EEP 260: DEVELOPMENT INTERVIEW -- EXTRA CREDIT

Activity: Interview an international GRADUATE student to learn about his/her country’s efforts to increase food production, reduce population growth, and alleviate poverty. Then, write a report summarizing what you have learned. If you are from a developing country, interview someone from a developing country in another region of the world.

Interest Form: If you select this option, you must complete and return to me the "Interest Form: Development Interview Form.

Grade Weight: Maximum of an additional 3 percentage points on your final grade.

Grading: To receive full credit, you must thoughtfully cover all points in the outline. Points will be deducted for poor grammar, spelling errors, and late papers.

Suggestions

Selecting a Student: Don't be shy! International students are proud of their countries and like to tell others about what life is like "back home". Select a CANR GRADUATE student, since he/she is more likely to know about the country’s agriculture that a student in another college. See your instructor or TA for assistance in selecting a student to interview.

Scheduling the Interview. When you e-mail or phone the graduate student to request an interview, first describe your assignment and be sure to mention that the interview will take less than one hour. Then, ask when you could meet with him/her, at the interviewee's convenience.

Preparing for the Interview. Be sure to familiarize yourself with your student's country before conducting the interview. No only will this impress the student, but in addition it will suggest questions that you will want to ask. For example, go to the library and read about the country in the encyclopedia, or search the internet for information about the country. In addition, photocopy (or print) a map of the country and bring it to along, so you can refer to it during the interview. Finally, be sure to review the report outline before conducting your interview, so you will be familiar with the questions that you need to ask.

During the Interview. Even though you are required to ask several specific questions (as described below), be flexible and let the interviewee steer the conversation in interesting directions. You can always return to the specific questions noted in this assignment. Also, listen for interesting points that you can pursue with follow-up questions. If the student’s response is too brief, too general, or you don't understand his/her answer, ask for more information. At the end of the interview, be sure to thank the student for taking the time to meet with you.

Report Outline

Your report (minimum of 5 pages) must: a) provide an overview of the country, b) discuss the country's major food, population, and poverty problems, c) provide information on recent changes in the country (including successes in increasing food production, reducing population growth, and reducing poverty), and d) discuss the prospects for--and constraints to--solving the country's food, population and poverty problems. You can obtain statistical data from a the World Bank's publication, World Development Report (available in the library) or on the internet.
INSTRUCTIONS

You must follow the format, exactly as outlined below. Be sure to include the number and title of all main sections and all subsections. Each section must provide the information requested. The minimum length is five typed, double-spaced pages. Use 1" margins and a standard font (11 or 12 pt.).

Cover Page:
Your Name: ____________________
Selected Country: ____________________
Name of Student Interviewed: ____________________
Student's Department at MSU: ____________________
Student's Job Back Home: ____________________

Main Report:

I. Overview of (your country) (3 pages).
   Describe the country’s:
   1. Development Status: What is the country’s current per capita GDP and its annual rate of GDP increase?
   2. Climate. What is the country’s annual rainfall, main growing seasons, temperature, and topography?
   3. Agriculture. What are the main crops grown? What proportion of the farmers are subsistence and what proportion are commercial farmers? What inputs do farmers use to grow their crops?
   4. Food Problems. What are the country’s main food problems? Who are the hungry?
   5. Increasing Food Production. What has the government done to encourage farmers to adopt new agricultural technologies and increase food production? How successful have these programs been?
   6. Population. What is the country’s current population and what is its annual rate of increase? What is the government/NGOs doing to reduce population growth? How successful have these programs been?
   7. Access. What groups have not benefitted from previous development programs (e.g., women, minorities, the landless)? What is the government/NGOs doing to assist these groups? How successful have these programs been?
   8. Health. What are the country’s major health problems? What is the government/NGOs doing to solve these problems? How successful have these programs been?
   9. Environment. What are the country’s major environmental problems? What is the government/NGOs doing to solve these problems? How successful have these programs been?
   10. Policies. What are the major policies/programs that the government is implementing to promote development (e.g., support for education, literacy, roads, agricultural research, extension, credit)? What are NGOs doing to promote development? How successful have these programs been?
   11. Trade. What are the country’s major exports? For what types of products is the government trying to increase exports?
   12. Foreign Aid. What countries provide foreign aid? How is the aid used? Has aid helped the country?
   13. Poverty. Who are the poor, why are they poor, and where do they live?

II. Recent Changes in (your country) (1 page)
   Discuss the most important changes that have occurred in the country during the past 10 years, including successes in: 1) increasing food production, 2) reducing population growth, and 3) reducing poverty.

III. Major Problems Facing (your country) (1/2 page).
   Discuss what the country must do to: 1) increase food production, 2) reduce population growth, and 3) reduce poverty.

IV. Prospects for the Future (1/2 page).
   1. Discuss the prospects for solving the country’s problems (section III) over the next ten years.
   2. Discuss the main constraints to solving these problems (they may be economic, social, or political)?

Appendix I. Attach a map of your country.