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Professor Ilaria Ossella-Durbal's Sabbatical Adventures

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Professor Ilaria Ossella-Durbal's Sabbatical Adventures

Abstract

Melissa Seeborg provides a brief overview of Professor Durbal-Ossella's sabbatical research, which focus on developing content for her "Economics of Developing Countries" course.

Professor Ilaria Ossella-Durbal's Sabbatical Adventures

Melissa Seeborg

In the economics of developing countries, there often emerges the question of how one can take an abstract theory and transform it into a functional policy or project. During her sabbatical in the Spring of 2013, Professor Durbal is tackling this question and making the connections more fruitful for her students. The purpose of her work is to compile a series of different projects to create a supplemental reader for her ECON 355 Economics of Developing Countries course, which will then be utilized in assignments throughout the year.

'The Green Revolution' in Asia serves as an example of one of these projects. Here, a number of economic and technological initiatives were implemented to commercialize agriculture and increase food production. However, criticisms over the true value of increased production and fears have emerged over the abundant use of fertilizer and its long-run effects on the soil. By incorporating examples similar to 'The Green Revolution', Professor Durbal's supplement will force students to take a critical look at the material and see how projects in developing countries are panning out in reality.

Current examples of development projects will be compiled using information from The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Bank, and other agencies. Professor Durbal will also be researching and keeping up with think tanks in developmental economics. Her final product is sure to provide a fuller picture of economics outside of the more traditional realm, and will be beneficial for many future classes to come.

In addition to research and the creation of the supplement, Professor Durbal took time out of the office for travel, which included an tiger safari in India!

Students and faculty look forward to welcoming Professor Durbal back next fall!

