

SIS 620-004 Syllabus

The Political Economy of Hunger

Spring 2026
Wednesdays 5:30-8pm
Location: TBA

Professor: Jesse Ribot

Email: Ribot@American.edu / jesse.ribot@gmail.com
(both go to the same place)

Office: Zoom

Office Hours: By Appointment

Preferred Communication Method: Email

TA: Michael Culbert

Email: mc0105a@american.edu

Bio: Ribot is a professor of environmental politics with a focus on climate and vulnerability. He taught in the Department of Geography at University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign from 2008 to 2018. Before 2008, he was a senior associate of the World Resources Institute, and earlier taught in the Urban Studies and Planning department at MIT. He is an Africanist studying local democracy, resource access and social vulnerability. See www.JesseRibot.com for more info.

We gear our analysis, ultimately, to matters of intrinsic concern and examine all causal influences on those matters.

Drèze and Sen 1989:15

Apocalypse – “Old English, via Old French and ecclesiastical Latin from Greek *apokalupsis*, from *apokaluptein* ‘uncover, reveal’, from *apo-* ‘un-’ + *kaluptein* ‘to cover’.”*

Official Course Description

Vulnerable, at-risk, prone, fragile, precarious – coping, secure, adapted, resilient. What do these terms mean? How are these terms used in policy, programming, and various forms of intervention around the world? By using multiple disciplinary lenses, analytical frameworks, and empirical studies, this course will explore how these terms and the concepts that underpin them, inform approaches to reducing risks of hunger and famine.

Real Course Description

Many farmers worldwide cannot feed their families for during the ‘hungry season’ – this is the period when farmers have run out of food and of cash yet the next harvest is not yet ready. Such hunger is often merely chalked up to ‘food shortages’ – despite that there is almost always enough available food to feed everyone. Outside of war zones, which we will not focus on, farmer food deficits are often attributed to poverty, the weather (droughts or floods), climate change, desertification, land degradation, locusts, poor farming methods or inadequate food storage. Some analysts also attribute hunger to markets – as free markets allocate food away from the hungry. Less often it is attributed to captured markets – non-free markets – which simply take food away from the hungry. How do we understand the role of markets in generating hunger? This course will explore causes of hunger in the poorer countries of the world.

The project for this seminar-style course will be the writing of a *research proposal*. It can be a *policy briefs*, but must contain most of the same elements as a research proposal – Problem, questions, literature review, ways of getting at answers and solutions. The course provides students with a critical theoretical base and policy-analytic skills applicable to increasing food security and wellbeing of the poor. In this course, you should learn to 1) evaluate the causes of hunger, 2) critically read and understand hunger-related literature, 3) identify and ask policy-relevant social science research questions about food-related vulnerabilities, and 4) to improve your writing.

* <https://en.bab.la/dictionary/english/apocalypse>.

Table of Contents

Course Assignments	v
<i>Course Assignment Summary (detailed descriptions in Annex A)</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Obtaining Weekly Assigned Readings</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Grading</i>	<i>vi</i>
WEEKLY CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE	1
Week 1 (14 Jan.): Introduction – Social Causality & Responsibility	1
<i>Overview of Course – Content & Admin</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Lecture: Market Grabbing or Climate and Migration Lecture – an introduction to my new work</i>	<i>3</i>
Week 2 (21 Jan.): Theorizing Hunger – Entitlement Views	3
<i>Discussion: Your Research-Proposal Term Papers</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>PROJECTS: For next week, please bring in a term-paper problem to discuss with class (see Annex A for details on what the term paper is about)</i>	<i>4</i>
Week 3 (28 Jan.): Dust Bowl & Potato Famines – familiar places to start	4
<i>Lecture: Climate & Migration from the Sahel</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Discussion of your term paper ideas in class today</i>	<i>5</i>
Week 4 (4 Feb.): ‘Natural’ Disaster? Hunger in times before Climate Change	5
<i>Discussion of more of your term paper ideas in class today</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>PROJECTS: Your Project Abstracts are Due by Class Next Week</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Schedule Research Presentations for week 6 to 14: Presentation Schedule Table</i>	<i>6</i>
Week 5 (11 Feb.): The Hungry Season	6
<i>Discussion of your abstracts in class today</i>	<i>7</i>
Week 6 (18 Feb.): Theorizing Vulnerability	7
<i>Lecture: Vulnerability Frames Summary of General Move from Hazards to Vulnerability Approaches</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Discussion: How is everyone doing? Do you feel ahead or behind? Are you worried about grades? Let’s discuss ..</i>	<i>8</i>
Week 7 (25 Feb.): Food Insecurity does not Fall from the Sky – the Case of Senegal	8
<i>Discussion of more of your abstracts in class today</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>First Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class – see Annex A for Presentation Instructions</i>	<i>9</i>
Week 8 (4 March): Hunger and Market Structure I	9
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Recitation: An Ode to the Lorax</i>	<i>9</i>
Spring Break: 11 March – no class	9
Week 9 (18 March): Hunger and Market Structure II	10
<i>Lecture: Who Profits along Senegal’s Charcoal Commodity Chains?</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Discussion: How is everyone doing? Do you feel ahead or behind? Are you worried about grades? Let’s discuss</i>	<i>10</i>

Week 10 (25 March): Hunger and Market Structure III	10
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	11
Week 11 (1 April): Food Security & Food Sovereignty	11
<i>Film: Morte e Vida Severigna (1977) – View & Discuss in Class</i>	11
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	11
Week 12 (8 April): Hunger and Gender Inequality	11
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	12
Week 13 (15 April): Food Policy Politics	12
<i>Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class</i>	13
<i>PROJECTS: Final term-paper project is due by 5pm this coming Friday the 17th (the day after tomorrow) via email & on Canvas</i>	13
Week 14 (22 April – Last Class): Wrap up and Overview	13
<i>Synthesis Discussion</i>	13
Annex A: Course Assignments	14
<i>Class Assignment Format and Submission Procedures</i>	14
<i>Written Comments on Weekly Readings</i>	14
<i>Term-Paper Writing Project: A Research-Proposal</i>	15
Note on in-Text Reference Style	15
Note on Bibliography Style	16
Your Abstract	16
Note on Identifying a Researchable Problem to Address	16
Components of a Policy Research Proposal	17
<i>Political-Economy of Hunger Term-Paper Concept and Structure</i>	18
<i>Hunger Term-Paper Concept and Structure</i>	18
<i>Class Term Paper Presentations – How to Structure</i>	20
Time Allotment in Sessions	20
Presenter Role & One-page Summary – to deliver to class in advance of presentation	20
Presentation	21
Outline for Term Paper Presentation [Discussants – use this as checklist]	21
Project Presentation Discussant Role	22
The Research-proposal Project Itself – Minimalist notes on what a proposal must include	22
A Useful Table to Help Organize your Methods Section	23
Some Useful Literature on Proposal Writing	23
Some Useful Additional Methods Books/Articles	24
Checklist for Grading of Term Papers	25
Annex B: Relevant Themes that will NOT be Covered this Semester	25
<i>Causality in the Law</i>	25
<i>On Revolution – from moral economy of the peasant to existential threat to the planet</i>	26
<i>On Causality and Causal Inference</i>	26
<i>On Responsibility for Climate Change: Policy vs. Industry vs. Consumer?</i>	27
SISU 620	iv

<i>Climate Change and Human Rights</i>	27
<i>Blaming Capitalism?</i>	27
<i>Research Methods as Causal Frames</i>	28
<i>The Bases of Ethics and Morality – of Good and Evil</i>	28
<i>On Legitimacy</i>	28
<i>General Readings on Moral Philosophy</i>	30
<i>General Readings on Vulnerability Indicators</i>	30
Annex C: University-Wide Policies You Should be Familiar With	31
Annex D: Academic Support Services You Should be Familiar With	33
Annex E: Student Support Services You Should be Familiar With	33
Annex F: What is a Capstone Course	35
Endnotes: Recommended Additional Readings	36

Course Assignments

Course Assignment Summary (detailed descriptions in Annex A)

- **Read Annex A** and come to the 2nd class with questions about the assignments.
- **Read Weekly Readings** – you must read the assigned readings. If you cannot find them. Write TA or prof. There is no excuse for not finding them.
- **Write Weekly 100-word-maximum Comments on Readings** – to be submitted on Canvas **AND** to me by email. These comments provide a basis for class discussion. Include in your comment: a) one quote that surprised or struck you, b) something in the article that is new to you (if anything), c) something you disagree with and why (if anything), and d) a discussion question relevant to the theme of this course. Comments are due at noon on the day prior to each class. See Annex A for more details. This assignment must not exceed 100 words total (not ‘per article’). [FYI, This bullet point is 99 words.]
- **Act as Reading Discussant on Weekly Assigned Readings** – Each of you must volunteer to be discussant on readings during the semester. So, as there are about 80 readings during the semester and there are 15 to 25 students in the class, please try to volunteer at least 4 times during the semester – or, about once every 3 or 4 weeks.
- **Write a Research Proposal Term Paper** – This is a 1500-word maximum writing assignment. The final project is due by 6pm on the Friday after our week-13 (the week before our final class). Annex A details format and content. The project will also include:
 - **A 150-word abstract**, due Week 4.

- **A 1-page single-spaced research proposal summary** – to be distributed to the class the Monday before your presentation. Please follow summary instructions in Annex A.
- **Term Paper Presentation** – You will each present your term papers in class. To prepare this presentation also see instructions in Annex A.
- **Term Paper Discussant** – Each of you will also act as a discussion leader on someone else's term paper. See Annex A for discussant roles.
- **Assignment Submission** – submit **ALL** assignments BOTH to Canvas **and** by email!!!
Ribot@american.edu or Jesse.Ribot@gmail.com.
- **Individual 'office'-hour meetings** – You can meet with me individually on Zoom. Set up an appointment by e-mailing me some proposed times. Best times are 11:30am to 2pm on any week day. Write 'office hours' or 'appointment' in the email subject line!

Obtaining Weekly Assigned Readings

All required readings are available on Canvas under 'Course Reserves' or 'Files' (if it is a piece I uploaded), or their URL is in this Syllabus. ***If readings are not available*** on Canvas or you cannot access them on the Canvas system, ***you are responsible*** to let me know (e-mail me), so I can fix the problem or send you a copy. Most readings should also be accessible through the library system, even if you cannot get them on Canvas. Note that I may change the readings as the semester progresses – as we discover new and interesting readings to include, and as our focus develops, we may drop some readings. Changes in the readings will be announced in class.

Grading

Assignment	% of Grade	N.B.
Weekly 75-word comment and comments/questions on readings	20% (2% each)	You can miss 4 without penalty – extra credit for handing in all of them
Research Proposal Term Paper	45%	Term Paper Abstract is included in this grade
Term-paper Presentation	15%	Includes Presentation and your 1-Page Overview
Participation in class	20%	Includes discussant roles (on readings and on your fellow student's presentations)

Fifty percent of the grade in each assignment is based on the instructor's judgment of progress from where each of you start at the beginning of the semester and the effort you put into learning. The grades will then be based on resulting assignment scores. The course is not graded on a curve; thus, it is not possible to give a grading chart.

Some of you want a sense of your grade halfway through the semester. I cannot provide this given the importance of the term paper; but, if you want to talk, drop me a note.

WEEKLY CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

NB: Readings may change during the semester as the areas we are covering will evolve with our discussions.

NB: IF YOU ARE SICK OR UNABLE TO MAKE CLASS, BUT YOU ARE WELL ENOUGH TO SIT IN FRONT OF A SCREEN, YOU MUST ZOOM INTO CLASS. The Prof. WILL SET UP A LINK FOR YOU AND YOU CAN JOIN THE DISCUSSION – OR OBSERVE, AT A MINIMUM. IN THIS PART OF THE 21ST CENTURY, THERE ARE FEW EXCUSES FOR MISSING CLASS. ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL FOR A GOOD GRADE IN THIS CLASS.

Week 1 (14 Jan.): Introduction – Social Causality & Responsibility

Overview of Course – Content & Admin

Prepare for today: Your Background Work

- In preparation for today's class please also look over the syllabus – including Annex A
- Please read the required readings listed below

Prelude

- Dr. Seuss. 1971. *The Lorax*. New York: Random House.

Structure of the Course

- The Syllabus
- The *Causes* of Crisis as a Problematic Category of Analysis¹
- Case studies of hunger will be taken from poorer regions of the world
- Case studies will include hunger attributed to 'climate-related' crises
- Assignments – See Annex A
 - Readings – will likely change during semester
 - Discussant Roles – discussant on readings; presenter/discussant on proposals
 - Written Commentaries on Readings
 - Weekly
 - Term Papers – a research proposal or policy brief on climate crisis & ethics
 - Abstract
 - One-pager
 - Presentation with Discussant
 - Some Project Ideas

To do Now

- Assign Week 2 Reading Discussants

Some Course Content

- Theodicy – causality and our ideas of Responsibility
 - Leibnitz Theodicy
 - Voltaire's *Candide*
 - Acts of God
 - Acts of Nature
 - Acts of Government
 - Causality in the law
- My objectives
 - Learn more about how markets shape hunger
 - Identify cases to study on markets and hunger
- Hunger
 - Tell me what is hunger? What is famine? How do you know it when you see it?
 - How defined?
 - How measured?
 - How explained?
- Markets
 - Tell me what you think of as a market? What is it? Where is it? How does it work?

Admin

- Canvas – YOU MUST View Announcements!
- Format – Follow format for all submissions
 - Word, Filename
 - Word count, Font
- Managing Up: Bug me!
 - If I do not send you comments on your abstract, one-pager or term paper: bug me. If you don't bug me, it'll be your loss.
 - If I am not clear about requirements/assignments/expectations, ask me! Otherwise, suffer the consequences!
- Plagiarism: I will flunk you. **No Mr. Nice Guy!** I will not give second chances. If you have any questions about plagiarism, ask me! My policy is No Tolerance for cheating (plagiarism or ChatGpt)
 - All quotes must be in quotation marks with reference.
 - All literature-derived materials not in quotes must be paraphrased *and* cited too!
 - Only your own original reflections, questions and synthesizing remarks can be without citation.
 - I consider AI-generated writing cheating. I will not tolerate it. It is easy to identify. It has no soul! If I suspect Chat or any other AI, I will interview you about your writing of the paper. Concerning this kind of cheating, see: AU's Academic Integrity Code, specifically article II.A.4 "dishonesty in papers" and

article II.A. 6 “fabrication of data.” I will consider data or writing from AI to be dishonest fabrication.

- If I suspect you used AI for any writing, I will immediately (within 18 hours of suspecting it) interview you about the contents of your papers. The burden of proof will be on you. I will also file a report with the Office of Academic Integrity (academicintegrity@american.edu).
- Assign Week 2 Reading Discussants

Lecture: Market Grabbing or Climate and Migration Lecture – an introduction to my new work

Required Reading for Today – on Research Proposals

- Lund, Christian. 2014. “Of what is this a case? Analytical movements in qualitative social science research,” *Human Organization*, 73 (3):224-34. PP. 10
- Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. 2008. “The Art of Writing a Proposal.” [posted in ‘Files’ on Canvas]
- Sample Proposals [posted in ‘Files’ on Canvas]
 - Levi 2025
 - Howell 2025
 - Anonymous 2022

Week 2 (21 Jan.): Theorizing Hunger – Entitlement Views

You cannot discuss famine today without reference to Amartya Sen’s ‘Entitlement Theory’. It is a widely used and very powerful frame for analyzing the causes of famine. Get a solid grasp on Sen’s approach. Also see some of Watts’s, Ribot’s and de Waal’s early critiques. Are they just? Is Sen right or wrong? What more is needed for Sen’s frame to be more universal?

Required Readings^{2,3}

Page Count: 4+8+6+17+21+17+21+21 = 109

- Wikipedia. Malthus’s “*An Essay on the Principle of Population*”:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Essay_on_the_Principle_of_Population
 - Read up to (stop before) section on “Editions and versions.” Pp. ~4
- Sen, Amartya. 1981. *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford: Oxford/Clarendon.⁴
 - Ch. 1: “Poverty and Entitlements,” pp. 1-8. Pp. 8
 - Ch. 5: “The Entitlement Approach,” pp. 45-51. Pp. 6

- Ch. 8: “Drought and Famine in the Sahel,” pp. 113-30. Pp. 17 [Could be paired with other material on the Sahel Famine]
- Drèze, Jean and Amartya Sen. 1991. *Hunger and Public Action*. Oxford: Oxford/Clarendon.
 - Ch. 11 “China and India.”⁵ Pp. 204-25. Pp. 21
- Watts, Michael. 1991. “Entitlements or empowerment? Famine and starvation in Africa,” *Review of African Political Economy* 51:9-26. PP. 17
- Ribot, Jesse. 2023. “Access Failure: Deep Explanation of Climate-Related Crises,” pp. 261-82 in Jun Borras and Jennifer Franco (eds.) *Oxford University Press Handbook on Land*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 21
- de Waal, Alex. 1990. “A Re-assessment of Entitlement Theory in the Light of the Recent Famines in Africa,” *Development and Change* 21(3):469-90. Pp. 21

Discussion: Your Research-Proposal Term Papers

Note: Sample Research Proposals written by students in previous classes are available in Files on Canvas. These may be on very different topics than we are studying this year. But, they give you a good idea of how to write a model research proposal. These were all proposals I considered to be very good quality.

PROJECTS: For next week, please bring in a term-paper problem to discuss with class (see Annex A for details on what the term paper is about)

What problem do you want your term paper to address? Think of a problem concerning the causes hunger. Pose a question that you want to answer. Be concrete. Be specific. Tell us where this problem is and for whom it is a problem. Tell us of more than one causal explanation for the crisis.

Week 3 (28 Jan.): Dust Bowl & Potato Famines – familiar places to start

The dust bowl is an event that most Americans have heard of. It is familiar. You probably have ideas of what took place – a drought, displacement, and the struggles of the poor. But what really caused people’s pain and suffering associated with climate-related stress (drought)? The Irish ‘potato’ famine is another event you probably know of. What caused it? Is this different than the story you know? These readings are about telling the story of who is responsible for disasters. How do we explain the role of the weather? How do we explain the role of human structures and human agency? Hulme brings in climate change and frames the limits of how we attribute disasters to climate and climate change. Dust Bowl was a case of migration more than

hunger; but relevant to hunger as the causes are often related. In short, these readings are about the shift from natural to un-natural interpretations of crisis.

Required Readings for Today^{6,7}

Page Count: 39+4+20+35 = 98

- Steinbeck, John. 1939. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin Books.
 - Chapters 1-5. Pp. 39
- Cook, Benjamin I., Ron L. Miller, and Richard Seager. 2009. "Amplification of the North American 'Dust Bowl' drought through human-induced land degradation," *PNAS* 106(13):4997–5001. Pp. 4
- Nally, David. 2011. *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine*. Indiana: Notre Dame.
 - Introduction. Pp. 1-20. Pp. 20
 - Chapter I: Fatal Circumstances. Pp. 21-56. Pp. 35

Lecture: Climate & Migration from the Sahel

Discussion of your term paper ideas in class today

Week 4 (4 Feb.): 'Natural' Disaster? Hunger in times before Climate Change

In the days before climate change, when examining the causes of hunger or famine, we were already looking away from the sky toward the underlying conditions that made people vulnerable. It was easier then – because 'nature', being inanimate, could not be responsible. It had no human agency within it. With climate change, the weather took on a new meaning, it carried human agency. We had entered the Anthropocene. Now how could we block out the weather as a causal factor – wasn't weather now 'responsible' for losses and damages, dislocation, hunger and famine?

Required Readings⁸

Page Count: 63+58+2+3+13 = 139 pages

- de Castro, Josué. 1952. *The Geography of Hunger*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.
 - Part Two, Ch. III. "Hunger in the New World," pp. 75-138. Pp. 63
- Watts, Michael J. 2013 edition [1983]. *Silent Violence: Food, Famine, and Peasantry in Northern Nigeria*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
 - "Bare Life and the Long Interregnum: Introduction to the New Edition," pp. xli-xcix. Pp. 58

- O’Keefe, Phil, Ken Westgate and Ben Wisner. 1976. “Taking the naturalness out of natural disasters. *Nature*,” 260: 566-567. Pp. 2
- Mirsky, Jonathan. 2012. “[Unnatural Disaster](#),” A Review of Yang 2012. Great Chinese famine book Tombstone. *New York Times* 9 December. Pp~3
- Crombé, Xavier and Jean-Hervé Jézéquel (eds.) 2007. *A not-so Natural Disaster: Niger 05*. New York: Columbia University Press.
 - Introduction, pp. 1-13. Pp. 13

Discussion of more of your term paper ideas in class today

PROJECTS: Your Project Abstracts are Due by Class Next Week

- E-mail your abstracts to me before class: Jesse.Ribot@gmail.com [& post them on Canvas]
- Be prepared to discuss – to present your idea and pose questions about the project

Schedule Research Presentations for week 6 to 14: Presentation Schedule Table

Week	Presenter 1 + Discuss.		Presenter 2 + Discussant		Presenter 3 + Discussant		Presenter 3 + Discussant	
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11	Passover				Passover			
12								
13								
14								

Week 5 (11 Feb.): The Hungry Season

The ‘hungry season’, also known as ‘seasonal hunger’ or the ‘slim season’, is the period of hunger before each harvest but after farmers have run out of food and cash. This is a period where farmers cannot feed their families. Where I work in Senegal, each year 80 percent of farm households experience a hungry season. This phenomenon is the focus of our course because it is poorly understood and often hidden from the urban and international communities. Why is it persistent? Why is it so widespread? What causes it?

Required Readings⁹

Page Count: 8+4+3+36+23+9 = 83

- Lappé, Frances Moore, Jennifer Clapp, Molly Anderson, Robin Broad, Ellen Messer, Thomas Pogge and Timothy Wise. 2013. "How we Count Hunger Matters," *Ethics and International Affairs* 27(3):251-9. Pp. 8
- Devereux, Stephen, Bapu Vaitla, Samuel Hauenstein Swan. 2008. *Seasons of Hunger: Fighting Cycles of Quiet Starvation Among the World's Rural Poor*. London: Pluto Press.
 - Forward (by Robert Chambers), pp. xvi-xix. Pp. 4
 - Preface, pp. xx-xxiii. Pp. 3
 - Ch. 1, Those with Cold Hands, pp. 1-36. Pp. 36
- Rivera-Núñez, T., L. García-Barrios, M. Benítez, J. A. Rosell, R. García-Herrera, & E. Estrada-Lugo. 2022. "Unravelling the Paradoxical Seasonal Food Scarcity in a Peasant Microregion of Mexico." *Sustainability*, 14(11):1-23.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su14116751> Pp. 23
- Ribot, Jesse. 2025. Research Proposal. In Files on Canvas. Pp. 9

Discussion of your abstracts in class today

Week 6 (18 Feb.): Theorizing Vulnerability

Sen centers his work on vulnerability from a neoclassical-economics perspective. But, he sneaks in a lot of political-economic understandings. De Castro, Steinbeck, and others before Sen, applied a much more political-economic analysis of cause. By shifting the frame from access through exchange to a broader set of factors that shape access to food, today's authors develop a more nuanced understanding of the origins of vulnerability. Political economic frames take history into account. Neoclassical frames do not – but, they should. If economists simply asked 'from where do the initial positions of all actors derive', they would no longer be neoclassical economists, they would become political-economic analysts. By not taking distribution of resources and wealth as a given, the analysis is much more complex and useful. The views here are usually considered to be more 'structural'¹⁰, referring to the fact that they do not take a methodological individualist approach common in neoclassical economics.

Required Readings¹¹

Page count: 37+21+29 +2 = 89

- Cochrane, Logan. 2021. *Ethiopia & Food Security: What we know, how we know it, and future options*. Los Angeles: Tsehai Publishers.
 - "Vulnerability," Ch. 5, pp. 95-132. Pp. 37
- Chao, Sophie, Christopher Krupa & Tania Murray Li. 2024. "Anthropologists are Talking – About Contemporary Plantations. Technologies, Violence, and Vulnerability Across

Geographies and Genealogies,” *Ethnos* 89(1):158-87. Link to this article:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2024.2305881>. Pp. 29

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1997. La précarité est aujourd’hui partout : Intervention lors des Rencontres européennes contre la précarité. Grenoble. 12-13 décembre 1997. *Contre-feux*, Ed. Liber Raisons d’agir, Grenoble. [available online : http://natlex.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_161352.pdf]. Pp. 2 [We NEED AN ENGLISH VERSION – Can someone fine this?]

Lecture: Vulnerability Frames Summary of General Move from Hazards to Vulnerability Approaches

Discussion: How is everyone doing? Do you feel ahead or behind? Are you worried about grades? Let’s discuss

Week 7 (25 Feb.): Food Insecurity does not Fall from the Sky – the Case of Senegal

This week we will explore Senegal as a case of climate-related crises. How do we define food security? How do we explore the relation between food security and climate?

Required Readings on Senegal¹²

Page Count: 18+11+26+9+8+9 = 82

- Franke, Richard W., and Barbara H. Chasin. 1980. *Seeds of Famine: Ecological Destruction and the Development Dilemma in the West African Sahel*. Montclair, NJ: Allanheld, Osmun.
 - “Introduction: Food Crisis – Ecological Crisis; The Great West African Famine of 1968,” pp. 1-18. Pp. 18.
- Mbow, Cheikh, Ole Mertz, Awa Diouf, Kjeld Rasmussen, Anette Reenberg. 2008. “The history of environmental change and adaptation in eastern Saloum–Senegal—Driving forces and perceptions,” *Global and Planetary Change*, 64(3-4): 210-21. Pp. 11
- Grossi, A., Downs, S., Trzaska, S. 2021. Climate Impacts on Nutrition in Senegal. *IRI Working Paper*. https://iri.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Literature-Review_Climate-Impacts-on-Nutrition-in-Senegal_final_Sd_AG_clean2.pdf Pp. 26
- Nèbie, Elisabeth Kago Ilboudou, Diaba Bâ, Alessandra Giannini. 2021. “Food Security and Climate Shocks in Senegal: Who and where are the most vulnerable households?” *Global Food Security* 29:1-9. Pp. 9

- Watts, Michael J. 2015. Adapting to the Anthropocene: Some Reflections on Development and Climate in the West African Sahel. *GeoJournal* 53(3):288-97. Pp. 9

Discussion of more of your abstracts in class today

First Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class – see Annex A for Presentation Instructions

- Presentations will start this week or next depending on how many student in the class

Week 8 (4 March): Hunger and Market Structure I

How do we imagine or think about markets? What is a market? What are the politics of market control? What is the political economy of a market?

Required Readings¹³

Word count: 34+6+8+16 = 64

- Blair, Jennifer (ed.) 2008. *Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press. Free access: <http://tankona.free.fr/bair2008.pdf>.
 - Jennifer Blair, “Global Commodity Chains: Genealogy and Review,” Introduction, pp. 1-34. Pp. 34
 - Immanuel Wallerstein, “Protection Networks and Commodity Chains in the Capitalist World-Economy,” ch. 4, pp. 83-89. Pp. 6
- Bates, Robert. 1981. *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 - “Introduction,” pp. 1-8. Pp. 8
- Hewitt de Alcántara, Cynthia (ed.) 1993. *Real Markets: Social and Political Issues of food Policy Reform*. London: Frank Cass.
 - “Introduction: Markets in Principle and Practice,” pp. 1-16. Pp. 16

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

Recitation: An Ode to the Lorax

Spring Break: 11 March – no class

Week 9 (18 March): Hunger and Market Structure II

Class Today will be on Zoom

Required Readings

Word count: 12+15+25 = 52

- Sen, Amartya. 1990. "Food Entitlements and Economic Chains," Ch. 14, pp. 374-86 in Lucile F. Newman (ed.) *Hunger in History: Food Shortage, Poverty and Deprivation*. Oxford: Blackwell. Pp. 12
- Clapp, Jennifer, Rachael Vriezen, Amar Laila, Costanza Conti, Line Gordon, Christina Hicks and Nitya Rao. 2025. "Corporate Concentration and Power Matter for Agency in Food Systems," *Food Policy* 134(102897):1-15.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2025.102897>. Pp. 15
- Neimark, B., Mahanty, S., & Dressler, W. (2016). Mapping value in a 'green' commodity frontier: revisiting commodity chain analysis. *Development and Change*, 47(2), 240-265. Pp. 25

Lecture: Who Profits along Senegal's Charcoal Commodity Chains?

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

Discussion: How is everyone doing? Do you feel ahead or behind? Are you worried about grades? Let's discuss

Week 10 (25 March): Hunger and Market Structure III

Required Readings

Page Count: 17+24+12+7 = 60

- Blauch, Bob. 2001. "Food Marketing," ch. 7, pp. 149-66 in Stephen Devereux and Simon Maxwell (eds.) *Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Scottsville, SA: ITDG Publishing. Pp. 17
- Utting, Peter. 1993. "The Political Economy of Food Pricing and Marketing Reforms in Nicaragua, 1984-87," pp. 107-31 in Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara (ed.) *Real Markets: Social and Political Issues of food Policy Reform*. London: Frank Cass. Pp. 24
- Harriss, Barbara. 1990. "Another Awkward Class: Merchants and Agrarian Change in India," pp. 91-103 in Henry Bernstein, Ben Crow, Maureen MacKintosh and Carlotte Martin (eds.) *The Food Question: Profits Versus People?* New York: Monthly Review Press. Pp. 12

- Ponte, Stefano, Jennifer Bair, Mark Dallas. 2023. "Power and inequality in global value chains: Advancing the research agenda," *Global Networks* 23(4):679-86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/glob.12456>. Pp. 7.

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

Week 11 (1 April): Food Security & Food Sovereignty

Food sovereignty is a current and widespread idea about how to deal with food insecurity. These pieces simply give you an idea of what food security is and some critique of this widely used concept.

Passover – Guest Lecturer

Required Readings¹⁴

Page Count: 20+21 = 41

- Edelman, Marc, Tony Weis, Amita Baviskar, Saturnino M. Borras Jr, Eric Holt-Giménez, Deniz Kandiyoti & Wendy Wolford. 2014. "Introduction: critical perspectives on food sovereignty," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* Vol. 41, No. 6, 911–931. Pp. 20
- Agarwal, Bina. 2014. "Food sovereignty, food security and democratic choice: critical contradictions, difficult conciliations," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41:6, 1247-1268, DOI: [10.1080/03066150.2013.876996](https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2013.876996). Pp. 21

Film: Morte e Vida Severigna (1977) – View & Discuss in Class

Director: Zelito Viana

Author of text (text is the reading of a poem): João Cabral de Melo Neto

The internet told me that this film is "The story of Severino, a man who tries to escape the misery and the drought prevailing in the rural backcountry of the Northeast of Brazil. He heads for Recife, passing through desert and forest regions, expecting to find a better life." But, discuss in class whether this is really flight from drought or from something else? What are the causes of the protagonist's flight?

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

Week 12 (8 April): Hunger and Gender Inequality

Access to food breaks down long many dimensions, including by gender, age, place of origin, citizenship, race, religion, profession.... Identity matters. It shapes who is able to access labor opportunities, land, markets and influence authorities. Identity, including age and gender, shape who makes decisions concerning food access within the household. This session we explore the implications of gender for hunger.

Required Readings

Page Count: 21+71+14 = 106

- Nussbaum, Martha. 2001. Adaptive preferences and women's options. *Economics and Philosophy*, 17: 67-88. Pp. 21
- Bina Agrawal 1990. "Social Security and Family in Rural India: Coping with Seasonality and Calamity," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 17(3):341-412. Pp. 71
- Whitehead, Ann. 1990. "Food Crisis and Gender Conflict in the African Countryside," pp. 54-68 in Henry Bernstein, Ben Crow, Maureen MacKintosh and Carlotte Martin (eds.) *The Food Question: Profits Versus People?* New York: Monthly Review Press. Pp. 14

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

Week 13 (15 April): Food Policy Politics

Markets are not just captured by individuals or merchants. They are captured because government allows them to do so. These readings help us to understand how allowing and facilitating market capture serves the state.

Required Readings

Page Count: 30+21+4 = 55

- Bates, Robert H. 1984. "Governments and Agricultural Markets in Africa," Ch. pp. 153-183 in D. Gale Johnson and G. Edward Schuh (eds.) *The Role of markets in the world food economy*. London: Rutledge. Pp. 30
- Thomson, Henry. 2019. *Food and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - "Introduction," Ch. 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, pp. 1-21. Pp. 21
 - "Agricultural Policy and Agricultural Rents," Ch. 2, pp. 22-26. Pp. 4

Scheduled Research-Proposal Presentations in Class

PROJECTS: Final term-paper project is due by 5pm this coming Friday the 17th (the day after tomorrow) via email & on Canvas

Week 14 (22 April – Last Class): Wrap up and Overview

How do we analyze the causes of vulnerability? Earlier readings frame its components, but how do we move from identifying vulnerability to explaining it? Explanation is one way of identifying potential solutions. It is not the only way. Think through how useful explanation is in helping us to reduce vulnerabilities. What helps us respond? Identification? Explanation? Innovation? Under what conditions do these different approaches help? What can we do with what we learn?

Synthesis Discussion

Annex A: Course Assignments

Class Assignment Format and Submission Procedures

IMPORTANT NOTE: All assignments must be in **12-point font and single-spaced**. All assignments must be posted on Canvas. The electronic copies of all assignments must be submitted in **Word (NO [N.O.] GOOGLE DOCS or PDFs)**, and the file name must start with your **last name**, followed by the **assignment title** and **course number**. So, if you are Anna Eggplant, then the file should be titled: **Eggplant Anna Week 3 Reading Comment 419.doc** (or **.docx**), or **Eggplant Anna Abstract 419.doc**. Inside the Word document, you must also always have your name, the assignment, the course number, and submission date written at the top of the page.

If Canvas says something surprising – like the wrong deadline, what do you do? Do you listen to Canvas or to the professor's Syllabus? The latter!!! So, if you find something amiss, please write me. We often have canvas problems. If it contradicts what I said above, then write me. Believe the syllabus before you believe Canvas. Also, we often put later deadlines on canvas than we state on the Syllabus. This is so that if someone is, by accident or necessity, late, they can still submit. We do not want to have to monkey around with Canvas to enable that late submission.

Written Comments on Weekly Readings

Weekly comments on the readings must not exceed 100 words per week (minimum 12-point font, single spaced, 1.5-inch margins). That means 100 words per week, not per article! These can be in a paragraph format or in bullet points, as you prefer. Please submit these to me on Canvas **and** by email by noon of the day before class. You can try to touch on multiple articles, just one, just a couple. The key is to identify a few items that struck you.

- **As mentioned in the intro on assignments**, these comments are designed to provide a basis for class discussion. They must include:
 - a) one quote that surprised or struck you,
 - b) something in the article that is new to you (if anything),
 - c) something you disagree with and why (if anything), and
 - d) a discussion question – that is about the theme of this course!
- Also, think about the following when you read:

- a. What do the articles contribute to theory – what is new in them?
- b. What are the key questions the articles evoke?
- c. Vis-à-vis your own interests, what do you find surprising, new and interesting in the articles, and why?
- d. What are some strengths and shortcomings of the articles?
- e. Compare and contrast the arguments or theoretical positions of the different articles where possible.
- f. What was incomprehensible to you in the articles? What did you not understand?
- g. From the readings, is there a memorable quote that strikes you?

This assignment is designed so that you come in with good discussion questions grounded in the readings. 100 words gives you plenty of space. You must read all of the required readings each week. You should touch on as many of the readings as you can in your comment, but if you have something more to say about one or two or contrast two, that is fine. Just be certain to have read everything – without doing so, you will be lost in the class discussions. In short, I want you to show that you are thinking about and questioning what you read – not just accepting it or even just absorbing it to regurgitate it to the class.

Term-Paper Writing Project: A Research-Proposal

The writing assignment for this course is a **1500-word (Maximum) Term Paper**. This will be in the form of a research proposal. The final term paper is due the Friday after the Week 13 class. This project will include a **150-word Abstract** to be handed in early in the semester – date is specified on syllabus, above. You will also include a 150-word abstract on the final term paper (a re-re-re-revised version of the first submitted, or a whole new one if that topic was not what you ultimately took up).

Note on in-Text Reference Style

Please use in-text references in all of your writing assignments. So, Ribot (2014:667) said “Vulnerability is, by definition, the social precarity found on the ground when hazards arrive. It does not fall from the sky.” Then republicans announced that the world is a dangerous rhombus with spikes and that people are damaged by climate events because they are not neoliberals (Trump 2019:45; Giuliani 2020:2). Note that all claims must be supported by a reference, an observation, or an argument. When there is a quote, please put in the page number you got it from. When it is paraphrased, use the page number. No page number is needed if you are citing a whole article or a whole book – as in when you say that Sen (1981) argued that famines are caused by entitlement failures. No page number is needed for documents without page numbers.

Note on Bibliography Style

Be consistent. Use a reference style in your reference list or bibliography that gives the full citation as you would see it in an article or book. You can also use the style I use in this syllabus. Choose a style and stick with it.

Your Abstract

Everyone must submit a 150-word abstract that describes your intended project on the week specified in the syllabus. Start with a title for your project! Provide a good pithy project title that reflects something to catch the interest of the reader – a title that indicates that the reader will discover something new and interesting. This abstract is designed to start your dialogue with me and the class on your topic and on the problem you are choosing to focus on. It should state the problem, why it matters and to whom, what your questions are and hypotheses (if you have them) and what your case study will be (where and what you will look at). Include (not in the word limit) a bibliography of at least 5 sources you hope to cite. You do not need to cite these in the abstract – in general, abstracts do not have references in them.

Note on Identifying a Researchable Problem to Address

Research Proposals are about problems. ***But, what is a problem?*** You must identify a problem. A *problem* is defined as an instance in which someone or some group either suffer losses or damages or cannot attain something they need. When you identify a problem, you must state or identify for whom it is a problem. For, if there is nobody who cares about this phenomenon you are looking at, it is not a problem. Problems are human/social. If you say the problem is that animals are suffering. Then you have to tell us why this problem matters and to whom. It is not the animals themselves suffering that is the problem. It is that someone cares about it. If the problem is 'climate-related migration' then you have to tell us who is concerned (specific groups in specific places) and for what reasons (i.e. losses, damages or changes that might hinder their gaining benefits they desire or need).

All problems are social – as it is a social judgment to call something a problem. Their solutions are also social – as someone or some group must act to solve the problem. This is a social-science assignment. This means we are looking at the causes of a social problem (i.e. a problem that involves individuals and groups and the ways they suffer from or generate losses and damages or deprivations).

Be specific when you choose a problem! Your problem cannot be something generic such as 'climate change' or 'famine'. It must be something you can identify and then explain that is happening or happened in a specific place and time. So, you might ask a question such as: what were the causes of young farmers embarking on dangerous emigration from

Tambacounda, Senegal toward Europe in 2015 to 2020; or how was climate change used to shield government from blame for famine in Tigre Province, Ethiopia during the civil war; or did lack of access to shelters caused tornado deaths in Oklahoma. In each question is an implicit, but very specific problem: repeated seasonal hunger, death in migration, avoiding blame for famine, tornado deaths.

Further, your problems have to involve a puzzle. If it is easy to understand the causes of the problem you are looking at, then we don't need to research it. We need a problem that is either misunderstood or not understood. It may be a problem everyone thinks they understand – like seasonal hunger in Senegal. Everyone thinks is due to climate change or low productivity. You can only justifying studying this problem if you think these answers are wrong and you have a better way to explain it. Further, your research can be about the problem of misunderstanding of causality of a problem. So, you can propose to explain why hunger is misunderstood in a given institution or by a given public – and research why people believe what they do. Here, however, you will have to also demonstrate that their explanation or belief is wrong – if you are explaining why they falsely believe it! Here the problem is that a problem (damaging to and cared about by someone) is not being solved!

This year I want all of the proposals to explore hunger (the problem) for a specific crisis in a specific place. The puzzle, then, concerns how hunger is caused. I want you to explore the conditions that make people vulnerable to food deficits, hunger and even famine. I prefer you focus on hunger and avoid famine – which is a special and extreme case. You can choose the causes you think most plausible – but, you must then construct a study of all causes to understand which is active/dominant/a product of human action.

Components of a Policy Research Proposal

A policy research proposal identifies a problem and asks an unanswered question (related to the causes of hunger) for which the answer will have policy relevance – i.e. it must be about the effects of existing policy or is amenable to resolution by policy intervention. The question should also have theoretical relevance – answering it should contribute to the broader understanding of this problem for instances other than your particular case (that is, it should provide abstractable and generalizable answers[†]). At a minimum, your proposal should identify a problem where better understanding is likely to help us to formulate a better solution for the problem you have identified. Great if it also helps solve a larger set of problems.

[†] To understand 'abstraction' and 'generalization' see: Lund, Christian. 2014. "Of what is this a case? Analytical movements in qualitative social science research." *Human Organization*, 73 (3), 224-34.

Political-Economy of Hunger Term-Paper Concept and Structure

Hunger Term-Paper Concept and Structure

Project: Identify a real-world researchable (i.e. where there is some information/data) case where farmers or other resource-dependent populations (gatherers or hunters or fishers) go hungry. Instances of seasonal hunger (a slim or hungry season) are ideal – you will find them all over the world. How do government, international development agencies and researchers working on your case explain the causes of this hunger? Explore whether there are any indications that this hunger might be caused by price fixing and unfair market access. These could be studies of local agricultural commodity chains or data on divergence between rural and national prices or rural and international prices. Hypothesize what you think is the most-plausible cause of that hunger. Show the data that support your hypotheses or simply argue, presenting some reason to believe your argument, for an alternative causal explanation. Propose research on your case.

This year I want the problem you research to be a case of hunger and whether it is caused by price fixing. I want it to be research into whether and how the price is fixed – the mechanisms that shape price fixing. It can be about the mere fact that prices are fixed. But, I want it to interrogate a) the causes of hunger, b) the causes of low prices for rural products (perhaps of high prices for inputs), c) whether the low price as caused by price fixing, d) whether price fixing is caused by capture of market shares, and e) if the case, the mechanisms through which this market capture takes place. You can hypothesize that hunger is not about price fixing – but, I want you to find cases where market grabbing is a plausible cause and where we can test it with commodity chain analytics – that show where profits are within commodity markets and the means by which those profits are captured (i.e. purchase and sale prices and market shares).

The following is a suggested proposal outline. A typical policy-research proposal has the components listed below. This is just an example—you can use a different outline if you wish. Nonetheless, you must somehow include each of these elements.

- A preamble that tells us who the audience is – who is the donor you want to get funds from. This is just so that we all know who you are writing to. This does not count in your word count – less than 50 words [word count not included in proposal word limit]

Not in Proposal Word Count:

Title – that catches attention and indicates your argument [Not included in Word Count]

Abstract—150 words max [Not included in Word Count]

Proposal – 1500 words max

- I. Introduction [Introduction takes us through most of the proposal – then you elaborate]
 - a. Problem statement
 - i. What is the problem to be explored?
 - ii. Why is it important and to whom is it important?
 - b. Summary of debates around the problem
 - i. Evoke typical explanations available for the crisis
 - ii. Evoke your explanation and why it is more plausible
 - c. Statement of research questions
 - d. Summary of hypothesis
 - e. Introduce the real case you will study – where, when and why it is of importance
- II. Background—What does the literature have to say about your problem/Review the literature on the causes of this crisis – what do different sources say
 - a. What others say about its causes
[Explore how different groups explain the causes (and how/why do they choose their approach to explanation) – for example:
 - i. How do climate scientists explain the cause of the crisis/damages,
 - ii. How do the United Nations or World Bank explains the crisis/damages,
 - iii. How do social scientists/geographers/political ecologists explain the crisis,
 - iv. How do the affected people explain the causes of the crisis/damages,
 - v. How does the government in place (can be local or national) explain the crisis/damages]
 - b. What theories might help you understand its causes
 - c. What vulnerabilities in place set the stage for the crisis to unfold
- III. Research Questions and Hypotheses
 - o Propose a hypothesis about what you believe you will be able to demonstrate as the most plausible cause of the problem. A strong hypothesis might also explain why that cause is not seen by others or might explain why the other explanations in the literature are believed – it needs an independent and a dependent variable and some mechanism by which they are linked.
- IV. Case
 - a. Where you are going to study your problem
 - b. Why this is an advantageous place for studying your problem
- V. Data required to address your Hypotheses – to measure/assess the independent and dependent variables
 - a. Suggest what data you would need to interrogate these questions
- VI. Methods
 - a. How you get from your questions to answers

- b. Suggest how you will gather the needed data
- VII. Merit
 - a. Intellectual merit
 - i. Contribution to applicable knowledge
 - ii. Contribution to theory
 - b. Broader merit
 - i. Contribution to change in the world – in your case and generally
 - ii. Tell the reader some implications of your research for practice. Tell us what use this work will have for theory. What is illuminated? To whom is it of use. Tell the reader who will use this research – i.e. farmers, policy makers or researchers or all of the above.

Not in Word Count but required:

- VIII. Deliverables
 - a. a Dissertation, an Article, a Book, a Film, a Scholarly Conference, a Policy Brief, Dialogue with Policy makers, trained researchers [word count deliverables not included in proposal word limit]
- IX. Timeline [not included in your word count]
- X. Budget [not included in your word count]
- XI. Bibliography [not included in your word count]

Class Term Paper Presentations – How to Structure

Time Allotment in Sessions

Total time is about 25 minutes per proposal organized as follows:

- **Your Presentation:** 2-5 minutes (you can use less time and that will allow more for discussion)
- **Discussant:** 5 minutes
- **Class Discussion without author intervening (author is ‘gagged’):** 10-13 minutes minimum
- **Class Discussion with author intervening (author ‘ungagged’):** last 5 minutes

Presenter Role & One-page Summary – to deliver to class in advance of presentation

Synopsis: Share with the whole class (and the professor) **a 1-page single-spaced term-paper summary** that states the Problem, your Questions, the Case to be studied and your approach to it. Include a bibliography of at least 5 sources in the one-pager, but do not include it in the one page (i.e. you have one page for text and additional space for the bibliography). This is due on the Monday prior to the class in which you present. This can be a slightly expanded and

redeveloped version of your abstract. Distribute this one-pager on Monday and also send with it **one study** from your research site for everyone to peek at.

- Send to class Monday before your presentation [Send it to TA (and CC prof.). TA will send it out to everyone. Also post it on Canvas.]:
 - Your one-page summary
 - One article for us to peek at – a commodity chain study of a product you hope to focus on or an analysis of hunger and its causes in the place and for the community you are to study. We want something concrete about your case study products and community that relates to causes of their hunger.

Presentation

Each of you will be expected to present your project to the class. In class you will present your work in under 2 to 5 minutes. Please be sure to include in your presentation the key points in the outline below.

Please use the following outline (or the sample term paper outlines above) to structure your presentation – just to make sure that main elements are present in your presentation.

You can use power point if you like. You do not have to.

Outline for Term Paper Presentation [Discussants – use this as checklist]

Be certain to evoke the key elements in the term-paper outline above. In short, they would include:

- Title – that catches attention and indicates your argument
- Which case are examining – where and when and why it is of importance
- Your primary question(s)
- Who has examined this crisis and say a little about their perspective on causes (e.g. climate scientists, UN, WB, social scientists/geographers/political ecologists, effected people, local or national governments),
- In your initial dive into the literature can you find actors who have differences in how they analyze causality of the crisis?
 - What are the differences?
- Do you have preliminary policy-research questions on the cause of the crisis? [note I call it a 'policy'-research question – to emphasize that it has relevance to policy or practice.]
 - This can be about why certain causes are privileged
 - It can be about how the causes of hunger are analyzed
 - It can be about the politics of analyzing the causes of hunger
 - It can be about what is illuminated and what is obscured by different explanations

- What are the implications of your question for practice? What practical knowledge will we gain
- Can you yet propose a hypothesis about what you believe you will be able to demonstrate is the primary cause?
- Beyond this page, please include a list of references you hope to cite in your paper. This is not counted in the one-page limit.

Project Presentation Discussant Role

The discussant will take up to 5 minutes to comment. Then the class, facilitated by the discussant, will discuss the presented work for about 10 minutes (or more if presenter and discussant take less time) without the presenter intervening. Presenter can then enter discussion for the last 5 minutes. Elements in the outline below. It is also often helpful for the discussant to try to simply repeat back to the author what they understand the core problem to be. The discussant also plays the role of facilitating class engagement.

The discussant's role is to give some constructive feedback on your project and to help lead a discussion. Discussants should ask about whether each of the elements of a proposal are present and what more needs to be done to develop the question, hypotheses, or arguments. The discussant should repeat back to the author what they understand the core problem and question to be. This is usually a very productive exercise for the author.

Discussants and the class can also use the outline above to make sure the presenter has covered what they should have touched on in their written piece & presentation.

The Research-proposal Project Itself – Minimalist notes on what a proposal must include

This project requires:

1. identifying the audience you are writing to;
2. identifying your problem;
3. developing a policy research question and/or hypothesis;
4. locating the problem and question within the literature;
 - a. What do previous studies have to say?
 - b. What causal arguments have been made about it?
5. explaining its broader policy significance (that is, making it clear why anyone should care about what is being investigated and what might be found);
6. explaining what data are necessary for answering the question;
7. explaining the methods to be employed for obtaining and analyzing the data (i.e. tracing out how empirical observations will be related to the question or hypothesis);
8. estimating a timeline; and
9. estimating funding needs.

A Useful Table to Help Organize your Methods Section

Hunger Question Example

Hypothesis or Primary Research Questions	Operational Questions	Data Required to answer operational questions	Methods for gathering data
<p>Q: Why do the majority of Senegal's farmers experience a hungry season?</p> <p>H1: Intermediaries manage rural prices via oligopsony and monopsony buying to keep them as low as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H1a: In years of abundant harvest intermediaries suppress producer price to just below subsistence to maximize their profits H1b: In years of poor harvests they raise the prices to prevent famine to avoid political backlash 	<p>H1Q1: What portion of farmers experience a hungry season?</p> <p>H1Q2: Is price managed by intermediaries?</p> <p>H1Q3: Does low price explain annual hunger?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics on rural hunger Indicators of price fixing (management) such as high merchant margins What are the effects of other factors (climate, soil fertility, crop loss) on production and price (state regulations) If prices are being fixed, what are the means by which price is controlled (how are market shares controlled? How are prices then set?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical analysis Document review and analysis – discourse analysis Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -of those who conducted analyses of hunger -of farmers on their perceptions of cause -of intermediaries -of regulators -of development agents -of food security experts Commodity-chain studies to measure costs, purchase prices, sale prices and profit margins, as well as to organize interview information on means of market access control
<p>H2: Farmers accept being price takers due to pre-structural adjustment state price fixing and therefore they do not question the prices they are paid in the current post-structural adjustment 'free market' situation.</p>	<p>H2Q1: Do farmers accept the prices they are offered?</p> <p>H2Q2: On what grounds do they accept (or reject) prices?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are prices being contested by farmers? What are farmer attitudes toward prices? How do farmers explain the prices they receive? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with farmers Surveys of farmers Interviews with farmer cooperative, association and union leaders

Some Useful Literature on Proposal Writing

- Professor Michael Watts' essay "The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal" is, well, just that – a "holy grail" – essay dedicated to demystifying the process and

offering concrete advice on the dos and don'ts:

<http://iis.berkeley.edu/sites/files/pdf/inpursuitofphd.pdf>

- NSF grant reviewer tells all
<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2003/04/nsf-grant-reviewer-tells-all>
- NSF Merit Review – look over.
Criteria that NSF grant reviewers hold the proposals to. Note that these are kind of flexible depending on what discipline and sub-discipline we may apply to. The section "Merit Review Facts" may be useful. http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/
- Some useful resources for helping in proposal writing – look over:
<http://iis.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop>
- Lund, Christian. 2014. Of what is this a case? Analytical movements in qualitative social science research. *Human Organization*, 73 (3), 224-34.
- Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. 2008. "The Art of Writing a Proposal."
<http://www.arch.mcgill.ca/prof/adams/arch627/fall2008/pdf/The%20Art%20of%20Writing%20Proposals.pdf>

Some Useful Additional Methods Books/Articles

More Methods Literature in Endnote¹⁵

- Sayer, Andrew. 1992. *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*, Second Edition. New York: Routledge.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent, Todd Landman, Sanford Schram. 2012. *Real Social Science: Applied Phronesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burawoy, Michael. 1998. "The Extended Case Method" *Sociological Theory* 16(1).
- Burawoy, Michael. 2009. *Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, One Theoretical Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Brady, H.E. and D. Collier. 2004. *Rethinking social inquiry: Diverse tools, shared standards*. London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Becker, Howard S. 2017. *Evidence*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ribot, J. and N. L. Peluso. 2003. A theory of access: Putting property and tenure in place. *Rural Sociology*. 68: 153-181.
- Bennett, A. 2010. "Process tracing and causal inference," Ch. 10 in Henry Brady and David Collier (eds.). *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Rowman and Littlefield.
- Cronon, W. 1992. "A Place for Stories: Nature, history, and narrative," *The Journal of American History*, (March), 1347-1376.
- Lund, Christian. 2014. "Of What is This a Case? Analytical Movements in Qualitative Social Science Research." *Human Organization* 73(3): 224-234.

- Bates, Robert, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, Barry R. Weingast. 1998. *Analytic Narratives*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction, pp. 3-23. Pp. 21
- If you come across Flat Ontologies as a frame, consider the readings in this footnote.¹⁶

Checklist for Grading of Term Papers

When I grade your proposal, the following is the checklist I will use. Be sure to understand this.

➔Grading Checklist: answered with Yes/No

- Is the title compelling: Y/N
- Is the abstract well-structured and clear:
- Is the gist/problem/puzzle of the proposal made clear in the first few sentences of the introduction:
- Is the case compelling – does it promise to demonstrate something new & interesting:
- Is the background of the problem well presented:
- Is the literature on causality well reviewed:
- Are the causal analyses clearly identified and laid out:
- Are the causes you believe are most plausible clearly identified and laid out:
- Are these causal insights integrated into a well-articulated hypothesis:
- Is the proposal cogently and clearly argued (the logic of the argument):
- Is the proposal clearly written (the clarity of writing):
- Is the merit compelling:
- Is the timeline and budget plausible:
- Did the term paper use references correctly (i.e. supporting every claim with a source):
- Did the writer submit this in the required Word Format:
 - ➔Grading decision will be based on these elements above
 - ➔Term Paper Points is 45% of the grade – so will be given a score of X/45

Annex B: Relevant Themes that will NOT be Covered this Semester

Below are topics I cover some years and not others or that I want to develop further. I list them here so you can see what might be interesting areas to look into on your own.

Causality in the Law

Law gives us some interesting perspectives on causality. In tort law, causes of damages that link to intentionality are what count. Are all meaningful causes linked to human action – when are causes social? When are they mere facts of nature? Are causes of damages always social? Yes when we ask what is a damage – as damage only has meaning due to social or individual evaluation and valuation. Perhaps when we ask what directly lead to the damage – as it depends on a) whether those acts were done by people and b) whether people could have foreseen and prevented them. No when they are random and unforeseeable acts of ‘nature’. This introduces one more question – is nature natural anymore? What nature is natural? What is the ‘nature’ of nature? What is the human element of environment?

- Calabresi, Guido. 1975. “Concerning Cause and the Law of Torts: An Essay for Harry Kalven, Jr,” *The University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 69-108. Pp. 39.
- Hart, H.L.A and Tony Honoré. 1959. *Causation in the Law*. Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
 - “Preface to the Second Edition,” Pp. xxxiii – lxxxi. Pp. 48
 - “Introduction,” Pp. 1-8. Pp. 8

On Revolution – from moral economy of the peasant to existential threat to the planet

This week I want to talk about moral economy (E.P. Thompson & James Scott), the erasure of posterity (Gunter Anders), and whether the existential crisis of climate change is cause for revolution (a moral economy predicated on threats to existence rather than threats to subsistence). War and violence are also relevant. When do people start viewing others as subject to elimination without grief? How does an existential crisis reshape our view of others – when does it create solidarity or division? How are categories of meaning and belonging being reconfigured by the change of nature to something other than itself and how will this set of changes interact with multiplied crises?

- Butler, Judith. 2009. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* Edinburgh: Verso.
 - Introduction: “Precarious Live, Greivable Life. Pp. 1-32, Pp. 32
- Abembe, Achille. 2019[2016]. *Necro-politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ch. 1: “Exit from Democracy,” pp. 9-41. Pp. 32
- Bello, Walden. 2019. *Counter Revolution: The Global Rise of the Far Right*. Blackpoint Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishers.
 - Preface + Ch. 1: “Understanding Counter Revolution,” Pp. 1-11. Pp. 11

On Causality and Causal Inference

- Ege: Something more relevant came to my mind, however—you might particularly enjoy this one because it distinguishes theories of causation and what they mean for

causation in the social world: <https://www.phenomenalworld.org/analysis/disparate-causes-i/>

- Bhaskar – something from recent 2008 book.
- Consider: Turner et al. 2025.

On Responsibility for Climate Change: Policy vs. Industry vs. Consumer?

- Hughes, David McDermott. 2013. "Climate Change and the Victim Slot: From Oil to Innocence," *American Anthropologist* 115(4): 570–581, ISSN 0002-7294, online ISSN 1548-1433. Pp. 11

Climate Change and Human Rights

- Sachs, Wolfgang. 2008. Climate change and human rights. *Development*, 51, 332-337. Pp. 6
 - [Excellent summary of biophysical impacts/consequences of climate change.](#)
 - [How do these translate into human rights issues?](#)
 - [Cause cannot be traced directly to culprits; but responsibility can be attributed through human rights frames.](#)
- Kashwan, Prakash. 2020. "American environmentalism's racist roots have shaped global thinking about conservation." *The Conversation*. September 2, 2020. <https://theconversation.com/american-environmentalisms-racist-roots-have-shaped-global-thinking-about-conservation-143783>. Pp.~5
- Rockström, J., Gupta, J., Qin, D. *et al.* Safe and Just Earth System Boundaries. *Nature* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-023-06083-8> [Technocratic Piece on Climate Justice]

Blaming Capitalism?

- Foster, John Bellamy. 2021. "The Capitalinian: The First Geological Age of the Anthropocene," *Monthly Review*, 73(4): 1-16. Pp. 16
- Harvey, David. 2004. "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession." *Socialist Register*, 40: 71-90 [63-87]. Pp. 19
- Patel, Raj and Jason W. Moore. 2017. *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature and the Future of the Planet*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 - "Cheap Nature," pp. 44-63. Pp. 19 [Should have used Introduction – if anything. This is not really good for this class.]

Research Methods as Causal Frames

- Burowoy, Michael. 2009. *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, One Theoretical Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Burawoy, Michael. 1998. The Extended Case Method. *Sociological Theory* 16(1): 4-33. Pp. 29
- Bhaskar, Roy. 1975. *Realist Theory of Science*. London: Verso.
 - Introduction & Ch. 1: Philosophy and Scientific Realism, pp. 12-62. Pp. 50

The Bases of Ethics and Morality – of Good and Evil

This section will introduce the notion of a social contract – some agreements among people that make for a world of respect and reciprocity. It will explore how a social contract reconfigures the notion of causality from that of the natural sciences (where what did not happen cannot be cause) to that of the social sciences.

Readings or a section on Social Contracts – the Shoulds to which we submit and that discipline us.

- The article on the gardener – did he cause the flowers to die or did Obama?
- Hobbs
- Arendt
- Lara, Maria (2001). *Rethinking Evil: Contemporary Perspectives*. University of California Press.
- Wrangham, Richard (2019). *The Goodness Paradox: The Strange Relationship Between Virtue and Violence in Human Evolution*. New York: Random House.

On Legitimacy

When asked what to read on Legitimacy, Christian Lund gave this reply:

This is not easy. But let me say a few things.

Legitimacy is always contextual. There is no transcendental legitimacy, so you need to know the important values in society in question (status, what is honorable, what is good and worthy, what holds value, etc). This is always equivocal. This means that it is futile to ask if some claim or other is legitimate. You cannot tell, and it is not your job. It is always better to ask how a particular claim is legitimated. With this question, it is possible to go through some of the texts you have already read, and ask this question. Maybe read a few books on the society you want to work on and see how different claims are underpinned or justified with reference to religion, tradition, the business form, expediency, development, modernity, the mores of society, and so on. Do this first.

There is a very good text by Carola Lentz (1998). We make reference to it in the attachment. She uses legitimacy in an easy and good way.

Otherwise, I suggest you do read some Weber from *Economy and Society*. It is in his ideal typical style, but it is a foundational text, and when would you read it otherwise. Weber connects this to rationalities. If you want to remain in the Frankfurt School a little, Habermas' *Legitimation Crisis* is worth a couple of hours. As is Honneth: (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

That would be enough German to start with.

Powers of Exclusion by Hall, Hirsch and Li, has some useful thoughts. Li's paper on the 'tribal slot' is also very good (attached).

Bourdieu also comes to mind. He is not working directly on legitimacy, but his idea that we possess different quantities of different capitals includes 'cultural capital' which is in same greater family of concepts influencing behaviour and relations.

Mary Douglas' *How Institutions Think* is very good. It is a little dry, but chapter 4 is very good. She argues that institutions work by analogy – they must refer to or resemble something we know and appreciate already. And best of all, if institutions have an axiomatic quality, i.e. no one knows where the values come from – they are just there as natural features of society (like private property, justice, religion, nationalism, and so on).

Eventually, you may run into Gramsci. His idea of hegemony as a form of generalized consent, is very much rubbing shoulders with the whole legitimation question. But I suggest you leave him for a little later.

Otherwise, browse Ernest Gellner, Norbert Elias, EP Thompson, Charles Tilly, Catherine Boone,

Three relevant pieces:

- Sikor, Thomas and Christian Lund. 2009. "Access and Property: A Question of Power and Authority," *Development and Change*, 40(1): 1–22 (2009).
- Li, Tania Murray. 2000. "Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42(1): 149-179.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1985. "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Social Science Information*, 42(2): 195-220.

General Readings on Moral Philosophy

Garvey, James. 2008. *The Ethics of Climate Change: Right and Wrong in a Warming World*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

- We can consider morality as merely those values passed on to us by our parents and communities. I was taught not to steal. I was taught stealing is bad. We can also consider morals to be a cultural inheritance from the long evolution of arrangements of sociality that allow for productive co-existence. They can be viewed as the evolution of principals that allow continued peaceful production and reproduction – respect authority, violence is only justified in self-defense, etc. All of these can be considered as moral codes that do not require reasoned foundations. Some even take them to be genetic – the selfish gene. They are taken as tenets as they are functional and viewed as stemming from practice and belief. These taken codes, however, do not preclude reasoned explanation of these codes or of new codes and principles that may also be functional and rational.
- We can follow moral commands. But they become part of our human nature when we reason them and have a foundational justification that makes sense to us. Thought is what is fundamental to being human (Chomsky predicates this on our having language – a unique characteristic of humans).
- They can also be seen as the will of an external force – the strong or God or whatnot, even genes or culture. In short, they are a ‘given’. Here the individual has purposes and objectives only within the context of a greater imposed order or scheme. Morality is an imposed set of rules.
- The question of how far we must go with ‘reason’ or with process tracing for the linking of cause to outcomes is pertinent here. We can ask what is the basis of a moral position – not harming the innocent. This may be that it is not just. What then is justice? Why does it matter that someone is innocent? We can spiral downward forever finding reason for each sub-position. This is also true of causality of damages or explanations of historical outcomes. There are always antecedents. How far do we go? If all historical events have preceding cause, and all justifications have tenets that require justification, then how far must we go? I give this one answer myself. You go as far back as you have time and energy to go. Then you come back to the present moment or decision and you act.

General Readings on Vulnerability Indicators

- Painter, M. A., Shah, S. H., Damestoit, G.G, Khalid, F.G, Prudencio, W.G, Chisty, M. A.G, TormosAponte, F., and Wilhelmi, O. 2024. “A Systematic Scoping Review of the Social Vulnerability Index as Applied to Natural Hazards.” *Natural Hazards*, 120, 7265-7356. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-023-06378-z>. [A solid review of the literature.]

Annex C: University-Wide Policies You Should be Familiar With

Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the university's Academic Integrity Code. By registering for this course, students have acknowledged their awareness of the Academic Integrity Code and they are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly and disciplinary action will be taken should violations occur. This includes cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism.

Defining and Reporting Discrimination and Harassment (Title IX)

American University expressly prohibits any form of discrimination and discriminatory harassment including sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution that operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. AU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status, an individual's genetic information, or any other bases under federal or local laws in its programs and activities.

As a faculty member, I am required to report discriminatory or harassing conduct to the university if I witness it or become aware of it – regardless of the location of the incident. There are four confidential resource on campus if you wish to speak to someone who is not required to report: Counseling Center, victim advocates in OASIS, medical providers in the Student Health Center, and ordained clergy in the Kay Spiritual Life Center. If you experience any of the above, you have the option of filing a report with [University Police](#) (202-885-2527), the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) (dos@american.edu or 202-885-3300), or the [Title IX Office](#) (202-885-3373 or TitleIX@american.edu). For more information, including a list of supportive resources on and off-campus, contact OASIS (oasis@american.edu or 202-885-7070) or check out the [Support Guide on the Title IX webpage](#).

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency, American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the University be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or the use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending

SISU 620 31

on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU email and Canvas, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any emergency-related absence. Students are responsible for checking their AU email regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of an emergency, students should refer to the AU Student Portal, the [AU website](#), and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college specific information.

Incomplete Policy

At the discretion of the faculty member and before the end of the semester, the grade of I (Incomplete) may be given to a student who, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete the course during the semester. The grade of Incomplete may be given only if the student is receiving a passing grade for the coursework completed. Students on academic probation may not receive an Incomplete. The instructor must provide in writing to the student the conditions, which are described below, for satisfying the Incomplete and must enter those same conditions when posting the grades for the course. The student is responsible for verifying that the conditions were entered correctly.

Conditions for satisfying the Incomplete must include what work needs to be completed, when the work must be completed, and what the course grade will be if the student fails to complete that work. At the latest, any outstanding coursework must be completed before the end of the following semester, absent an agreement to the contrary. Instructors will submit the grade of I and the aforementioned conditions to the Office of the University Registrar when submitting all other final grades for the course. If the student does not meet the conditions, the Office of the University Registrar will assign the default grade automatically.

The Associate Dean of the Academic Unit, with the concurrence of the instructor, may grant an extension beyond the agreed deadline, but only in extraordinary circumstances. Incomplete courses may not be retroactively dropped. An Incomplete may not stand as a permanent grade and must be resolved before a degree can be awarded.

Student Code of Conduct

The central commitment of American University is the development of thoughtful, responsible human beings in the context of a challenging yet supportive academic community. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) is designed to benefit the American University community and to assist in forming the highest standards of ethics and morals among its members. By registering for this course, students have acknowledged their awareness of the Student Code of Conduct and they are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code.

Religious Observances

Students will be provided the opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance, provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. Please send this notification through email to the professor. For additional information, see American University's [religious observances policy](#).

Use of Student Work

The professor will use academic work that you complete for educational purposes in this course during this semester. Your registration and continued enrollment constitute your consent.

Annex D: Academic Support Services You Should be Familiar With

Academic Support

All students may take advantage of the [Academic Support and Access Center \(ASAC\)](#) for individual academic skills counseling, workshops, Tutoring and Writing Lab appointments, peer tutor referrals, and Supplemental Instruction. The ASAC is located in Mary Graydon Center 243.

Additional academic support resources available at AU include the Bender Library, the Department of Literature's Writing Center (located in the Library), the Math Lab in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics, and the Center for Language Exploration, Acquisition, & Research (CLEAR) in Anderson Hall, Room B-10I. A more complete list of campus-wide resources is available in the ASAC.

International Student & Scholar Services

[International Student & Scholar Services](#) has resources to support academic success and participation in campus life including academic counseling, support for second language learners, response to questions about visas, immigration status and employment and intercultural programs, clubs and other campus resources. (202-885-3350, Butler Pavilion 410).

Writing Center

The [Writing Center](#) offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address your assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. (202-885-2991, Bender Library – 1st Floor Commons).

Annex E: Student Support Services You Should be Familiar With

Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI)

[CDI](#) is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, multicultural, first-generation, and women's experiences on campus and to advancing AU's commitment to respecting and valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. It is located on the 2nd floor of Mary Graydon Center (202-885-3651, MGC 201 & 202).

Counseling Center

The [Counseling Center](#) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources. (202-885-3500, MGC 214).

Dean of Students Office

The [Dean of Students Office](#) offers individual meetings to discuss issues that impact the student experience, including academic, social, and personal matters; making referrals to appropriate campus resources for resolution. Additionally, while academic regulations state that medical absences are to be excused, if faculty require documentation to verify the student's explanation, such documentation should be submitted to the Dean of Students. The office will then receive the documentation and verify the medical excuse. Faculty have the discretion to approve absences and do not need permission from the Dean of Students to excuse absences. Students should be sent to the Dean of Students only if faculty require further proof or if they have concerns about the impact of absences on the student's ability to succeed (202-885-3300, Butler Pavilion 408).

Food and Housing Insecurity Statement

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the [Dean of Students](#) (dos@american.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

Office of Advocacy Services for Interpersonal and Sexual Violence

[OASIS](#) provides free and confidential advocacy services for students who have experienced sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, sexual harassment, and/or stalking. Please email or call to schedule an appointment with a victim advocate in OASIS. (oasis@american.edu, 202-885-7070, Health Promotion and Advocacy Center – Hughes Hall 105). Students can also book an appointment with one of our two confidential victim advocates.

Respect for Diversity

As stated in the [American University Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy](#):

"American University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution that operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy or parenting, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status, an individual's genetic information or any other bases under applicable federal and local laws and regulations (collectively "Protected Bases") in its programs and activities. The University expressly prohibits any form of discriminatory harassment including sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and stalking."

The above website includes further details, including how to report instances of discrimination and your responsibilities as a member of the campus community in relation to the policy; you are strongly encouraged to familiarize yourself further with this policy.

Class rosters and University data systems are provided to faculty with the student's legal name and legal gender marker. As a student, you are able to change how your preferred/proper name shows up through email, Canvas, and on your AU ID Card. This option is helpful for various student populations, including but not limited to: students who abbreviate their first name; students who use their middle name; international students; and transgender students. As a faculty member, I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns. We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you. Should you want to update your preferred/proper name, you can do so by looking at the [guidelines and frequently asked questions](#) from the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

Students with Disabilities

If you wish to receive accommodations for a disability, please notify me with a letter from the Academic Support and Access Center. As accommodations are not retroactive, timely notification at the beginning of the semester, if possible, is strongly recommended. To register with a disability or for questions about disability accommodations, contact the Academic Support and Access Center at 202-885-3360 or asac@american.edu, or drop by MGC 243. For more information, visit AU's [Disability Accommodations web page](#).

Annex F: What is a Capstone Course

The official description is: The capstone course is specifically designed to provide the summative academic experience for our undergraduate students. The capstone affords them the opportunity to sum up their accumulated learning. A Senior Capstone class should itself be integrative, as well as giving students the opportunity to work on a summative project of their own: readings should draw on international studies broadly understood, assembling whatever conceptual pieces are needed to make sense of the topic of the class, regardless of subfield, thematic area, discipline, or whatever. Professors should be bold, demanding, but supportive and fair in their design of these peak SIS undergraduate experiences. Capstone projects should be designed to enable students to integrate their previous coursework and allow them to demonstrate the skills and competencies that they have gained during their time with us. For some students this may be a research paper; for others, a documentary film; for still others, a piece of international service on which they reflect in a systematic way. Capstone courses are topical, much like First Year Seminars; they are not specifically tied to any thematic area, and they have as their prerequisite only the successful completion of at least one of the 300-level core courses in one of the thematic areas, and the successful completion of the second-level methodology requirement through SISU-306 Topics in IR Research or an approved equivalent, so that the student will have had the experience of doing some original research in an upper-division course before plunging into the capstone course.

Capstone Courses officially have the following two learning outcomes:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking as evidenced through both written work and oral presentation.
2. Understand and apply theories and models drawn from appropriate disciplines, including political science, history, and economics to international affairs.

I approach the capstone experience by giving you readings and assignments that bring theory and practice together in both oral presentation and in a written term paper.

Endnotes: Recommended Additional Readings

¹ Additional Readings on Causality as a Special Category

- Wilkinson, Iain. 2010. *Risk, Vulnerability and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge.
- Wilkinson, Iain. 2020. "The Sociological Problem of Suffering: Ever More Exacerbated and Confounding." In Rowland Atkinson and Dan Goodley (eds.) *Humanity Under Duress*. Multiple Press, Sheffield, UK, pp. 61-63. ISBN 978-1-916342-70-5. Pp. 5
- Wilkinson, Iain M. 2017. "Social Suffering and Public Value: A Spur to New Projects of Social Inquiry and Social Care," in A. Lindgreen, N. Koenig-Lewis, M. Kitchener, J. Brewer, M. Moore and T. Meynhardt (eds.) *Public Value: Deepening, Enriching, and Broadening the Theory and Practice*, London: Routledge, pp. 75-86. ISBN 978-1-138-05966-5. E-ISBN 978-1-315-16343-7. ([KAR id:65223](#)). Pp. 11 [OK, but not worth

² Recommended Readings on Causes and Theorizing of Famine:

- de Waal, Alex. 1989. *Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 - Ch. 1, "'Famine' in English" pp. 9-32. Pp. 23
- de Waal, Alex. 1997. *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*. Oxford: James Curry.
 - Intro. Pp. 1-6. Pp. 6
 - Ch. 1: Rights and Entitlements, Pp. 7-25. Pp. 18
- Edkins, Jenny. 2002. "Mass Starvations and the Limits of Famine Theorizing," *IDS Bulletin* 33(4): 12-18. Pp. 6 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2002.tb00039.x>
- Edkins, J. 2000. *Whose Hunger Concepts of Famine, Practices of Aid*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1997. La précarité est aujourd'hui partout : Intervention lors des Rencontres européennes contre la précarité. Grenoble. 12-13 décembre 1997. *Contre-feux*, Ed. Liber Raisons d'agir, Grenoble. [available online : http://natlex.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_161352.pdf]. Pp. 2
 - Read this too with an eye to how the idea of precarity helps us understand the causes of vulnerability as structural.
- Orjuela, Camilla & Swati Parashar. 2024. "Memory and Justice after Famines: an introduction," *Third World Quarterly*, 45(2): 247-258, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2023.2236954. Pp. 11
- Jennifer Clapp & William G. Moseley. 2020. "This food crisis is different: COVID-19 and the fragility of the neoliberal food security order," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 47:7, 1393-1417, DOI: [10.1080/03066150.2020.1823838](https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2020.1823838). Pp. 24
- Jisheng, Yang. 2012. *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine 1959–1962*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

³ Recommended Readings on Capabilities:

- Sen, Amartya. 1984. Rights and capabilities. In: A. Sen (ed). *Resources, values and development*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 307-24. Pp. 18
- Sen, Amartya. 1997. "Editorial: Human Capital and Human Capability." *World Development* 25(12): 1959-1961. Pp. 3
- Bebbington, Anthony. 1999. Capitals and Capabilities: A framework for analysing peasant viability, rural livelihoods and poverty. *World Development*, 27(12), 2021-44. Pp. 24

⁴ Consider also:

- Sen, Amartya. 1977. In *Cambridge Journal of Economics*. Vol. 1. [origin of the above piece], Intro to Drèze and Sen could be good here.
- Sen, Amartya. 1980. "Famines," *World Development* 8(9): 613–621.

⁵ On China's Great Famine see:

- Also see Jisheng, Yang. 2012. *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine 1959–1962*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

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- Mirsky, Jonathan. 2012. "Unnatural Disaster," A review. NYT. Review of Yang 2012. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/09/books/review/tombstone-the-great-chinese-famine-1958-1962-by-yang-iisheng.html#:~:text=In%20%E2%80%9CTombstone%2C%E2%80%9D%20an%20eye,then%20comes%20to%2076%20million.%E2%80%9D>.

⁶ Further Recommended Readings

Recommended Readings on Unnatural Disasters: Dust Bowl and Katrina

- Cronon, William. 1992. "A place for stories: Nature, history, and narrative," *The Journal of American History*, 1347-76. Pp. 29
- Smith, Neil. 2006. "There is no such thing as a natural disaster," on SSRN's website on Understanding Katrina: <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/>. [or <https://items.ssrc.org/understanding-katrina/theres-no-such-thing-as-a-natural-disaster/>] Pp. 4
- Bullard, Robert D. and Beverly Wright. 2009. "Introduction," pp. 1-14 in *Race, Place and Environmental Justice After Hurricane Katrina: Struggles to Reclaim, Rebuild, and Revitalize New Orleans and the Gulf Coast*. Boulder: Westview Press. Pp. 14
- Abatzoglou, John T., and A. Park Williams. 2016. "Impact of anthropogenic climate change on wildfire across western US forests," *PNAS* 113(42):11770–11775. Pp. 5
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