



AGST Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2022



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“Implications of Climate Change, Agricultural Policies and COVID-19 Pandemic for Food Security” &
“Rural Sociology: Trouble in Paradise?”
- AGST Spotlight Interview
Dr. Witsanu Attavanich, Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, Kasetsart University, Thailand

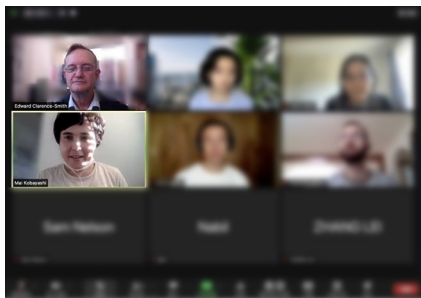


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The course entitled “Sustainable Industry Development”, taught by Mr. Edward Clarence-Smith, introduced updated information and inspiring knowledge about how to achieve industries’ sustainable development in modern society. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the course had to be taken online through zoom, which was delivered in a series of lectures during two months.

The course started with the key question - what is “Circular Economy”. Lectures related to the transition to circular economies and the role of sustainable (green) industrialization in that transition, focusing on strategies the economic/social actors in that phase can use to embrace



the transition to a circular economy and policies governments can adopt to promote the transition. In addition, in every lecture, Mr. Clarence-Smith gave detailed data and examples to emphasize the role which industry has to play in each phase. Circular economies are considered to be integrated into all production processes, including manufacture, product design, use, repair and refurbish, technical recycling system, and so on. Each week, students learn how to achieve sustainable development of industry in a different phase. What is more, we understood that although GDP (or GDP/ capita) is widely used by analysts, politicians, the press, the business community, and the public at large, it is not the only index to indicate development. To achieve sustainable development, we need more standards to measure human welfare. This course addressed related questions from the industry’s perspective.

Combined with the work experience of how to promote the green industry in various countries, Mr. Clarence-Smith shared his knowledge to students, which helped everyone understand the sustainable industry from a practical point of view. There is still much to be done to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve sustainability. This journey will never end with this course. Actions and efforts for sustainable development will continue for the rest of our lives.

Wang Ting

Doctoral student, Graduate School of Economics

Multiple Perspectives on Management

by Prof. Matthias Kipping
York University

We offered a module on 'Multiple Perspectives on Management' from October to November 2021. The course was taught by Professor Matthias Kipping of York University, Canada, under the invitation of Professor Takafumi Kurosawa of Kyoto University. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation and the time differences between global students, the classes were held over Zoom.

As the title of the module indicates, we learned basic concepts and theories in the discipline of management. We had six



lectures and one class for presentations by the students. As part of the lecture, Professor Kipping introduced us to management theories that focused on the role of a manager and their relationship to their subordinates. We learned how a manager makes their subordinates work, how they control a project, and so on. Additionally, we learned a brief history of the development of management theories alongside projects and organizations. The students presented a short research paper based on one concept in management or scholar in the field they learned from these lectures. As a result, students were eager to learn and introduce new learning to the audience, from which I also learned a lot about the field.

Overall, the module had a lot of valuable content for the students. Suitable for beginners in management, but advanced students can benefit from the class discussions as well. Based on my experience in Multiple Perspectives on Management, I am certain that I would be interested in taking a module by Professor Kipping again.

Shoya Fugetsu

Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Economics

AGST Top Global Course

It is a pleasure to announce that three students completed the AGST Top Global Course on March 24, 2022. They come from the Graduate School of Economics, Graduate School of Letters and the Graduate School of Agriculture. This brings the total number of students that have completed the programme to 49 since it was launched in March 2017. More information about this programme can be found [here](#).



Professor Ben Wubs of Erasmus University Rotterdam taught the course 'International Business and Nation States' under the invitation of Professor Takafumi Kurosawa of Kyoto University from November 2021 to January 2022. The classes were held online with Zoom because of the ongoing pandemic and the class design aimed at the Global students who participate in from various different time zones.

As its name indicates, Professor Wubs told us the history of businesses and their relations to the government. We had seven lectures in four days and one class for presentations by the students. The lecture began with an introduction to projects and the role of states in controlling them, as outlined by the professor. Early modern Europe saw the rise of chartered companies, such as the East India Companies, whose powers were endorsed by the states after the big-scale businesses that emerged in medieval Italy. The lecture went into the ages after the Industrial Revolution where the state of businesses dramatically changed with the establishment of the capitalist economy. After the professor finished speaking on the topic of modern-day business and the role of states as providers of infrastructure and potential entrepreneurs, the students presented their own themes based on what they had learned from the lectures.



The module is full of fruitful contents and is best suitable for newcomers in the field of business history. At the same time, advanced students also can learn various new aspects through the opportunities of class engagements and presentations. As both a teaching assistant and a post-graduate student, I recommend other students take Professor Wubs' courses when the next opportunity arises.

Shoya Fugetsu
Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Economics

Comparative Development Studies

by **Prof. Raymond Jussaume Jr.**
Michigan State University
& **Prof. Maria Fonte**
The American University of Rome

The course entitled "Comparative Development Studies" was offered at the Graduate School of Economics as part of a series of the international collaborative courses sponsored by the Asian Platform for Global Sustainability and Transcultural Studies. The course consists of two different while mutually intersecting sessions. The first part of the course was given by Professor Raymond Jussaume from Michigan State University, USA from December 14 to 24, 2021, and the second half was led by Professor Maria Fonte from the American University of Rome, Italy from January 18 to February 4, 2022.

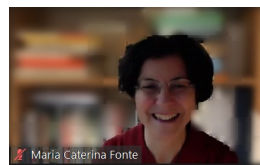
Despite the smaller class size, students participated in class sharing and discussion more than in previous years. Additionally, students had more time to discuss and combine what was discussed in class with their own research interests.

The first part was given by Raymond Jussaume, professor of sociology at Michigan State University. The objective of the course was to provide students with different lenses and approaches to analyze sustainability and sustainable transitions not only in theory but also in practice. In addition to teaching students how to think critically and form sound arguments, the course also taught them how to formulate sound arguments when discussing sustainability.



The organization of the course was free, interacting and very engaging. The students were asked to choose an article from an author that discussed sustainability either in theory or in practice and to present it to the class. After that, each student had to analyze and criticize the authors approach to sustainability and then propose some questions for discussion. Occasionally, prof. Jussaume would also come up with some press release or new concept to discuss (eg. The notion of "wicked" problems in sustainability).

Throughout the course, students presented many interesting approaches to sustainability which stemmed into wonderful discussions. Topics covered included social justice, agri-food systems, theoretical approaches to sustainability, circular economy, etc. Many discussions and debates took place during the class, but perhaps the two most insightful ones were: (1) How to bridge the gap between theory and practice when it comes to sustainability? (2) How are the three pillars of sustainability (social, economic and ecological) interconnected? What is true sustainability?



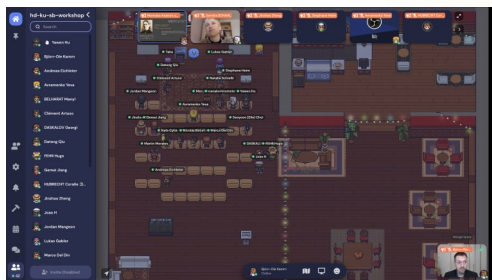
In conclusion, throughout presenting and discussing various authors' ideas about sustainability, students were able to develop their critical thinking skills as well as expand their theoretical and practical knowledge about what sustainability means and implies from various perspectives.

The second session led by Prof. Maria was focused on the discussion and analysis of the current 'turn' and transition in rural development and the global agro-food economy. For each class, students were tasked with presenting analytical summaries on assigned articles and contributing to the integration and discussion. The class discussion started with "what is wrong with the present agro-food system" and headed towards "the future food system we would like to aim at". During the class, we discussed broad issues, such as "what strategies and forms of governance may be better suited to lead us to the desirable future", and theoretical frameworks, such as transition pathways theory, MLP (multi-level perspective), and social practice theory were introduced in the class as useful tools to analyze transition and dynamics. In addition, students were also encouraged to reflect critically on these tools as well. Furthermore, Prof. Maria deeply discussed and shared the transformative power of consumers as citizen-consumers to reshape the current system and helped students to enhance their critical understanding of the ecological, economic, social, and political systems from a multidimensional and multidisciplinary perspective.

Nabil EL Bachiri and Yue Zhu
Master's students, Graduate School of Economics

Every year in February since 2015, the Graduate School of Letters sends a student delegation to its European partners in Strasbourg and Heidelberg to learn about exchange possibilities, participate in joint workshops, and get to know fellow students. This program is organised by the Division of the Joint Degree Master of Arts in Transcultural Studies, a collaborative degree program of Kyoto University and the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS). Like last year and due to the ongoing pandemic, the workshop organized by Prof. Björn-Ole Kamm took place online.

Kyoto • Strasbourg • Heidelberg: Three-University Student Workshop Online



Instead of separate workshops, we held one joint event in 2022 engaging the topic of “Transcultural Moments for the Future: How difference is made facing global challenges.” Joint degree students from Kyoto and Heidelberg (guided by Prof. Takahiro Yamamoto) came together with MA students from the Japanese Studies department in Strasbourg under the tutelage of Prof. Sandra Schaal. The students presented and discussed issues of racial stereotyping during the pandemic, colonialism and public health, and ideas of “non-action” when facing environmental concerns or outstanding cases of collaboration, such as the international space station.

Instead of using video conferencing software, the workshop took place on a spatial chat platform, where participants could move around and talk in smaller groups. Approaching slightly more a feeling of being together, participants much appreciated the possibilities and continued to talk long after the official program ended. Even though we had some lively discussions and participants stay connected beyond the workshops, we hope to again hold the workshops in person in Europe next year. We highly recommend this trip to Europe to interested students. From 2023 onwards the workshops will continue with a focus on joint degree graduate students.

Björn-Ole Kamm

Junior Associate Professor, Graduate School of Letters

Report on the 2nd Four Universities Graduate Workshop

in-Asia Cultural Studies (JACS) Program, the Ritsumeikan University Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences, and the Tokyo University Department of Aesthetics. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet subsided and because we held many classes online during the 2021-22 academic year, students and faculty members alike enjoyed a moment of in-person intellectual exchange.

The students’ academic fields and subjects of analysis varied widely, ranging from presentations on visual media such as film, animation, and games, to sociolinguistics, gender studies, physical urbanism, time-art theory, and the aesthetic study of “cracks (hibiware),” which together made the discussion in the three-day workshop very rich.

As JDTS Senior Lecturer Kjell Ericson reported last year in the AGST Newsletter (Spring/Summer 2021) after the first Four Universities Graduate Workshop, proximity among participants is indispensable for academic exchanges. I realized again that this style of graduate student workshop has become even more valuable in light of the past few years.

Finally, I would like to mention a key difference from the previous workshop. While last year’s workshop was held in a classroom on the Nagoya University campus, this time we reserved lodgings with facilities that included a gymnasium (often otherwise used for athletic team training retreats) where we could play badminton, basketball, and Frisbee during our free time. I enjoyed being able to catch a glimpse of new aspects of each student’s personality through these out-of-the-classroom activities. I am looking forward to planning another workshop for next year, and others in the years to come.



Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, Ph.D.

Professor of Cinema and Media Studies,
Director of Joint Degree Transcultural Studies (JDTS) Program,
Kyoto University Graduate School of Letters

In each week of November 2021, an interesting course themed "Implication of Climate Change, Agricultural Policies, and Covid-19 Pandemic for Food Security" was held online. The instructor was Prof. Witsanu Attavanich, an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Kasetsart University.

Prof. Attavanich taught us two lectures each week. He provided us with research articles and case studies for each topic to gain understanding in real-world settings. Although it may sound very thorough, he packaged the course in a simple way and used easy-to-understand language. So, students can follow it easily and keep being excited along the course.

In the beginning, Prof. Attavanich introduced the climate change effects on agriculture and some common methods to measure them. By referring to the academic publication, he showed us in detail how those methods are applied in several countries (Thailand, China, USA) to measure current impact and future projection of climate change implications. Then, through the homework, he motivated us to think critically about each method; what the prime features and shortcomings are for real-world application.

On the second day, we gained perspective on the differences between adaptation and mitigation responses against climate change in agriculture. We also looked into the influencing factors of the farmers' adaptation capacity. On the third day, we learned the concept of how climate change affects negatively the food system and food security. We further learned how to construct a more accurate food security index that incorporates the role of climate change. Moreover, we looked into the recent evidence in Thailand about the pandemic implication on food system and food security. The case study was insightful as we can know how beneficial that research is to immediately develop policy recommendations. Furthermore, the structure of Thailand's agricultural household also was covered by Prof. Attavanich; its challenge and solutions to overcome them. Finally, on the last day, he explained the methods for program and policy evaluation. He showed us that we can use the subjective well-being approach to evaluate economic impacts of air pollution. It was mind-opening for us that the methods are not rigid and we can expand our methods that are more suitable to each context of an application.

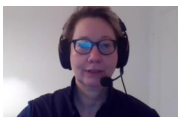
Overall, the course covered a wide range of topics and was comprehensive on the climate change implication on agriculture and food security. However, as the research about Covid-19 pandemic implications is still developing, it was only slightly covered in this course. Fortunately, the discussion time was such an opportunity to raise any questions that we were interested in. Even, Prof. Attavanich encouraged us to discuss outside the class by online appointment or freely on Google Classroom platform. So, in the end, we can gain broader perspectives and knowledge.

Pradnya Paramarini

Master's Student, Graduate School of Agriculture

Rural Sociology: Trouble in Paradise?

by Prof. Claudia Neu
University of Göttingen



Between February 14 and 17, 2022, we honor to welcome Professor Neu Claudia from the University of Göttingen, Germany to give an intensive lecture on the "Rural Sociology: Trouble in Paradise?" theme. The online lecture was having diverse participation of graduate students and post-doc researchers from France, Peru, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Morocco.

The lecture started with five fundamental concepts of sociology and their application in explaining the structure and function of rural societies – rural sociology. We learned the German English word "Heimat" (HI-mat), which means home or homeland and is similar to ふるさと in Japanese, and tried to translate the word into our mother language and home country context as an unreplaceable place regardless of its geographically urban or rural space.

On the second day, we worked on defining the boundary of the rural area while considering its urban counterpart as a political instrument for the governments and organizations to provide efficient support for underdeveloped regions. The students debated on the rurality based on the power of space and place to explore the "other" sides of the countryside where rural residents confront environmental degradation, social isolation, and limited financial and human resources, rather than its Western-constructed beautiful landscape and idyll. Also, we had a guest speaker – Ms. Pieper presenting her "Women on farm" project with a focus on the social and agricultural transformation processes influencing women farmers' participation in Germany.

The second half of the course has expanded the rural sociology concept to a global context: demographic change and migration between continents, countries, and regions. Learning the German history of migration reception and crisis in 2015 with different immigrant waves would provide students with an insight into multiculturalism and the dilemma of accepting immigrants that Japan probably encounter in the future.

Last but not least, each student is required to present one rural-related topic either from their research fields or their home country case study. Presentations range from alcoholism- rurality link among rural-urban migrants in Peru; gender inequality in university education access in Japan; impacts of contract farming on small farmers' livelihoods in Morocco; experimental education in rural areas of Taiwan; and migration narrative of Vietnamese female agricultural trainees in Japan.

In summary, the informative lectures and fruitful discussions from individual and international perspectives are valuable opportunities for the participants to explore the rural sociology field and reflect on their research.

Vien T.T. Dinh

Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Agriculture

AGST Spotlight Interview

Dr. Witsanu Attavanich

Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, Kasetsart University, Thailand

In the Fall semesters of 2020 and 2021, the Division of Natural Resource Economics in the GSA invited Dr. Witsanu Attavanich to give an intensive lecture course, which was entitled “Linking Climate Change, Food Security and Policies in Agriculture” in 2020 and “Implications of Climate Change, Agricultural Policies and COVID-19 Pandemic for Food Security” in 2021. The course was delivered online in both years.

Q1: What impressions did you have of Kyoto University students? Did you find any differences between students at Kyoto University and at Kasetsart University?

Dr. Attavanich: Over the two years I had the opportunity to teach at Kyoto University, I have been impressed by students at Kyoto University in several aspects. Kyoto University students work hard and participate in the class very well. Every time I ask questions, students will help each other express their answers and opinions. I appreciate the creativity of the students here every time they have a discussion in the classroom. Moreover, when they don't understand the class materials, they always ask me. These good habits make the atmosphere of online learning fun and teachers can know whether students understand the content taught. For the second question, yes, I did find that Kasetsart University students were a little less participate in the class than Kyoto University students although students from both universities always provide excellent ideas for the discussion.

Q2: In both 2020 and 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, you delivered the course on Zoom from Bangkok. What do you think about online teaching, which I think has its own advantages and disadvantages?

Dr. Attavanich: For the advantages of online teaching, the first is that online teaching is convenient for both students and teachers. Students and teachers can access the classroom from anywhere. Second, students can review lessons from recorded videos. Third, teachers including myself are able to apply teaching materials with modern digital technology making it easier for students to understand the content. Finally, online learning doesn't have to waste time traveling to school. For the disadvantages of online teaching, the first disadvantage is that teachers cannot easily observe whether how much students understand the teaching material since a majority of them decided to turn off their video camera. However, I did try my best to find new teaching techniques to investigate the students' understanding. Second, online teaching reduced classroom participation between teachers and students and among students themselves. Thirdly, online teaching has prohibited the effective group work. Fourthly, unstable internet connectivity some-

time has interrupted the teaching environment. Last but not least, online teaching may foster lazy habits in students if there is a lack of discipline because it is too convenient for them. In conclusion, for me, I prefer teaching in the classroom than teaching online and I believe that most students and teachers would like to meet in the classroom.

Q3: What are the research topics you are currently working on?

Dr. Attavanich: I'm currently working on four topics. The first topic is about the sustainable resource management and poverty alleviation for small-scale fishing communities in Thailand. I'm working with Professor Yohei Mitani and his colleagues from Kyoto University plus Thai colleagues. The second topic focuses on the impacts of climate change on rice production in Thailand and the potential adaptation strategies such as the alternative wetting and drying, which improves the rice yield and reduces the greenhouse gas emission. This project obtains the financial support from Kasetsart University. For the third topic, I'm helping the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to assess the digital readiness of Thai farmers at the village level and evaluate the impact of farm digital technology's adoption on farm income. Finally, I'm helping the World Bank to diagnose key challenges and opportunities and provide solutions to improve the income of rural households in Thailand.

Q4: What are your messages to Kyoto University students? Any advice for those of them who are interested in climate change impacts on agriculture and food security?

Dr. Attavanich: I have to say thank you very much for your hard work and the knowledge you helped me find while doing the homework. Also, thanks for the creative ideas during the class discussion. You all made the teaching atmosphere very enjoyable and thank you for your warm friendship. Please continue to study hard to gain as much knowledge and experience as possible. I wish all students succeed in what they desire. If anyone wants me to help with anything, just let me know. I would like to meet all of you in person at Kyoto University and if anyone has the opportunity to come to Bangkok in the near future, please let me know.

For those who are interested in climate change impacts on agriculture and food security, you need to learn more about science related to climate change and practice applying this scientific knowledge to your knowledge of economics. It is recommended to read the IPCC's recent sixth assessment report to improve the knowledge and up-to-date findings. There are also several peer-reviewed journals that you should read such as Nature Climate Change and Climatic Change.



Makoto Kuroda
Assistant Teaching Staff,
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