

**SYLLABUS**  
**GROWING DIVERSITY: COFFEE ECOLOGIES & LIVELIHOODS**  
**(PSS 095)**  
**FALL 2007**

**Instructors**

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**OVERVIEW**

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This course presents an overview of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of coffee production, commercialization and consumption. Specifically, we will cover the following topics: 1) How coffee is produced and the challenges and opportunities that affect the livelihoods of coffee producers; 2) How coffee is marketed in the global economy, including a comparison of conventional and alternative markets (fair trade, organic, shade grown, etc.); 3) The opportunities and challenges to integrate coffee production with environmental conservation initiatives.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

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Required Textbook (forthcoming in January 2008, but the publisher has given us permission to use all the chapters in pdf format)

Bacon, C., V. E. Méndez, S. R. Gliessman, D. Goodman & J. A. Fox (eds.) (2008)  
*Confronting the coffee crisis: sustaining livelihoods and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. Food, Energy and Environment Series. MIT Press:  
Cambridge, MA, USA.

Other selected articles or book chapters.

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

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This course will be divided into instructor and guest lectures, and some field trips (budget depending).

### ***Teams***

The class will be divided into teams that will prepare a group presentation on a selected topic. These teams will also serve as a support network to write individual research papers, by sharing sources, discussing topics and ideas.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

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### **Three-step Individual Research Paper (3 assignments in 1!)**

#### ***Step 1: Choosing a Research Paper Topic.* DUE DATE: September 24**

Choose a preliminary topic for your assignments, which is relevant to the course (IE: International Ag Markets, Social Justice in Ag, Ag and the Environment), and turn it in along with a brief description (1-2 paragraphs) and a short list of potential references. The idea is that by encouraging you to choose your topic early, it will help you focus, and to begin working on assignments that will lead you into writing your Final Research Paper.

#### ***Step 2: Bibliography Homework.* DUE DATE: October 22 .**

The homework consists of doing a literature search of scientific articles and other references, on your preliminary topic for your research paper (Step 1). The search focuses on using the Web of Science and Biosis Previews article databases. The end result will be a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 references to start reading and reviewing for your research paper. At least 5 of the 10 references will be peer-reviewed, journal articles found through Web of Science or Biosis Previews. The other 5 can be books or book chapters. You may include additional sources in your final bibliography (no limit!), but you will need a minimum of 10, 5 of which are journal articles.

#### ***Step 3: Research Paper.* DUE DATE: December 3**

The research paper should present a critical review of the literature on a selected topic related to the course. Your paper should include at least: 1) a description of your chosen topic; 2) a critical discussion of the existing literature on the topic; 3) key questions/issues/problems related to this topic; 4) future directions based on your literature review. For example, is what you found insufficient? Is there a lot of literature, but incomplete? Is more research necessary? If so, in what areas? 5) relevance of your topic to agroecology.

The research paper will be 6-10 pages in length, double spaced, and 12 pt font (between 2500-3500 words), not including the Literature Cited section.

The paper will have a minimum of 10 references, and at least 5 of these will be research articles. Please cite references as follows:

*Journal Articles:*

Perfecto, I. & R. Snelling (1995) *Biodiversity and the transformation of a tropical agroecosystem - ants in coffee plantations*. *Ecological Applications* 5 (4):1084-1097.

*Books:*

Gliessman, S. R. (1998) *Agroecology: ecological processes in sustainable agriculture*. Ann Arbor Press: Ann Arbor, MI, USA.

*Edited Books:*

Schroth, G., G. Foseca, C. A. Harvey, C. Gascon, H. Vasconcelos & A. M. N. Izac (eds.) (2004) *Agroforestry and biodiversity conservation in tropical landscapes*. Island Press: Washington, D.C.

*Chapters in Edited Books:*

Rocheleau, D. E. (1999) *Confronting complexity, dealing with difference: social context, content and practice in agroforestry*. pp. 191-236. In L. E. Buck, J. P. Lassoie & E. C. M. Fernandes (eds.) *Agroforestry in sustainable agricultural systems*. Lewis Press: Boca Raton, FL, USA.

*Electronic sources:*

IUCN (2002) *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*. <<http://www.redlist.org>> [Date Accessed: August 27, 2003].

**Late Policy**

One point will be deducted from assignments for every day late, up to 3 days after the due date. No papers will be accepted after 3 days.

**Two-step Group Presentations (2 assignments in 1 !)**

*Step 1: Meeting with your teams.* Teams will be randomly assigned. You are encouraged to start meeting with your teams as soon as you know who you are.

*Step 2: Presentation Topic* **DUE DATE: October 15**

The first activity you will do with your team is to choose a presentation topic. We would recommend you choose the topic according to a theme or topic shared in your research papers. By doing related presentations and papers you will save time and energy.

*Step 3: Presentations* **DUE DATE: Sign-up**

Teams will sign up for assigned presentation slots at the end of the semester. You are free to choose your presentation format, which may include powerpoint, guest interviewing, expert panels, etc. However, your proposed media and style need to be approved by the instructors.

## **COURSE LOGISTICS**

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**Location:** Marsh Life Sciences 235

**Meeting Times:** Mondays 5:45 to 8:30 pm

**Instructor Office Hours:**

Ernesto Méndez: M: 1:30-2:30 at Hills 112; T, Th 2:00-3:00 at Bittersweet office (153 So. Prospect Rd.). Office hours are by appointment only. Call or email Sue Bean for an appointment (Tel: 656-4055, email: [sbean@uvm.edu](mailto:sbean@uvm.edu))

Michael Moser: Wed. 2-4 pm, by appointment.

Katlyn Stillings Morris, by appointment

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

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The course evaluation will be based on a total of 100 points, separated into the following:

1. Class attendance & participation (15 points)
2. Choosing Paper & Presentation Topics (2 points extra credit each, if on time)
3. Bibliography Homework (15 points)
4. Midterm Exam (25 points)
5. Research Paper (25 points)
6. Group Presentations (20 points) We can include a group self eval form for this.

## Course Schedule

Week #	Date	Topic	Assignment Due Dates	Readings
1	Aug. 27	Introduction to the course and coffee! (All)		
2	Sept. 10	History, origins and botany of coffee (EM)		1, 2, 3, L
3	Sept. 17	Geography of coffee (MM) Coffee farmer livelihoods: Honduras case study	Groups Assigned	4, 5, L
4	Sept. 24	Agroecology and coffee farmer El Salvador case study (EM)	Research Paper Topic Due	6, 7, 8, L
5	Oct. 1	Political economy of coffee: the coffee commodity/value chain (MM)		9, 10, L
6	Oct. 8	<i>Field trip to coffee roaster &amp; cupper- Waterbury</i>		
7	Oct. 15	Midterm exam	Group Topic Due	
8	Oct. 22	Political economy of coffee: the coffee price crisis - - Video & discussion: Black Gold (EM)	Research Paper Bibliography Due	11, 12
9	Oct. 29	Political economy of coffee: alternative markets, sustainable coffee certifications		13, 14, 15
10	Nov. 5	- Coffee and Environmental Conservation - Environmental certifications		16, 17
11	Nov. 12	- Coffee and the environment: challenges & opportunities		18, 19 L
12	Nov. 19	<i>Guest speaker: Rick Peyser, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters</i>		20
13	Nov. 26	Group Presentations		
14	Dec. 3	Group Presentations - Final discussion and internal evaluation	Research Paper Due	

## **GROWING DIVERSITY: COFFEE ECOLOGIES & LIVELIHOODS READING LIST**

1. **Ch. 1:** Dicum, G. & N. Lottinger (1999) *The coffee book: anatomy of an industry from crop to the last drop*. The New Press: New York.
2. **Introduction (xv-xxi):** Pendergrast, M. (1999) *Uncommon grounds: the history of coffee and how it transformed the world*. Basic Books: New York, NY.
3. **Ch. 1:** Pendergrast, M. (1999) *Uncommon grounds: the history of coffee and how it transformed the world*. Basic Books: New York, NY.
4. **Ch. 2:** Pendergrast, M. (1999) *Uncommon grounds: the history of coffee and how it transformed the world*. Basic Books: New York, NY.
5. Alvarez, Julia. A Cafecito Story.
  
6. Lyngbaek, A. E., R. G. Muschler & F. L. Sinclair (2001) *Productivity and profitability of multistrata organic versus conventional coffee farms in Costa Rica*. *Agroforestry Systems* 53:205-213.
7. Gliessman, S. R. (2008) *Agroecological foundations for designing sustainable coffee agroecosystems*. In C. Bacon, V. E. Méndez, S. R. Gliessman, D. Goodman & J. A. Fox (eds.) *Confronting the coffee crisis: sustaining livelihoods and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. Food, Energy and Environment Series. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.
8. Méndez, V. E. (2008) *Farmer livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in a coffee landscape of El Salvador*. In C. Bacon, V. E. Méndez, S. R. Gliessman, D. Goodman & J. A. Fox (eds.) *Confronting the coffee crisis: sustaining livelihoods and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. Food, Energy and Environment Series. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.
9. Internet readings
  
10. Ponte, S. (2002) *The 'latte revolution'? regulation, markets and consumption in the global coffee chain*. *World Development* 30 (7):1099-1122.
11. Bacon, C. (2005) *Confronting the coffee crisis: can fair trade, organic and specialty coffees reduce small-scale farmer vulnerability in northern Nicaragua*. *World Development* 33 (3):497-511.
12. Petchers, S. & S. Harris (2008) *The roots of the coffee crisis*. In C. Bacon, V. E. Méndez, S. R. Gliessman, D. Goodman & J. A. Fox (eds.) *Confronting the coffee crisis: sustaining livelihoods and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.
13. Reynolds, L. T., D. Murray & A. Heller (2007) *Regulating sustainability in the coffee sector: A comparative analysis of third-party environmental and social certification initiatives*. *Agriculture and Human Values* 24 (2):147-163.
14. Méndez, V. E., C. Bacon, S. Petchers, D. Herrador, C. Carranza, L. Trujillo, C. Guadarrama-Zugasti, A. Córdón & A. Mendoza (2007) *Sustainable coffee from the bottom-up I: effects of certification initiatives on small-scale farmer households of Central America and Mexico*. submitted to *World Development*.  
DOWNLOAD at: [http://repositories.cdlib.org/casfs/rb/brief\\_no6/](http://repositories.cdlib.org/casfs/rb/brief_no6/)

15. Jaffe, R. & C. M. Bacon (2008) *From differentiated coffee markets towards alternative trade and knowledge networks*. pp. In C. Bacon, V. E. Méndez, S. R. Gliessman, D. Goodman & J. A. Fox (eds.) *Confronting the coffee crisis: sustaining livelihoods and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, USA.
16. Perfecto, I. R., R.A., Greenberg, R. Vand der Voort, M. E (1996) *Shade coffee: a disappearing refuge for biodiversity*. *BioScience* 46 (8):598-609.
17. Méndez, V. E., S. R. Gliessman & G. S. Gilbert (2007) *Tree biodiversity in farmer cooperatives of a shade coffee landscape in western El Salvador*. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment* 119 (1-2):145-159.
18. Rappole, J. H., D. I. King & J. H. Vega-Rivera (2003) *Coffee and conservation*. *Conservation Biology* 17 (1):334-336.
19. Philpott, S. M. & T. Dietsch (2003) *Coffee and conservatioin: a global context and the value of farmer involvement*. *Conservation Biology* 17 (6):1844-1846.
20. Grodnik, A. & M. E. Conroy (2007) *Fair trade coffee in the United States: why companies join the movement*. pp. 83-102. In L. T. Reynolds, D. Murray & J. Wilkinson (eds.) *Fair trade: the challenges of transforming globalization*. Routledge: New York, NY.
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