Learning objectives: This course provides a multidisciplinary, comparative, and necessarily eclectic look at rural-urban connections, with an emphasis on the multitudinous transformations that have affected rural areas and peoples in diverse parts of the world. We will attempt to understand how the development of technology and various kinds of markets, states, empires, and industrialism have brought rural peoples into new kinds of relations with each other and with nearby and distant urban areas and social groups. These processes have often involved complicated, interrelated environmental, economic, demographic and cultural changes and violent as well as “everyday” social conflicts. Social scientists and agrarian radicals used to speak of “peasant society” and “the agrarian question.” Our task is to ask not one but many “agrarian questions” and to appreciate what is at stake in debates over urbanization, food and agriculture as well as the tremendous complexity that lies behind the categories that are part of the received social scientific wisdom and our deep-rooted common sense – whether “urban,” “rural,” “peasants,” “landowners,” “traditional culture,” or “food.”

Course requirements include:

1. Active participation in all class discussions (16% of course grade). I take this requirement very seriously. Participation will be judged by level of preparation, intellectual engagement in class discussions, and generosity to other students. Students must come to class having completed all assigned reading and prepared to discuss it in detail. Please consider that the only way to not participate actively and achieve a “B” grade is if you achieve an “A” on every other assignment and examination (which for non-participators is nearly impossible). What you learn in this course and how well you do will depend significantly on how deeply you engage with the material and with the other people in the course. If you are extremely shy or inhibited (as many of us are or once were), please see the instructor in office hours within the first two weeks of the semester so that we can develop a strategy to get you to participate. Anthropologists need to be able to interact with people as part of their fieldwork and in academic and other professional settings (as do non-anthropologists). If you are not shy, it is very important that you contribute to creating a supportive environment for those who might be.

2. Six one-page, double-spaced reaction papers (24% of course grade) on any week’s readings, to be submitted by 5:30pm on the day of the class. These papers must address an issue that you view as significant in the readings. It is up to you to choose which weeks you wish to write reaction papers, but it is not a good idea to leave them all for the latter part of the semester. Under no circumstances should reaction papers be more than one page, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, in twelve-point type. The top line of each paper should have your name, the date and the course number (that’s it, nothing else). Papers must be carefully proofread. No staples, clips, folders, binders or plastic cases, please. Papers that do not meet these criteria or that are written with less than professional standards will receive lower grades.

3. An in-class examination to be held on October 17 (20% of course grade). This exam will consist of short answer and short essay questions, some of which will be distributed in advance.

4. A brief (750-1000 words) op-ed opinion article (15% of course grade), due December 5, that addresses any issue considered in the course. This must be based on data and the prose should be like that of opinion articles in The New York Times, The Economist, Slate, OpenDemocracy or The Nation. The style, in other words, should be journalistic and directed at a general audience. It is expected that student authors will try to publish their essays online or in print (which can earn up to 10% extra credit, at the instructor’s discretion).

5. A take-home final examination due at 5:30PM on December 19 (25% of course grade). This will consist of short essays.
Late assignments will be accepted only under very unusual circumstances. Email submissions will be accepted only for the op-ed opinion article and the take-home final exam. This syllabus may be modified during the semester.

Shakespeare’s bookstore (Lexington Avenue between 68th and 69th Streets) has ordered the following books:


Other assigned readings may be obtained through web links in this syllabus or via the Library’s Electronic Reserve web page for this course. Go to [http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/](http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/) to sign in. The password is edelman309 Please note that students registered for Anthropology 702.95 (graduate level) should use the Anthropology 309 ERES and Blackboard web sites. There are not separate sites for Anthropology 702.95.

A NOTE ABOUT BLACKBOARD, ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND E-MAIL:

This course will make use of a Library Electronic Reserves web page and a Blackboard web site, which registered students may access from any computer with an Internet connection at [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu). The syllabus is available on the site under “Course Information.” Blackboard allows the instructor to email individual students or the entire group, but it only uses Hunter email addresses that students receive automatically when enrolling at the College. It is important that you check your [Hunter email address](mailto:studentname@hunter.cuny.edu) or that you set it to forward messages to an account that you check frequently.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212-772-4857)/TTY (212-650-3230) or email [AccessABILITY@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:AccessABILITY@hunter.cuny.edu).
OTHER COLLEGE RESOURCES

Hunter College also has the following resources available for students who are experiencing academic or other difficulties:

Advising Services: East Building, room 1119, tel. 212 772-4882, AdvisingServices@hunter.cuny.edu

Reading/Writing Center: Thomas Hunter Hall, Room 416, tel. 212 772-4212, http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/

Counseling Services: East Building, room 1123, tel. 212 772-4931, PersonalCounseling@hunter.cuny.edu

Center for Student Achievement (workshops on test-taking, time management, effective study practices), West Building, room 417 cfsa@hunter.cuny.edu

These offices are staffed by highly trained professionals who are there to help you. If you are in trouble of any kind, it is imperative that you contact the appropriate office and receive assistance.

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Hunter College Anthropology Department has a zero-tolerance policy regarding plagiarism. It the student’s responsibility to understand what plagiarism is and why it is unacceptable and harshly penalized. Hunter College Senate requires that the following statement be included on all syllabi:
“Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.”

See also http://studentservices.hunter.cuny.edu/advising/advising_policies_integrity.htm
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Tues. Aug. 29  
WELCOME AND COURSE INTRODUCTION

Tues. Sept. 5  
RURAL-URBAN INTERACTIONS


Tues. Sept. 12  
THE DIFFERENTIATION DEBATE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES


Tues. Sept. 19  
NO CLASS. CUNY ON THURSDAY SCHEDULE.

Tues. Sept. 26  
PLANET OF SLUMS

Davis, Planet of Slums (entire book).
Tues. Oct. 3
AGRARIAN REFORM DEBATES, THEN AND NOW


Tues. Oct. 10
ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION AND FOOD REGIMES


Tues. Oct. 17
IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Tues. Oct. 24
PROPERTY CONFLICTS AND THE LAW


Edelman and Borras, Political Dynamics of Transnational Agrarian Movements (entire book).

O’Brien and Li, Rightful Resistance in Rural China (entire book).


Tues. Dec. 12

REVIEW FOR **TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM** (DUE VIA EMAIL BEFORE 5:30pm ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19).