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TEACHING AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS IN THE GENERAL UNIVERSITIES OF BANGLADESH

Mahfuzul Huq*

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the importance of teaching agricultural economics in Bangladesh, then makes a critical review of the syllabuses on the subject taught as a part of the curricula for under-and postgraduate degrees in economics offered by the four general universities in the country. It is concluded that the emphasis laid by different universities to the need for teaching agricultural economics is generally low and varied as reflected in the differences in curriculum, quality of teaching staff, reading materials and other supporting inputs. A greater emphasis on the subject is advocated and to materialise it, a number of suggestions are made.

I. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The economics of agriculture does not have a unique body of theory and methods. Study in agricultural economics involves the application of economic theory and quantitative methods to problems arising in or related to the agricultural sector. Thus, within its purview falls the study of agricultural production economics, marketing of goods of farm origin, and farm management, etc. Indeed, evidence points to partiality for a wider compass to include forestry, fisheries and resource economics within the field. This is perhaps because agricultural economics (especially production economics) is the oldest and most widely studied field among the applied sciences.

However, the emphasis laid to the need for such education varies widely in this country. This is manifested in the difference in curriculum, quality of teaching staff, reading materials and other supporting inputs which have ultimate bearing upon the quality of education, potential for research and supply of trained personnel for improving efficiency and productivity and to a broader sense, the development of the agricultural sector. In the present paper an attempt will be made to undertake a critical appraisal of agricultural economics education in the general universities of Bangladesh. With this end in view we

*Professor, Department of Economics, Chittagong University.

shall analyse (in chronological order) the importance and relevance of such education in a developing country like Bangladesh, course contents at different levels in the four general universities, problems and constraints of agricultural economics education thereof. The paper ends up with some concluding observations regarding policy implications.

II. IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

There was a time when the fundamental scientists looked with disdain upon the workers of 'bread and butter study' even though in the world as a whole most people are directly or indirectly related to farm or farming for a living. Not to speak of the less developed countries of the tropics and Asia, even in countries as advanced as the U.S.A. and U.K. the study of agricultural economics has been of only recent growth. In the U.S.A. the main foundation has been laid at the beginning of this century while in the U.K. the subject has been accorded recognition at the academic level in 1913 with the foundation of the Institute for Research in Agricultural Economics at Oxford. In Bangladesh its recognition as a vital area of academic interest came only in early 1960's with the establishment of the Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at the Bangladesh Agricultural University at Mymensingh. In the general universities, however, agricultural economics is taught mostly as a paper at the Honours level under the title of Rural Economics or Agricultural Economics. Thus, the general neglect to the subject has led to the paucity of trained agricultural economists and hence much of the works considered to be the job of specialist agricultural economists are done by general agriculturists/economist/experts of other disciplines.

Therefore, there is no need to search for a good reason as to why special importance should be attached to the study of agricultural economics in an agrarian society like ours. In a subsistence economy heading towards commercialisation the agricultural economists have a vital role to play in assisting the farmers to maintain the economic viability. The major areas in which education in agricultural economics may be useful for us are listed below.

Production Economics. An important problem in less developed countries like ours is that of substituting modern agricultural practices for traditional ones. Farm management must assist with studies which show the economic advantage of such a change. Study of agricultural economics can be very helpful for the improvement in the techniques of production used in agriculture. In the process the agricultural economist is concerned with the measurement of investment in farm capital and estimating the inputs in the different process used by the producers. On the basis of information thus obtained he can

suggest new techniques of production or varieties of crops with greater possibilities of success.

Marketing and Prices. Knowledge of agricultural economics is helpful for the study of marketing process of principal products like jute and rice. Because of the importance of export trade the marketing of export products like jute and tea has to be studied. Similarly important is the study of market structure, wholesale and retail marketing. Moreover, the study of demand, supply, price and income elasticities are necessary. For, prices are subject to fluctuation and price/production regulation for the best interest of the society require these knowledge.

The Supply of improved inputs and technology. The modernization of traditional agriculture depends to a great extent on the supply of modern inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, credit and implements. The ways in which these are supplied in this country are highly un-satisfactory ; the level of knowledge required to utilize these inputs is also inadequate. Education, research and extension in this area may go a long way in making the farmers more efficient.

Agricultural Policy : The well-being of the agricultural sector, nay the whole population depends on the public policy, action, objectives and their implementation with respect to the agricultural sector. The evaluation of these policies or their implications on the economy or economic dealing with specific problems of agriculture require a large quantity of basic information about the agricultural sector, e.g. role of agriculture in the economy, its place in the economy vis-a-vis other sectors and the objectives needed for its development. An agricultural economist, well-equipped with the knowledge of other relevant fields, e.g. basic economics, sociology and statistics can function as a guide in the practical problems of agricultural policy and its execution.

III. AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS EDUCATION IN THE GENERAL UNIVERSITIES

There are four universities in Bangladesh imparting general education in a wide range of disciplines at graduate (Pass and Honours) and post-graduate levels. These are Universities of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar. In these universities agricultural economics is taught as a part of general economics syllabus. For the sake of systematicism we shall first present an account of the course contents, teaching resources and level of emphasis in agricultural economics at various levels of instruction, university-wise and then evaluate these.

Teaching at Degree (Pass) Level

Economics is taught in three papers as an elective subject at B.A. (Pass) and as a compulsory subject at B. Com (Pass) levels in the affiliated degree colleges under three Universities (excepting Jahangirnagar University which is residential) of Bangladesh. One of these three papers is called Bangladesh Economy and a few topics on agricultural economics are touched upon only at a preliminary level in this paper. Broadly speaking, these topics are: Structure of the economy of rural Bangladesh, Problems of agricultural production (size of holdings, land tenure, land reforms), Food problem, Problems of agricultural marketing, Co-operation in agriculture, and Population problem.

Obviously, these topics are intended to be taught in the background of the economy of Bangladesh and hence no theoretical base is needed for the students. Teaching is imparted by the teachers having no special background in agricultural economics. It is doubtful if the syllabus can serve any useful purpose towards an intensive understanding of the economic problems of our agricultural sector or its population.

Teaching at the B.A. (Honours) Level

In the B.A. Honours level agricultural economics is taught as one of the papers consisting of 100 or 50 marks in all the general universities and their affiliated colleges having Honours course in Economics. It is also a compulsory paper as all other papers in the Honours level. While all other papers in Economics have their own water-tight compartments the paper on Agricultural Economics is a conglomeration of all the disciplines related to the economic problems of agriculture. It sketchily deals with the following theoretical fields: (a) agricultural production economics, (b) agricultural marketing, (c) price theory and analysis, (d) land economics, (e) population economics, and (f) the case of Bangladesh agriculture etc. The course contents, teaching facilities etc. are summarized university-wise as follows:

University of Dhaka: Being the oldest of all the universities it has pioneered the study of economics (and hence agricultural economics) in this country. Formerly, a few topics on agricultural economics were squeezed into a paper titled 'Rural Economics' and this continued upto early 1960's. In the late 1960's the paper was re-designated as 'Agricultural Economics' perhaps with a greater emphasis on the theoretical and applied aspects of agricultural economics. After the introduction of the course system in 1980 the paper has been bifurcated into theoretical and applied parts, the former being taught as a paper of 50 marks and the latter (of 50 marks) as a part of the paper on Bangladesh Economy. The courses of study relate sketchily to the above broad fields. About 100 students in the University and another 250 in six affiliated Honours colleges study this

course. Teaching in the University is generally imparted by teachers having specialization in the subject at some level. In the colleges the subject is taught by non-specialists.

University of Rajshahi : Agricultural Economics was introduced in 1963, the year in which Honours course was started in the University. Initially, the paper was of 100 marks. But with the introduction of course system the paper is being taught in 50 marks (in the Second year). Accordingly, the syllabus has shrunk down to a very few topics in Production economics, land economics, co-operation, agricultural marketing and finance (vide Appendix A). Nearly 130 students in the University and 200 in six Honours colleges take up the course. In the university the course is offered by teachers having specialization in agricultural economics at the post-graduate level while in colleges the generalists do the job.

University of Chittagong : Since the beginning of Honours course in Economics around 1969 Agricultural Economics is being taught as a paper of 100 marks. The course is subject to constant revision to cater to the need for down-to-earth training in the economics of agriculture. The students have to write a term paper of 20 marks on their practical experiences of visits to the sites of practical working of the economics of agriculture (e.g. T.C.C.A., B.A.R.D., Tebhaga Khamar, Grameen Bank etc.). As evident from the syllabus perhaps the teaching is more intensive and practical oriented than any other general university of the country. All Honours students numbering nearly 100 in the University and 125 in three Honours colleges study the course. In the University the teacher in-charge have specialization at the Ph.D. level while no trained teacher is available in the colleges.

Jahangirnagar University : At the second year Honours level agricultural economics is taught as a paper of 50 marks. The course contents are somewhat different from other universities. As can be seen from the syllabus (Appendix A), apart from being very condensed it has not done justice to various important aspects of knowledge on the subject, e.g. production economics, land economics and Bangladesh Agriculture.

Teaching at the Postgraduate Level

Teaching in the economics of agriculture or its allied field (i.e. rural economics) at the post-graduate (M.A./M.Sc. Final) level is available in all the general universities of Bangladesh excepting the University of Dhaka. In all the Universities, however, the course is an optional one. In some universities, e.g. the University of Chittagong, the course is offered also at the M.A. Preliminary level as a compulsory paper of 50 marks. The course contents and emphasis varies widely from university to university.

At the University of Rajshahi the paper named 'Rural Development' (formerly 'Agricultural Development') lays special emphasis to the concepts, problems and importance of rural development and its institutional aspects. The paper relates itself to the problem of agriculture only through its confinement to the problem of food self-sufficiency, land problems and policies and rural (agricultural) credit (Vide Appendix B). The number of students taking the course has increased from 80 in 1982 to 125 in 1984. A highly specialized teacher has been teaching the course for the last few years and it is reported that the course is being continuously revised to make it more and more practical oriented.

At the University of Chittagong the course in agricultural economics (named 'Selected Topics on Bangladesh Agriculture') involves both theoretical instructions in the class room as well as research on a problem relating to Bangladesh agriculture. In the course work (of 50 marks), out of ten selected issues on Bangladesh agriculture (vide Appendix B) on which the instructing teachers themselves have research experience, at least two topics are taught by each teacher highly intensively. The objective here is to make the students conversant with the findings of research on the problems of agriculture in Bangladesh. In the course of class-room teaching the students are also equipped with the tools and methodology for their prospective research works. At the end of the final examination, each student, upon the approval of the Chairman of the Department, writes a dissertation (of 50 marks) for 3-4 months himself generating data from field survey under the guidance of a specialized teacher. As the preparation of a dissertation requires special aptitude in research, only a few selected students (upto 10 in each session) are allowed to take the course. Two highly specialized teachers deal with the instruction of part of the course while for the dissertation part each student is assigned to a teacher capable of guiding him in his field.

In the Jahangirnagar University the paper is named as 'Rural Economics'. As can be seen from Appendix B, the paper is mainly concerned with structure and institutional aspects of the rural economy of Bangladesh and their policy implications. Certain aspects of Bangladesh agriculture, e.g. production, marketing and price, land tenure, employment and taxation etc. also appear in the syllabus. The course is optional and taught by a specialist in the field.

IV. EVALUATION : A FEW GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

From this brief survey of the present scenario of agricultural economics education in Bangladesh a few comments are in order :

1. At the degree level emphasis on the study is very negligible. This is undue especially in view of the overwhelming importance of agriculture in the national economy and direct/indirect dependence of a vast majority of population on the agricultural sector.

The topics in the syllabus are relevant in the context of Bangladesh agriculture but so sketchy that justice in teaching can hardly be expected. In order to make the students more informative about the economic problems of Bangladesh agriculture at least half of the syllabus in Bangladesh economy should consist of the economics of agriculture.

2. At the Honours level the objective perhaps is to create a knowledge-base in all aspects of agricultural economics and the related problems with respect to Bangladesh. This is evident in the fact that the paper taught in all the universities contain within itself all the broad disciplines of the faculty of Agricultural Economics. In the case of a few universities (e.g. Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar) the emphasis on the subject has, over the years, dwindled. This is obvious from the fact that with the introduction of the course system the subject has been reduced to half of its original size. This has kept the students on the threshold of the subject and far from learning the subject, any student within a year or two since the termination of his university career fails even to remember if he had in his syllabus a course called 'Agricultural Economics'.

3. Even in such an 'outline' type of syllabus certain very useful topics as farm management, economics of agriculture in the contemporary world etc. are absent. Similarly, agricultural statistics (sources of data and methods of compilation etc.) should have been taught at least in the Statistics paper. But unfortunately, it is nowhere in any of the syllabi.

4. As in the case of Honours course, in post-graduate teaching also the stress varies widely. For example, the Dhaka University has no course in Agricultural Economics. The courses at Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar are heavily weighted towards the problems of our rural economy within which agriculture is only but a major area. Perhaps the greatest importance to the subject at both Honours and post-graduate levels is attached at the University of Chittagong. This is apparent from the combining of course work and term paper/dissertation in both the courses of studies there. However, the subject being optional in all the universities does not adequately serve the purpose of agricultural economics education at an advanced level.

5. Like the teaching of Honours subjects in any discipline, the teaching of agricultural economics is a problem area in the University Colleges/Honours Colleges where only the generalists are available in the teaching staff. Obviously, the quality and level of teaching in Honours classes widely vary between the colleges and universities.

6. As for reading materials, most of the text books and reference materials are of foreign origin and written in English, while the medium of instruction and learning is Bangali for most of the students. Although most of these are very high quality stuff for

the theoretical part of the subject, yet these hardly relate to or illustrate the issues in the perspective of a developing country like ours. Because of the dearth of quality reading materials in Bengali the students often resort to some note books in Bengali of poor standard prepared and published locally.

V. SUMMARY AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From what precede, teaching Agricultural Economics in the general universities of Bangladesh has received varied level of emphasis from university to university. In a single paper of 50 or 100 marks at the Honours level proper justice to such a vast field can not be expected. The condition of teaching the subject in the colleges is even precarious due to the non-availability of trained teachers, quality books & journals and students of high calibre in general. The conviction in certain quarter that teaching agricultural economics does not require specialisation as in other branches of Economics (e.g. Theory, Macroeconomics, Econometrics etc.) is a sheer demonstration of the utter negligence to such a versatile discipline that encompass quite a wide range of technical areas (as production economics, price analysis, farm management & accounting etc.). If the economists from the general universities have to cater the need for professional agricultural economists in various ministries/departments and effectively contribute towards policy formulation with respect to agricultural development there is a need for rationalisation of the agricultural economics education in various universities through rectifying certain deficiencies in teaching, course contents, staffing and reading materials. In this context the following are suggested :

1. At the degree (pass) level a minimum of 50 marks should be earmarked for teaching agricultural economics. This can be done by dividing the paper on Bangladesh economy into two parts—part one consisting of the general economic problems of Bangladesh and part two of the economic aspects of Bangladesh agriculture. In view of the preponderance of agriculture in the life of majority of the Bangladeshis, such an emphasis is deemed to be overdue. The syllabi may be developed by the respective universities with the help of experts (if needed) from the Agricultural University/other universities.

2. At the Honours level the emphasis on the subject should be rationalised by upgrading the 50 marks paper (in some universities) into a full paper of 100 marks. Such topics as agricultural production economics, farm management, economic aspects of agriculture in less-developed areas etc. should receive due consideration for inclusion into the syllabus. It would be advisable to bifurcate the paper into 'theories of agricultural economics' and the 'economic aspects of Bangladesh agriculture'. Some credit should (in the line of the University of Chittagong) also be assigned to the preparation of a term paper

based on the practical experiences of the students about the working of the economic institutions of agriculture.

3. At the post-graduate level the paper should be made compulsory in all the universities. It is a pity that at the University of Dhaka the paper is not taught at the Masters level. The paper should be re-designated as 'Advanced Economics of Agriculture' and not 'Rural Economics' (an optional paper with that title may, however, exist). The paper should equip the students with advanced analytical tools to resolve the practical issues facing the agricultural sector. With this objective in view at least 25 marks should be allotted to the preparation of a dissertation on the basis of field-works on some selected issues.

4. Perhaps the teaching of Agricultural Economics can be placed on its proper perspective if the general universities arrange to open up a separate department of Agricultural Economics offering B.A. (Honours) and M.A. degrees in the subject. Provided necessary inputs are available, such a programme should not appear to be too ambitious especially when many important disciplines in the universities (e.g. Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Sociology, Languages etc.) have already been bifurcated.

5. To solve the problem of scarcity of reading materials in Banglaid in different areas of the subject effort should be made to remove the impediments on the way of the production of text books in Bengali by the experts in the universities or research organisations. Pending this, widely-used basic text books produced in English or other foreign languages (e.g. E.O. Heady's Economics of Agricultural Production and Resource Use) may be translated into Bengali. Development agencies like the A.D.C. and Ford Foundation may come up with funding of such programmes.¹

6. In recent years enormous volume of research materials, produced in mimeograph/printed forms have emerged on issues related to Bangladesh agriculture. Unfortunately, most of these are not adequately circulated among the teachers/researchers in the academic institutions. Some agency/organisation should take initiative to collect, compile, edit, translate (if necessary), publish and circulate these among the relevant departments in the universities and colleges. Alternatively, the universities themselves can do the work.

7. In order to improve the standard of teaching Agricultural Economics in the Honours colleges, a training programme for the college teachers of the type of 'Summer

1. In this connection the author recalls one laudable effort by Dr. G.J. Gill, Associate, A.D.C. (Inc.), Bangladesh who collected all articles/papers on Bangladesh economy published in various reputed foreign journals for reproduction and free distribution to researchers/academicians in Bangladesh.

Course' may be introduced by the B.A.U., Mymensingh. The programme may be jointly organised and funded by the B.A.U. and some other agency. The response to such a programme is likely to be encouraging.

8. Lastly, the class-room education of the students may be supplemented by some practical experience of the working of agricultural sector through field trips to such places as Rural Academy, T.C.C.A., Grameen Bank, Tebhaga Khamar, B.A.D.C., various irrigation projects, exhibition farms, livestock and other markets for primary products etc. The practical knowledge about the working of these will enable the students in their latter life to work as extension agents for the farmers to educate them as to how to make wise choice between enterprises, how to choose the best methods of production for their farms, how to buy the chemical inputs, how to sell their farm products, obtain and utilise credit most profitably. Some universities have long ago introduced field-trips in their curriculum while the others have yet to do so.

Appendix A

SYLLABUS IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS TAUGHT AT THE BACHELOR LEVEL IN VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES

University of Dhaka

Agricultural Economics (50 Marks)

Nature and scope of Agricultural Economics. Factor endowments in agriculture in developed and developing economies. Types of farming—Institutional factors—Land reforms—Co-operative and collective farming. Problems of production, marketing, finance, distribution in agriculture—the problems of agricultural prices. Agriculture in a developing economy—generation of surplus for growth. State in relation to agriculture—agricultural bias in national planning.

University of Rajshahi

Agricultural Economics (50 Marks)

Nature and scope of Agricultural Economics—Role of agriculture in economic development—Allocation of Resources : Input-output relationship, product relationship and factor-factor relationship—their implications. Land as a factor of production, supply of land, land man ratio—improvement of land use and soil conservation. Type

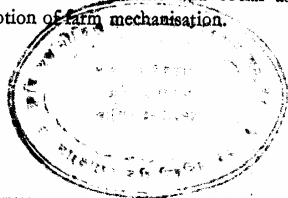
of Farming : cooperative farming, collective farming and subsistence and commercial farming. Land tenure systems and land reforms. Institutional factors—the role of co-operatives, agricultural marketing, agricultural finance.

University of Chittagong

Agricultural Economics (Total Marks 100 : Theory 80, Term Paper 20)

Theoretical Topics

1. Definition and Scope—Usefulness of the study of Agricultural Economics.
2. Factors of production in agriculture—importance of land as a factor of production in agriculture, land in a labour surplus underdeveloped country—land in a labour scarce manufacturing country—land-man ratios of some selected developed and underdeveloped countries and their implications.
3. Economics of land use and soil conservation—Methods of soil conservation and their effects—Role of Government in soil conservation.
4. Population growth and the supply of land—population and labour force—factors affecting population growth—rural-urban migration and population growth. Causes, effects and solutions.
5. Economics of farm size—controversies regarding big farms and small farms—farm size, scale and resource productivity—empirical evidences and lessons.
6. Agricultural inputs and methods of production—the input-output, product-product, and input-input relationships—resource structure, resource combination and the demand for inputs.
7. Uncertainty in agriculture—agricultural production cycle and supply response : the cobweb theorem—types of uncertainty in agriculture and their effects—measures to overcome the effects of uncertainty.
8. Technological change and innovation in agriculture—the input-output ratio—the diffusion of innovation—water-seed-fertilizer technology and agricultural production—modern technology versus indigenous production techniques—conclusion.
9. Farm mechanisation—economic and social aspects of farm mechanisation—reasons for the promotion of farm mechanisation.



10. Definition of agricultural marketing—the structure of agricultural markets—the structure-conduct-performance relationship—channelised and non-channelised marketing—contract farming and marketing boards—role of government in agricultural marketing.

11. Land reforms—definitions and concepts—land tenure, productivity and income distribution—theoretical arguments for individual peasant holding and collectivisation—land reforms in some selected countries such as Japan, Egypt, China and U.S.S.R.

12. Agricultural credit—agricultural practices and problems—evolution of current approach—problems of agricultural credit markets—constraints on the role of credit in development. Credit programmes and policies—designing credit programmes—financial viability of credit institutions—systems for delivering agricultural credit—policy making and administrative issues—Guidelines on delivery system—conclusion.

13. Agricultural policy—economics of agricultural support and price policies and their appraisal.

14. Agricultural issues in Bangladesh.

(a) The nature of Bangladesh agriculture—the agricultural production strategies and production performance—a critical evaluation.

(b) Water-seed-fertilizer technology—cultivation of HYV rice and its future prospects—effects of HYV rice on income, employment and productivity. Flood control, drainage and irrigation—large scale versus small scale irrigation methods in Bangladesh—problems and prospects.

(c) Agricultural credit distribution system—agricultural credit, SACP credit and Grameen Bank Credit and their relative efficiency—problems and prospects of agricultural credit in Bangladesh.

(d) The role of co-operatives in Bangladesh agriculture—the Comilla Approach—a critical evaluation.

(e) Fish resources in Bangladesh—problems and prospects.

(f) The marketing of agricultural products—the rice marketing—rice marketing in the private and public sectors—ration shops—ration distribution and price stabilisation—rice procurement and price stabilisation—incentive price and domestic procurement of rice : a critical evaluation.

- (g) Jute marketing—problems and prospects.
- (h) Food aid—food aid to Bangladesh—political economy of food aid—impact of food aid on domestic efforts for raising food production.
- (i) Famines in Bangladesh—their causes and consequences—policy measures to fight famines.

Term Paper

Each student will be required to write a term paper on the basis of field trips to agrobased rural projects such as TCCA, Grameen Bank, Model Village, Up-graded Thana etc. Twenty marks are allotted for the term paper which will be examined and graded by the class-teacher concerned. This system of examining term paper will be equally applicable both in case of college and university.

Jahangirnagar University

Economics of Agriculture (50 marks)

Nature and Scope of Agriculture—Agriculture in developing and developed countries—subsistence and commercial farming. *The Nature of Capitalist Agriculture*—The spread of innovation—land augmenting innovation—changes in labour requirement—structural changes.

Farm size, productivity and returns to scale in agriculture—theory and application in Bangladesh—farm structure, tenurial relations, technological change and productivity with special reference to Bangladesh agriculture.

Unemployment and under employment in Bangladesh agriculture. Institutional problems—Agricultural finance, marketing of agricultural commodities. Price policy in agriculture. *Agriculture and Economic Development*—The relationship between agriculture and industry—the problems of intersectoral terms of exchange.

Appendix B

SYLLABUS IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS TAUGHT AT THE MASTERS LEVEL IN VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES

University of Rajshahi

Rural Development (100 Marks : Optional)

1. Concept and importance of rural development : definition of rural development, concept of integrated rural development—importance of rural development with special reference to Bangladesh.
2. Approaches to rural development : Schultz's approach, Myrdal's approach and World Bank's approaches (old and new) to rural development—a critical analysis.
3. National Goals, Policies, Plan, Strategies, Approaches and Programmes Relating to Rural Development in Bangladesh. A Critical Review of current National Plans—The case of Area Planning.
4. Food Self-sufficiency strategy : concept, assessment of demand, projection of demand-supply of food, possibilities of increased agricultural output—Demand-Supply balance—Food policy.
5. Rural Institutions : Identification of formal/informal rural institution—A critical review of their role in rural development—Towards building appropriate rural institutions in Bangladesh.
6. Land problems and policies : distribution of land by size of land and by tenure status—their implication—Land reforms : its implementation.
7. Rural Credit : Its importance and sources—problems. Recent approaches to rural credit in Bangladesh

University of Chittagong

Selected Topics in Rural Economics : Bangladesh (100 Marks : M.A. Final Year)

This is a seminar course to be offered to selected number of students. There will be a written final examination of 50 marks and the remaining 50 marks will be assigned

as a research paper to be written under the guidance of the teacher on the basis of empirical data to be collected by students. Intensive discussions will be held on at least two of the following topics. Outside experts will be invited to participate in the discussions.

(1) Rural Credit (2) Land Reform (3) Rural Institutions (4) Strategy for food self-sufficiency (5) Planning for Bangladesh Agriculture (6) Structure of Bangladesh Agrarian Society and its impact on Rural and National Economy (7) Agricultural Marketing (8) Agricultural Taxation (9) Issues in food & nutrition (10) Forestry & Fisheries.

Agricultural Economics (50 marks : M.A. First Year)

1. Agriculture and the Economy of different countries and Bangladesh. Rural Bangladesh : Administrative units—Divisions, Districts, Sub-Divisions, Thanas, Unions, and Villages. Agencies responsible for rural upliftment ; their structure and inter-relations at different administrative levels. (This part of the course is intended to equip the student with a thorough knowledge of the functioning of different agencies at various levels of the rural society).

2. Land as a factor of production in agriculture—supply of land—Man-Land ratio of various countries. Improvement of land use and soil conservation.

3. Agricultural Inputs and Methods of Production : Introduction of new inputs and methods in Bangladesh agriculture. Agricultural production economics : input-output relationships ; Resource combination and uncertainty in agriculture ; agricultural production cycle—supply of agricultural products—the Cobweb theorem.

4. Land Reforms—Definitions and concepts— theoretical arguments for individual peasant holdings and collectivisation. Problems of land reforms in Bangladesh—search for a comprehensive agrarian reforms in Bangladesh.

5. Cooperatives : Co-operative approaches to agricultural development : the Comilla approach, analysis of Comilla approach—its potential to solve general problems of Bangladesh agriculture especially those of credit and marketing (Recommended : Field trips to study functioning of at least two TCCA's and a term paper on the operation of selected TCCA).

Jahangirnagar University

Rural Economics (100 marks : Optional)

1. Structure of Bangladesh economy : Predominance of rural sector and its implications in the context of growth—major economic activities in the rural sector of Bangladesh.

2. Agriculture : (A) Production : Traditional and modern agriculture ; production function ; scale of farming ; land allocation between different uses and crops ; technological changes ; production response to price.

(B) Inputs : Economics of irrigation and fertilizer use ; input supply and distribution ; agricultural credit.

(C) Institutional Structure : Tenurial relations and allocation efficiency ; land reforms ; farm size policy ; cooperative and collective farming.

(D) Mode of production : Concept, definition and types of mode of production ; Relevance of mode of production for suggesting policies regarding rural development ; Current controversies on the mode of production in Bangladesh agriculture.

(E) Demand, Supply and Marketing : Demand for and supply of agricultural commodities ; income and price elasticities ; marketed surplus ; procurement, distribution and pricing policies, international commodity price stabilization.

3. Agriculture and Economic Growth : Strategies for agricultural development ; agricultural surplus and taxation ; relationship between agriculture and the rest of the economy ; unemployment and underemployment in Bangladesh agriculture and its implications for growth.

4. Rural Industries : Problems and prospects. Services sector in rural Bangladesh.

5. Approaches to Rural Development : Current trend towards a participatory approach to rural development : concept of integrated rural development : (a) relevant theory (b) Bangladesh experience, and (c) some international comparisons.

6. Field visit to and survey of a typical rural society and preparation of a report on a particular rural problem.