

University of Toronto
Department of Geography and School of the Environment
JGE 1425H: Livelihoods, Poverty and Environment in the Global South
Fall 2018



Time: Tuesdays 12-2 PM
Location: SS 5016

Instructor: Christian Abizaid
Office: Sidney Smith Hall, 5055
Office hours: Tues. 2:15-4:15 , or by appointment
Email: christian.abizaid@utoronto.ca
Tel: 416-978-3373

Overview

The livelihoods of the rural poor in the developing world are closely connected to the environment. Hundreds of millions of people, including many indigenous and folk peoples, rely directly upon natural resources, at least in part, for their subsistence and often for market income. For many of them, access to natural resources is a matter of survival – of life or death, a way of life, or the hope for a better future for them or their children. Although the livelihoods of these peoples are sometimes regarded as having a negative impact on the environment, more recently, traditional peoples are being heralded as models for biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use. A better understanding of how the rural poor make a living — their livelihoods — is considered key to securing their rights, to address issues of poverty and sustainability, and also for environmental change mitigation and adaptation. This course seeks to develop an understanding of livelihoods among the poor in developing countries, with a focus on how assets, social relations, and institutions shape livelihood opportunities in the present and into the future. More broadly, attention will be paid to the ways in which livelihoods are connected to the environment, but also to economic and political processes, in order to gain insight on their potential for poverty alleviation, sustainable resource use, and environmental change mitigation/adaptation. The course will also explore emerging areas of inquiry in livelihoods research.

Course requirements

Reading responses: In addition to completing the readings in preparation for our weekly seminar, you will be asked to write a short commentary (250-500 words) on the readings for four of the weeks during the term — you can select which weeks. Commentaries should reflect upon and evaluate the ideas and arguments in the readings, and comment on their relevance or implications, new insights you have gained, or questions that they raise for you. These responses should discuss the readings for a given week in an integrative way (i.e., make connections between the readings of the week, or with others read earlier in the course). Students must submit the responses electronically via email with text embedded in your email (no attachments please) no later than 10:00 AM on the day before the seminar (i.e., Monday). Issues raised in the responses will be incorporated into the discussions of the week and thus, I need some time to read them in order to prepare. As a result, late submissions will not be graded. For weeks in which you are not preparing a response, you are expected to submit two questions pertaining to the readings for discussion (also due by 10: 00 AM, Monday). Once received, responses and questions will be anonymized and posted on the course's QUERCUS. Students are expected to read them in advance of the seminar.

Critical article review: Students will select a research paper from a list provided by the instructor and prepare a written critical review; the review will be briefly presented in class on Oct. 16. Written reviews should be no longer than 4 pages (double spaced) submitted in hard copy and are due at the beginning of class on October 16. Format for presentations will be discussed later in the term. No reading response is required that week.

Participation: As a graduate seminar, students are expected to do the assigned readings in advance and be prepared to actively participate in class discussions throughout the term. Participation will be graded based upon the quality of contribution to discussions and on the extent to which students demonstrate that they prepared the assigned readings and engaged with the materials and issues discussed in class.

Seminar presentation: Each student will be asked to introduce at least one of the weekly seminars during the term -- tentative dates are marked in the proposed schedule below. You will work alone or in pairs to create a 15 minute presentation that provides general background on the topic for the week, situating the readings within the literature. Please note that this implies some additional research. In addition to the presentation, you will need to prepare 4-5 questions to be considered for discussion. A sign-up sheet will be circulated before Sept. 18; dates will be assigned on a first-come first-serve basis. Details will be discussed in class.

Term paper idea: A one-paragraph description of your proposed topic for the paper. This brief paragraph will serve as a way to introduce your idea, as well as to get early feedback before you start doing the work. Term paper ideas are due before class on Oct. 9; hard-copy or electronic submissions via **QUERCUS** are welcome.

Term paper proposal: This is a 1-2 page submission that outlines the topic/issue to be addressed, why it is important, how you are going to address it, and its expected outcomes. Proposals are due electronically through QUERCUS by 11:59 PM on Nov. 11. Students will be asked to read 1-2 proposals from their peers and provide feedback.

Term paper: A term paper on a topic/issue of your choice, but related to this course. I encourage you to try to work on a topic that is somehow linked with livelihoods/poverty/environment, but also to incorporate your own interests. This will make for better and more engaged (and engaging) papers, from which you will benefit more fully. These papers may be useful for you in the preparation of your research proposal, thesis, or a manuscript for publication. A term paper can take two forms: a research paper or a review paper, and should be 20-25 pages (double-spaced, plus bibliography). Papers are due via QUERCUS by 11:59 PM on Dec. 10.

Proposed schedule*

Date	Topic	Student presentations	Observations
Sept 11	Introduction		
Sept 18	Conceptualizing the livelihoods of the poor		Presentation sign-up
Sept 25	<i>It is about what the poor have</i> : Asset-based approaches to livelihood analysis	***	
Oct 2	Poverty and livelihood diversification	***	
Oct 9	<i>Access</i> : Entitlements, institutions and livelihoods		Term paper idea due
Oct 16	Gender and livelihoods		Article review due; no reading response
Oct 23	Livelihoods and markets	***	
Oct 30	Breaking the urban-rural divide: multi-sited livelihoods	***	
Nov 6	<i>FALL READING WEEK—NO CLASS</i>		Term paper proposal due Nov. 11
Nov 13	Social networks and rural livelihoods		
Nov 20	Livelihoods and conservation	***	
Nov 27	Livelihoods vulnerability and resilience	***	
Dec 4	Course wrap up		
Dec 11			Term paper due Dec. 10

Notes:* Students will be notified of any changes in advance, should they occur.

Course Evaluation

Four reading responses 20% (5% each)

Critical article review (including short presentation) 10%. Due Oct. 16

Participation in class 20%

Seminar presentation 5%

Term paper idea & proposal 10%.

Idea due: Oct. 9

Proposal due: Nov. 11, by 11:59 PM

Term paper 35%, due: Dec. 10, by 11:59 PM

Readings

A list of required readings will be posted on **QUERCUS**. Actual readings will be available to you electronically via links to the library, or through the course's **QUERCUS**. Alternative arrangements will be made for readings not available in electronic format.

Policy on late assignments

Work submitted late will be accepted with a 5% daily penalty (including weekend days), up to seven days after the due date.

QUERCUS

A **QUERCUS** has been set for this course. Readings, assignment guidelines, reading responses/questions for discussion, and other useful materials will be posted on it. **QUERCUS** will also be used by the instructor to communicate with seminar participants. Please make sure to check it regularly.

Communication with the instructor

My preference is to meet with you in person. My designated office hours is a block of time in which I am available to discuss with you course-related matters (for the hours, see the first page of the syllabus). It is time set aside for you -- take advantage of it! Appointments may also be set for students who cannot come during scheduled office hours. For urgent matters or simple questions, you may also contact me via email, but **the rule of thumb is that email should not be a substitute for office hours**. Depending on the situation/issue, I may ask you to come to office hours or set up a meeting in person. Please note that I am not online 24/7 and thus may not be able to respond to your messages right away. I try to check my email regularly and will make an effort to respond to you within 48 hours, but it will take longer during weekends as I deliberately remain offline to spend time with my family.

Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> You may also want to contact Accessibility Services Office if you have problems arising from chronic issues or injuries sustained during the term that affect your ability to do tests or course work.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of citation. Quotation marks are required when using an author's words. Students also should not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. For further information please consult the "Rules and Regulations" section of the Arts and Science Calendar ([http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules & Regulations.html](http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules%20&%20Regulations.html)) and

check the 'How not to plagiarize' website at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be addressed in accordance with the procedure established by the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*.

Useful Library and Writing Resources

UofT School of Graduate Studies- ELWS: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/GCAC.aspx>

UofT Writing: <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/> ; <http://writing.utoronto.ca/support/english-language-support/>

Green course

This course has been recognized as a green course by the Sustainability Office. Green courses are intended to reduce paper use. Assignments are to be submitted electronically, unless otherwise noted; I will do my best to grade them electronically as well. Students are encouraged to conserve paper by limiting their printing of course materials whenever possible.