words, spending at least ½ of the review providing an economic critique of the work.
Alternative: I am considering the following book for future offerings of this class. You are welcome to use it as a substitute. It is:

2) Problem Sets: Graphical and/or mathematical applications of the concepts and tools taught in class. They will be due one week from the date of assignment, and submitted before 11:59 pm of the due date. Late submissions will be accepted until the exercise is returned to the class. Such submissions will be subject to a 10% per day decrease in total possible points obtainable. (2 @ 5% each)

Public address write-ups: CSU and the broader Fort Collins community provide regular and frequent opportunities to hear world authorities speak on aspects of development. Two one page (single spaced, 11 pt font) reflections of an economic development oriented seminar that you have attended during the semester, or have viewed via an electronic source are required. The write-up should discuss what was presented and what you learned from the presentation through an economic lens. Grading criteria will include an assessment of writing quality including logical support, grammar, spelling and form. I will mention some of the relevant lectures in lectures and via email, but you are not restricted to these suggestions. If you have questions, please contact me for approval. (2 @ 2.5%)

Note: Book reports and public address write-ups turned before Spring Break will earn a 5% bonus.

3) Examinations will be in class and will be short answer and essay format, typically consisting of 4-5 multipart questions. There will be no final exam. Exam 1 covers the first half of the course. Exam II covers the second half.

4) Group project: The class will have the opportunity to explore more completely the development progress and challenges facing emerging national economies. This year the following countries will be the focus of our investigations: Bhutan, Estonia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Serbia, and Tanzania. Each group of approximately 4 students each will provide an overview and analysis of one of these countries and report their findings to the
rest of the class. Each week of the course should provide insights into what might make for an informative report. The report should generally provide:

a. An overview of the political context of the country, its partners, its development perspective, and its role in the global economy.
b. A demographic profile and trajectory of the country
c. An economic profile and trajectory of the country
d. An assessment of the current stocks and flows of important sources of natural capital
e. A review of the relevant development indicators over time and relative to peer nations
f. A synthesis of the five points above in identifying opportunities and constraints to (agriculture and natural resource based) economic development for the country.

A final project report will be no more than 20 pages of 11 pt font, double-spaced text, inclusive of all tables, graphs, bibliographical materials, etc and will comprise 80% of the group grade (assessed by the professor or TA) and the oral and visual (Power Point or Prezi) presentation will be 20% of the group grade (assessed by the class). Individual grades may be adjusted based upon peer assessment of their involvement in the group project and by participation in the peer assessment of the oral presentation.

5) Extra credit: This course repeatedly touches on the themes of poverty and hunger that plague some 3/4 of the Earth’s population. Since CSU students generally have chosen their parents well and have little experience with either abject poverty or long term hunger, a student who wishes to substitute a 750 word essay reflecting on their experience resulting from a 24 hr fast for one of the public speeches will be provided this opportunity. Let us be clear that this is not a requirement of the course, rather a choice freely entered into by the student having taken due care and consideration for his or her own health. An alternative to the fast is a second book review as detailed above. (5% extra credit)

Policies:
These should be self-evident. However...

1) Issues covered in this course can touch upon deeply held and personal values. I strongly encourage you to discuss these issues both inside and outside of class. General rules of civil discourse, mutual respect and decorum should be adhered to at all times.
2) Please be on time. I will begin and end class on time to be respectful of your time. Please reciprocate.
3) Do your part. The first question I will ask you when you come to office hours is “Have you read the text?” and the second question I will ask you is “What do your classmates say?”
4) All university policies about academic honesty most definitely apply.

Need Help?
CSU is a community that cares for you. If you are struggling with drugs or alcohol and/or experiencing depression, anxiety, overwhelming stress or thoughts of hurting yourself or others please know there is help available. Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Contact 970-491-6053 or go to http://health.colostate.edu. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, Tell Someone by calling 970-491-1350 to discuss your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources (http://safety.colostate.edu/tell-someone.aspx ).
Expected Course Outline (subject to change according to the interests and needs of the class):

Module 1: Dimensions of world food and development problems; Hunger, malnutrition, economics of food demand, population, and demography.
January 22, 22, 27, & 29
Readings:

Module 2: Measures of wellbeing, Greening GDP, the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals.
February 3, 5, 10, 12
Readings:
Ecosystem service identification, quantification and indicators. http://www.bipindicators.net/

Module 3: Development theories and the role of agriculture and resource-based economic activities.
Feb 17, 19, 24:
Readings:
Homework 1 Due February 19.

Feb 26 & March 3: Review of first 6 weeks and Midterm Exam I.

Module 4: Agriculture in traditional societies, subsistence, determinants of agricultural systems, resource use sustainability, & gender roles.
March 5, 10 & 12
Readings:

Spring Break: March 17 & 19

Module 4 continued: Formal and informal institutions.
March 24
Readings:

Module 5: Getting Agriculture Moving
March 26 & 31, April 2 & 7
Readings:

Homework 2 Due.
Module 6: Ag and Resource-based development, trade, and aid
April 9, 14, 16, 21
Readings:

April 23 & 28: Second half of class synthesis, review and examination
Thursday: Synthesis and review
Tuesday: Midterm Examination II

April 30: Group work day.

Group Projects: May 5 & 7: Class Presentations
Tuesday: Bhutan, Tanzania, Costa Rica, Serbia (15 minutes presentation, 5 minutes questions per country)