



Blum Center for Developing Economies

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September 21, 2009

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Blum Center for Developing Economies! With the excitement of students and faculty returning to campus, we thought it was a good time to share our latest news.

The semester got off to a wonderful start as we learned that our founder, Richard Blum, had received a **Jefferson Award for “giving a new generation the tools to make big changes around the world.”** By honoring recipients, the Award hopes to inspire others to become involved in community and public service. Two recent graduates from our Global Poverty and Practice Minor, Jonathan Lee and Nicole Walter, were also interviewed for the television segment which aired on KPIX on September 2nd and can now be viewed from our website, <http://blumcenter.berkeley.edu/>.

That same week, our Education Director, **Dr. Ananya Roy, greeted the 725 students enrolled in the Minor’s flagship course**, “Global Poverty: Challenges and Hopes in the New Millennium.” Now located in the largest classroom on campus, this course helps students participate in the global debates about poverty, development, and inequality.

Earlier this summer, we were delighted to receive a **\$2 million gift from an anonymous donor**. This remarkable contribution will be partially matched by the Hewlett Foundation, enabling us to establish a \$3 million Chair to support our Global Poverty and Practice Minor. The gift also establishes a fund to increase support for student field research, a truly unique feature of our Minor. This generosity couldn’t have come at a better time, as enthusiasm and interest in the Center continues to exceed all expectations!

The growth of the Center has also necessitated the creation of a physical home which Richard Blum generously offered to finance. If you’ve been on the north side of campus, you’ll know that this **new home is rising right on schedule**, as crews are restoring the historic Naval Architecture Building and constructing a new wing adjacent to it. We were honored to have welcomed Vice President Al Gore to our groundbreaking ceremony this past April, and look forward to planning our grand-opening celebration next fall!

Finally, we invite you to visit our newly re-designed website at <http://blumcenter.berkeley.edu/>. It always has the latest news and invitations to our upcoming events. You can also view an interactive map showing where our students are addressing the most pressing problems around the globe, and read the “Student Profiles” or “Our Alumni in Action” to learn about their success.

Thank you again for all you do to support the faculty and students at the Blum Center. We welcome your comments and suggestions about our work and hope you’ll get involved!

Best regards,
S. Shankar Sastry
Faculty Director, Blum Center for Developing Economies
Dean of Engineering, UC Berkeley



**The Honorable Walter F. Mondale
“The Crisis in U.S. Aid and Developmental Policies”**



Former Vice President Walter Mondale speaks to Blum Center students and faculty about US development policies.

On September 16, we were honored to have Walter Mondale, who served as Jimmy Carter’s Vice President for four years and as Ambassador to Japan during the Clinton Administration, speak to a packed audience about “The Crisis in U.S. Aid and Developmental Policies.” He addressed most of his remarks directly to the many students in attendance, encouraging them to help the United States be “more effectively engaged in giving people around the world a better chance.”

“I would like to see us not only train you about this issue,” Mondale noted, “but to find some way to make it possible for you to use your talents and your energy and your idealism to make a difference.”



BLUM CENTER EDUCATION NEWS



On the first day of class, Blum Center Education Director Professor Ananya Roy addressed the 725 students enrolled this semester in the Blum Center’s flagship class, Global Poverty: Challenges and Hopes in the New Millennium.

The Center’s Global Poverty and Practice Minor, now the largest minor on the UC Berkeley campus, gives undergraduates the knowledge and real-world experience to become dynamic participants

in the fight against poverty. Students take a variety of new courses and participate directly in poverty alleviation efforts throughout the world.

This semester, almost **1,200 students are enrolled in a class sponsored by the Blum Center** including:

Global Poverty: Challenges and Hopes in the New Millennium

Professor Ananya Roy

Students participate in the key theoretical debates about global poverty and inequality. This course teaches students about different models of poverty alleviation and methods for evaluating such models and practices.

The Ethics, Methods and Pragmatics of Global Practice

Professor Clare Talwalker

This course allows students to discuss, reflect upon, and debate the ethics of global citizenship. Students work on projects and assignments that support preparation for their minor practice experience.

Women, Poverty and Globalization

Professor Minoo Moallem

Students examine new patterns of inequality as they relate to the feminization of poverty in a global and transnational context, while enhancing their knowledge of new forms of globalization and their impact on the least-privileged groups of women. The class also provides an opportunity for students to work with a non-governmental or community organization focusing on gender and poverty, and to engage in a systematic analysis of the strategies and practices of these organizations.

Slouching Towards Utopia? The World Economy in the 20th Century

Professor Brad DeLong

This is a course in the history of economic experience: how economies evolved and how people lived their lives within the framework of the economy of their age in a particular time—the long twentieth century from 1870 or so to the present—for the world as a whole. It is an effort to provide an account of the development of the world economy since 1870 and ask questions about the prospects for the future as well.

Poverty and Peripheries in the Asia Pacific

Professor Aihwa Ong

Contrary to claims about the world being flat, students will discover that it is highly uneven, webbed and scaled by geopolitical rivalry and different kinds of capitalism. This course will examine the tightening interrelationships between poverty, peripheries and gender across the Asia Pacific.

Global Practice Reflection Course

Instructor Liz Cretti

This course is a special offering designed for students who have just returned from their service learning experiences across the globe. It provides students with a forum for reflection on their experiences with global poverty and practice, and allows them to explore the meanings of diversity within the global and local communities.



GUEST ARTICLE

Training Worldly Problem Solvers by Abby Cohn



Sara Al-Beaini and Meg Harper with the low-cost solar water heater designed for use by the poor



Susan Ambrose testing groundwater in a rural village in Bangladesh for arsenic

In a basement classroom of Wheeler Hall this past spring, Professor Ashok Gadgil handed 25 students what may be the assignment of a lifetime. **Their challenge: Study an intractable problem facing the globe and its vulnerable populations, and develop a practical solution to solve it.**

Welcome to Design for Sustainable Communities, a semester-long course cosponsored by the Blum Center. The class has inspired students to tackle an array of groundbreaking projects in developing countries and other needy communities. Their work includes designing fuel-efficient stoves for Darfur refugees, creating a system for filtering arsenic from contaminated wells in Bangladesh and building solar water heaters for Guatemalan households.

“All the projects are connected to the real world,” says Gadgil, a senior scientist and deputy division director at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory who is acclaimed for his humanitarian inventions. **“The real world is far more complicated than textbook problems.”**

Popular from the start, Design for Sustainable Communities speaks to the passion of Berkeley students to focus their talent and energy on global issues. The class attracts students from such fields as engineering, physics, environmental science, public policy and business—and routinely has a long waiting list. Students select projects and work on multidisciplinary teams. **Not surprisingly, it has been a transformative experience for many students, who have chosen to stay involved long after the semester ends.**

“I walked into the class and found my new life,” says Susan Amrose Addy, who switched the focus of her doctoral research after taking Gadgil’s class. **“It was in that class that I realized how many different ways fundamental research can be beneficial in the world.”** Addy, who just completed her Ph.D., is developing a low-cost electrochemical device for removing arsenic from drinking water. Her project, which responds to the threat of arsenic-laced wells facing up to 70 million Bangladeshis, drew a team of students over the past semester.

Other student teams are working on the solar water heater, a solar box cooker, low-cost shelter panels, and a low-energy house for hurricane-prone French Polynesia.

Recognizing a synergy with its mission of service learning, education and alleviating poverty worldwide, the Blum Center is a leading sponsor of the course. Blum Center funding enables the class to be offered annually and provides vital travel and research grants to students. Additionally, some projects pursued by students receive separate backing as Blum innovation initiatives.

“The support of the Blum Center has been critical,” says Gadgil, who is a professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering along with his LBNL positions.

Gadgil was a natural choice to teach the class. An expert in energy efficiency, he has pioneered a number of innovative technologies to help developing countries. **“There was nothing like this when I was on campus,” says Gadgil, who earned his Ph.D. in physics from Berkeley in 1979. “I had to learn so many things to figure out how to make a difference in the real world, in the developing countries that are resource poor.”**

One of his first lessons was that successful innovation involves more than a clever design. Inventors must also evaluate the cultural, political, economic and other characteristics of a specific community. “Unless you walk in the shoes of your customer, you won’t understand what they understand,” Gadgil explains.

Sara Al-Beaini, a doctoral student in mechanical engineering, spent a month identifying and studying a community in Xela, Guatemala, when she began work in 2007 on a low-cost solar water heater for the poor. Today, she is part of a seven-member team called CalSolAgua that has traveled to Guatemala to test prototypes and hopes to introduce the invention to other communities worldwide. **“Being on the ground is very key,” Al-Beaini says. “You can’t just design away from your subjects.”**

Berkeley students are responding effectively to global needs on a number of fronts. This year, for instance, several thousand compact metal stoves based on a model that students helped design and test are expected to be constructed and delivered in Darfur. The Berkeley Darfur Stove is meant to reduce the risk of rape and other attacks on women who must venture out from refugee camps searching for scarce fuel wood.

Design for Sustainable Communities got its start in 2005. Eager for a hands-on approach to technology design and implementation, a group of students developed a sample curriculum, made a presentation to campus leaders and approached Gadgil. The course was introduced soon afterward. Ashley Murray, one of the students leading that effort, said Gadgil’s class provides invaluable training for students venturing into careers involving the developing world.

The course “speaks to their values,” Gadgil says. “It connects formal training to what these students come for: How do you make the world a better place?”



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please check our website at <http://blumcenter.berkeley.edu/> to learn more about these and other events to be announced soon.

On September 29, the Center is proud to co-sponsor a symposium on the **Global Food Crisis**, from 3:30-5:00 pm in 315 Wheeler Hall. A panel of activists, scientists and social scientists discuss the problem of world hunger and some approaches to a solution, moderated by Blum Center Innovation Initiative faculty member, Professor Isha Ray.

On October 9, the Center sponsors its second annual **Global Service Fair and Global Research Practice Symposium** from 10:30am- 3:00 pm in the Martin Luther King Jr. Student Union on campus. The Global Service Fair features campus and community organizations that provide students the opportunity to engage in both hands-on and policy related work for international development and poverty alleviation. The Fair will be followed by a Global Research Practice Symposium which will feature students from the Center's Global Poverty and Practice Minor describing their summer practice experiences across the world. Topics will include health and education outreach, access to safe drinking water, and microfinance. This event also incorporates our Tata-Berkeley Symposium highlighting the experiences of the Blum Center's Tata interns.

On October 19, at 12:00 noon in the Hearst Memorial Mining Building Room 290, the Center welcomes **Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne**, in the second of our "Perspectives in International Development" events. Dr. Ariyaratne, the founder of the Sarvodaya movement of Sri Lanka, has worked for nearly half a century with people and villages in his country to reduce poverty.



We welcome your questions and comments!

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