Novel education abroad experience via advanced seminar course structure

Soo-Yeun Lee, Prasanta Kalita, Kim Graber, Laurie Kramer
Education Abroad Opportunity

The First International Congress on Postharvest Loss Prevention
Rome, Italy, October 4-7, 2015

Co-organizing sponsors

ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss
The Rockefeller Foundation
Educational Goals for the Opportunity

• Promote exposure to, and subsequent critical reflection about, a variety of topics relevant to postharvest loss prevention, the main theme of the conference

• Maximize student learning while participating in an international conference via advanced seminar course structure
Student Learning Objectives

- Engage in a variety of presentations given by the expert presenters at the Rome congress on the challenges associated with postharvest loss

- Communicate summarized information of a scientific presentation

- Write a technical article based on presentations and interviews with experts
Participants

Seven undergraduate honors students:

- James Scholars from the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
- Campus Honors Scholars

ACES James Scholar Honors Program
Seminar Course Structure

- Pre-trip meetings
- International congress attendance
- Post-trip meetings
- Post-trip writing phase
  - Draft report
  - Review 1: Peer review
  - Revised report
  - Review 2: Instructor review
  - Revised report
  - Submit formatted manuscript to i-ACES
  - Review 3: Review by the chief editor of the journal
  - Final revised manuscript published
Syllabus

Course Description

Credit

Contact Information

Expectations and Student Learning Goals

Student Activities and Responsibilities
Syllabus

Assignment – Technical Paper

a. Summary of the research presentation
   a. Background and Rationale
   b. Aims
   c. Approach
   d. Findings
   e. Implications and Significance of the findings

b. Critical reflection of the presentation
   a. What did you learn about the topic discussed by the presenter you interviewed?
   b. What are your thoughts about the limitations of the study presented?
   c. What would be a good future research studies extending from the findings and limitations.
   d. From the grander scheme of things, what may be proposed solutions to significantly reduce post-harvest loss by 2050?

   c. Reflection on the interview process
      a. What did you learn by interviewing the presenter?
      b. What are the necessary preparation and skill set for an effective interview?
      c. How would you do the interviews differently in the future?

Recommended number of pages: 5-15 pages.

The technical paper will be peer-reviewed by the scholars and reviewed by the instructor. Each scholar will receive two technical papers by the other scholars. In total, three reviews will be given back to the scholar for a revised paper. Once the technical papers are revised, they will be submitted to be published in i-ACES (https://ugresearchjournals.illinois.edu/index.php/iaces/index), online undergraduate research journal.
Syllabus

Grading

Course-grade breakdown:
Attendance and Participation → → → → → → → → → 50 points
Technical paper graded by the instructor → → → → → → → → 200 points
Average score from the peer review (follow the peer review guide, next page) → 100 points
Quality of the peer review assessed by the instructor → → → → → → 50 points (25 each)
Total → → → → → → → → → 400 points

Academic Integrity

http://www.admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/academic-integrity-policy.html
Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade. Every student is expected to review and abide by the Academic Integrity Policy. http://www.admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/. Please note that you are responsible for reading this policy. Ignorance is not an excuse for any academic dishonesty.

Accommodation and FERPA

If you need accommodations for any sort of disability, please speak to me after class, or make an appointment to see me, or see me during my office hours.
### Technical Paper Peer Review Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment criteria</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<td>Accuracy of content</td>
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Please be sure the scores assigned to each criterion.
Syllabus

Student Activities and Responsibilities

ACES-298: INDEPENDENT STUDY

Scholars for Post-Harvest Loss Prevention Congress in Rome

Tentative Syllabus—Fall 2015

Course Description

This course is designed to promote exposure to, and subsequent critical reflection about, a variety of topics relevant to post-harvest loss prevention. A total of 7 undergraduate students will participate in this opportunity sponsored by ADMI, Campus Honors Program and ACES James Scholars Program. The selected scholars will attend the First International Congress on Postharvest Loss Prevention held in Rome (Oct. 4-7, 2015). Prior to the trip, the scholars will be working with staff members at ADMI to be trained to assist at the conference as well as develop their ideas to attend specific presentations to write a technical article on the interviews they will conduct at the conference with the presenters. Post-trip, the scholars will write and publish the technical article through e-ACES, online undergraduate research journal.

Credit

Two honors credit hours will be earned by students completing this course with a grade of B- or higher.

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Soo Lee, ACES Honors Dean
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Telephone: (217) 333-3389
Email: s.lee@illinois.edu
Website: http://academic.aces.illinois.edu/honors/james-scholars/399
Office hours: by appointment

Expectations and Student-Learning Goals

Scholars are expected to actively engage in a variety of presentations given by the expert presenters at the Rome congress on the challenges associated with postharvest loss within the framework of metrics and measurements that will enable development of better tools and interventions to prevent postharvest losses for smallholders in developing countries. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to successfully do the following (Student Learning Goals):

1. Discuss global postharvest loss issues and food security.
2. Develop a "Roadmap for PHL Reduction", which will detail how to significantly reduce losses by 2050. Students will be part of the process in which the roadmap is developed.
3. Communicate summarized information of a scientific presentation.
4. Write a technical article based on an interview with an expert.
5. Communicate and disseminate the event highlights through Facebook, twitter etc.
6. Compile the comments from PHL congress blog and post them in appropriate categories. Ideas from these forums will be synthesized and shared with the scholars.
Student Activities and Responsibilities

- Attend 2 to 5 Posters or Oral presentations.
- Interview at least two speakers of the presentations they attend.
- Write a technical article based on the interview.
- Publish the article in i-ACES (inquiry-ACES).
- Communicate and disseminate the event highlights through social media.
- Compile the comments from PHL congress blog and put them in appropriate categories. Ideas from the conference participants about the details of how to significantly reduce losses by 2050 will be collected through online blogs during the conference.
- Help the poster presenters and learn about their projects.
- Take notes during the sessions.
- Assist with registration, congress events, directing people to find things and help at the conference.
Assignment – Technical Paper

a. Summary of the research presentation
   a. Background and Rationale
   b. Aims
   c. Approach
   d. Findings
   e. Implications and Significance of the findings

b. Critical reflection of the presentation
   a. What did you learn about the topic discussed by the presenter you interviewed?
   b. What are your thoughts about the limitations of the study presented?
   c. What would be a good future research studies extending from the findings and limitations?
   d. From the grander scheme of things, what may be proposed solutions to significantly reduce post harvest loss by 2050?

Reflection on the interview process
   a. What did you learn by interviewing the presenter?
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Recommended number of pages: 5-15 pages

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• What did you learn about the topic discussed by the presenter you interviewed?
• What are your thoughts about the limitations of the study presented?
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• What did you learn by interviewing the presenter?
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• Focus on the written comments and recommendations

• Provide constructive feedback, which can be used to improve the revised paper

• Give a quantitative rubric based on the scores assigned to each criterion for each assessment criterion
Technical Paper
Peer Review Guide

Assessment criteria

- Accuracy of content (20 pts)
- Thoroughness of summary and critical reflection (40 pts)
- Organization and structure (10 pts)
- Grammar and mechanics (20 pts)
- References (10 pts)
Developing International Connections and Consensus to Reduce Postharvest Loss
Chelsea Peterson*

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ABSTRACT
The ADM Institute at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign held the First International Congress on Postharvest Loss Prevention in Rome, Italy to bring together various researchers and people from organizations around the world to network and provide insight into methods of reducing postharvest loss (PHL) globally. PHL presents a significant threat to food security now and in the future because of the tremendous amount of food lost along with the time and inputs lost with it. The other goal of the Congress was to reach a consensus on key areas along the food supply chain that organizations should focus on in order to significantly reduce PHL. The participants at the Congress agreed on emphasizing proven technologies by connecting smallholders to the private sector and implementing them on a large scale in a sustainable manner. Solutions are sustainable when they are implemented in a regional context that accommodates to the needs of all members of the community, especially women, when education and training allows members of the community to maintain them, and when they have a minimal environmental impact.

INTRODUCTION
Eight hundred and seventy million people around the world are currently undernourished (ADM Institute 2015). With a rising global population expected to reach 9.5 billion by the year 2050, the number can only increase if the current agricultural practices and processes continue, making the issue of food security for all people even more critical. With the increased population looming in the future, an estimated 95 percent of agriculture research is dedicated to provide more food by increasing crop yields. Yet, there is already an abundant amount of food harvested that could contribute to feeding the currently malnourished and the future increased population. However, the food is not reaching the people who need it the most because of one the greatest challenges to agricultural production, postharvest loss (PHL). Postharvest loss is the cumulative crop yield lost at each step of the supply chain starting with harvest and ending with consumption. Approximately one-third of all food produced each year is lost or wasted (Gustavsson et al. 2011). PHL is most prevalent in developing countries among smallholder farmers and the predominant causes are poor handling, improper storage, inadequate transportation, deterioration, and absence of a consistent market to sell. The majority of the losses in each area occur because of a lack of modern technology, training, and incentive to produce quality goods. Many universities, government organizations, and non-profit organizations are focusing on research in different areas of the food supply chain to reduce PHL. Solutions must be regional, considering the culture and needs of the people, and require that many groups work together. Decreasing PHL aims to both bring food security and improved livelihoods to
Reflections by the Scholars

“Going to Rome has been the high point of my college experience. It was incredible to have the opportunity to work with the world's leading authorities in Postharvest Loss to improve the lives of people around the globe.”

"Travelling to Rome to attend the International Congress for Postharvest Loss Prevention broadened my cultural knowledge and exposed me to a topic that I was not previously familiar with. In only five days, I learned more from this experience than I could have gained in an entire semester of classroom learning."