

Syllabus: GMU Honors 131-002; Elimination of Global Hunger: Problems, Progress, and Challenges; Spring Semester 2017

Course, Time and Location:

Professor

Honors 131-002

Phil Thomas, 2nd Floor Mason Hall

Mon & Weds: 9:00 -10:15 AM

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Thompson Hall L004

Office Hours: 10:30 – 12 PM ; M & W

Background: Chronic hunger is one of the most critical problems confronting the global community. Despite numerous efforts over the past 60 years, its elimination remains elusive. Today, over 800 million people are chronically malnourished. Hunger is number one on the list of the world's top 10 health risks. It kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. Missing out on essential nutrients in 1000 days from conception to a child's second birthday translates into irreversible damage to cognitive and physical development. Global hunger is a major foreign policy issue affecting national security and economic development. The global community needs to increase food production by at least 60 percent by 2050 to meet the needs of an anticipated global population of 9.5 billion people all while facing increasing pressures on land and water resources as well as a changing climate.

Objectives: In this class we will identify and examine the many causes of global hunger, its effects, progress, and challenges. This course will: 1) address the nature and scope of global food insecurity from a cross-cutting multidisciplinary perspective (human rights, gender, age, health, nutrition, land rights , water access, governance, finance, agricultural policy , and conflict) ; 2) assess hunger's impact on people, nation states, and the entire international community; 3) analyze the interrelationship between food assistance, food security, and national security; 4) review U.S. Government anti-hunger policies and programs designed to achieve global food security; and 5) examine challenges confronting the attainment of global food security (lack of political will, climate change, urbanization, inadequate agricultural production, *and post-harvest food losses*). This course is a broad based interdisciplinary review of global hunger and food insecurity. It is designed to provide a comprehensive perspective on food insecurity as a multi-dimensional challenge to the global community. We will assess why global hunger is so difficult to resolve despite the multitude of resources available to society.

Required Texts

- A)** Gordon Conway, *One Billion Hungry: Can We Feed The World The World?* (Cornell University Press, 2012 ISBN978-0-8014-7802 (pbk.)

B) Christopher B. Barrett and Daniel G. Maxwell, *Food Aid After Fifty Years: Recasting Its Role* (Routledge, 2005 ISBN-0-415-70125-2 (pbk.))

Recommended Texts/Readings Recommended readings include texts, research publications, and a variety of written documents available in print and online to enhance understanding of global hunger and food security issues. A list of these assorted publications is provided in a separate document.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING **1) Attendance, Readings, and Discussions (35 %)**. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students should come to class having completed assigned readings and prepared to engage in a lively discussion of key global food security issues and readings assigned for the week. Throughout the semester students will be expected to actively participate in a variety of in-class projects involving role playing, debating, and other forms of creative interaction addressing a variety of critical global food security issues. Emphasis in all aspects of this course is on **Critical Thinking.** **2) Midterm (20 %)** A short take-home mid-term will cover material from the first half of the course. **3) Research Paper (35%)**: Each Student will submit a ten-page research paper on the relevant global food security topic of his or her choice. The research paper will be an objective evidence-based analysis demonstrating critical thinking skills. The research paper will include findings, conclusions and recommendations. We will discuss potential topics and strategies in class. **Oral Presentation (10 %)** In lieu of a final examination, we will meet to allow students to orally present the substantive messages of their written research paper to the class.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1	Topic	Readings
Jan 23	Intro to the Challenge of Global Hunger	Thomas: June 2014 Article
Jan 25	Intro to the Challenge of Global Hunger	Conway pp 3-20
Week 2		
Jan 30	The many dimensions of Global Hunger	Conway pp 21-40;
Feb 1	The political economy of Food Security	Conway pp 41 -63
Week 3		
Feb 6	The Right To Food: A Basic Human Right?	UN FAO Website
Feb 8	Food Aid Convention: Political Will?	Food Aid Convent Site

Week 4	Topic	Readings
Feb 13	The essence of Food Aid: Assistance vs. Self-Interest	Barrett pp 1-17
Feb 15	Donor-Oriented Food Aid: Assistance vs. Self Interest	Barrett pp 18- 51

(RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSALS DUE IN CLASS FEB 15)

Week 5

Feb 20	Multilateral & Bilateral Donors: Rhetoric vs. Reality	Barrett pp 51-67
Feb 22	U.S. Food Aid: Who Benefits? The Iron Triangle	Barrett pp 68 - 107

Week 6

Feb 27	Food Aid & Food Insecurity: A Band Aid on Cancer	Barrett pp 107 - 138
Mar 1	Food Aid & Food Insecurity: A Band Aid on Cancer	Barrett pp 139 - 193
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Week 7

Mar 6	Conflict and Global Hunger: A toxic Relationship	UN WFP Website
Mar 8	Conflict and Global Hunger: A Toxic Relationship	NGO Websites

(TAKE-HOME MID-TERM DUE March 8)

Week 8 Mar 13 & 15 Spring Break (March 13-19))

Week 9

Mar 20	US Feed the Future Initiative: A New Start	USAID's FTF Website
Mar 23	US Feed the Future Initiative: A New Start	USAID's FTF Website

Week 10

Mar 27	NGO's/ UN & Global Hunger: Is There Commitment?	UN & NGO websites
Mar 27	NGO's/ UN & Global Hunger: Is There Commitment?	UN & NGO websites

(RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS MARCH 27)

Week 11	Topic	Readings
Apr 3	Priv/Pub Partners & Global Hunger: Do They Work?	USAID's New Alliance
Apr 5	Priv/Pub Partners & Global Hunger: Do They Work?	USAID's New Alliance
Week 12		
Apr 10	Hunger:, Conflict , and National Security	USG,UN WFP & FAO,
Apr 12	Hunger, Conflict, and National Security	NGO & Think Tanks
Week 13		
Apr 17	Hunger Nutrition/ Gender/Health Issues: Challenges	US,UN, & NGO Sites
Apr 19	Hunger Nutrition/Gender/ Health Issues: Challenges	US,UN & NGO Sites
Week 14		
Apr 24	Increasing Food; Climate, GMO's & Food losses	Conway pp 85 -143
Apr 26	Increasing Food: Climate, GMO's & food losses	Conway pp 286 - 305
Week 15		
May 1	New 2016 Global Food Security Act & UN Sustainable	Conway pp 329-348
May 3	Development Goals: A New Food Security Agenda	Barrett pp 194 - 253
Week 16		
May 9 & 10	(PRESENTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH IN LIEU OF FINAL EXAM)	

INSTRUCTOR

Phil Thomas is an Adjunct Professor at GMU's School of Policy, Government and International Affairs where he led a Global Food Security Review of the impact of food aid reform on the U.S. shipping industry issued in June 2015. He is a retired Assistant Director with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) where he directed reviews of U.S. International Food Assistance, Global Food Security Programs, and UN operations resulting in many U.S government and UN reforms. Phil did undergraduate work at the University of Virginia and has an M.A. and B.A. in International Affairs from California State University in Sacramento. He is also a Navy Veteran, former Vice Mayor of Falls Church, Va., and investigative reporter with The California Journal.

