RPAD 364/RPOS 366: Approaches to Development
Spring 2014

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Course Description:

This course introduces the main principles of economic, political and social development, and provides students with an appreciation for the problems and constraints that developing countries face. It presents economic and institutional frameworks that facilitate the analysis of these problems and the generation of relevant policy recommendations as well as country-specific and issue-specific contexts within which students can apply the knowledge they acquire during the course.

We will take an inter-disciplinary approach that blends insights from the disciplines of economics, political science, public administration and anthropology in order to generate fresh thinking on important policy issues facing governments in developing and developed countries. Aside from readings, presentations and class discussions, students will work together to address important issues. Students will complete a number of short reviews of literature, an assessment and a policy memo in the class.

Core Readings: Available at Mary Jane’s Books

- Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom (Anchor, 2011)
- Carlo Levi, Christ Stopped at Eboli (1947) (Blackboard)
- Paul Collier, The Bottom Billion (Oxford, 2007)
- Arian de Haan, How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development (Kumarian Press, 2009)
- Assessments, articles and reports available on e-reserve via Blackboard
- Blogs, assessments, and evaluations, from multilateral institutions, development institutes, etc., e.g., USAID, DFID, World Bank, Center for Global Development, Innovations for Poverty Action, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at MIT, etc.

Requirements

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Learning Objectives. At the end of this class, students should be able to:

- Summarize classical and contemporary definitions and approaches to international development, especially those that and articulate a critique and defense of these approaches.
- Analyze the effectiveness of varying donors’ approaches to international assistance for development, including inter-governmental and individual government donors.
- Formulate elements of a ‘Development Assistance Framework’ (or donor strategy of activity with a specific country).
- Develop research skills: finding materials, reading closely and summarizing texts and drawing inferences concerning motivations and causation of policies and events; and formulating policies to enhance development.
- Develop analytic and writing skills that enable you to distill and summarize source materials, including coherent, written arguments with support from diverse sources.
- Develop the capacity to make oral presentations and arguments in support of a particular policy area.

Expectations: Students will be expected to come to every class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Attendance is expected and is especially important on the days of quizzes/class exercises. Students will be expected to turn in assigned work on time. Late work will face deductions. Students will benefit from taking notes during class.

Class Etiquette. There will be no texting in class. In addition, class discussions will take place in a spirit of mutual respect and deference. There will certainly be differences in viewpoints among us, and students will respect these differences.

Writing and Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another’s words or ideas without giving credit to that person. While this includes copying text word for word without the use of quotation marks, it also includes paraphrasing another person’s work without proper citation. Intellectual honesty is a core value of university and the foundation of faculty and student development. Students guilty of plagiarizing any material will receive a failing grade for the course and the evidence will be automatically turned over to the Office of Student Conduct. During the first week of class, all students must review the UAlbany Library’s tutorial on plagiarism entitled: Plagiarism 101 (http://library.albany.edu/usered/ncplaga/index.html). It is really far easier to do your own work than to plagiarize and students would be most unwise to consider it.

Accommodations Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in any Reading Department class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services.
(Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations. The University provides a great deal of information on the services it offers to disabled students which can be found on the Disability Resource Center page. The university’s policy is at: http://www.albany.edu/disability/docs/RAP.pdf

**Participation.** Class participation consists of preparation for and engagement in class discussion. It entails regular class attendance, completing assigned readings, participation in groups, and asking relevant questions.

**Groups/Teams.** Students will be divided into teams on Day 2 of the class. They will sit together with team members throughout the class, and there will be a number of group exercises and assignments during the class. The

**Quizzes.** Students will take 3 short quizzes that test their knowledge of the material and familiarity with IOs in contemporary events.

**Midterm and Final:** These essay exams will give the opportunity to present views on the material covered in class and in readings.

**(DAF) Development Assistance Framework:** Each group will devise a DAF for a developing country. The group exercises throughout the semester will provide the occasion for students to develop this framework. Each student will then put together a paper on a different area – health, education, corruption, employment strategy, business development, etc. – that will fit into that strategy. Detailed assignment will be handed out in class. **Due May 2. Penalties for late papers.**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Thinking About Development:** The first part of the class will explore the meaning of development and review approaches to development. We will articulate a definition of “development” that includes other sub-objective (eg., well-being, prosperity, human development, sustainable development, democracy, etc.) We will explore competing explanations of why some governments are wealthier than others, and analyze how politics, institutions, ideas and interests provide a context for development.

**January 22, 24: Introduction: Scope and Method.** How do we know what we know – ways of learning; approaches to the field. The readings below are recommended and. Geertz’s article is a classic; Rousseau’s manuscript (especially Chapters 2 and 4) will be useful as you craft arguments for exams and your Development Assistance Framework.

- Clifford Geertz. “Notes on a Balinese Cockfight” - blackboard
January 27, 29, 31: What is development? Does ‘development as freedom’ imply the development of individual and group capabilities, and opportunities? Which ones? How can we fit in important institutions, such as the market, state, media, opposition and NGOs into an integrated framework?


February 3, 5, 7: What does development imply? Does Sen’s approach to development provide a basis in advancing policy making and ‘interventions’ in development by leading to particular kinds of developmental strategies? Is it possible to achieve diverse goals, including ending hunger and advancing human rights, collective cultural rights, gender equity and transparency?

- Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, pp. 146-299:

February 10, 12: Underdevelopment in Europe. In what sense is Gagliano underdeveloped? To what extent has ‘underdevelopment’ become engrained as a part of life? Would the destruction of traditional forms in the course of economic development lead to a broader underdevelopment? Is it possible for ‘agents of development’ to support constructive development?

- Carlo Levi: *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (Farrar, Strauss and Co., 1947) - blackboard

February 14: Quiz and Exercise in DAFs (Development Assistance Frameworks)

February 17, 19: Development Traps. What “traps” appear to impede the capacity for the poorest countries to ‘develop’. What is the logic underlying each of the traps, and what solutions exist to eradicate these traps?

- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, pp. 1-96

February 24, 26, 28, March 3, 5: Institutions for Development: Historically, what has led some countries to become rich and others to become poor? How do the different factors of geography, culture, political leadership and institutions combine to affect different countries’ trajectory of development?

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail, The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*
  
  o 2/24: pp. 1-69. Wrong-headed approaches to development
  o 2/26: pp. 70-151. The role of institutions in development
  o 2/28: pp. 151-301. The emergence of current inequalities
  o 3/3: pp. 302-403 Virtuous and Vicious Circes
  o 3/5: pp. 404-462. Solutions and policies
• http://whynationsfail.com/ This is the authors’ blog addressing ongoing issues associated with development. It is recommended

March 7: Quiz, DAF Assignment handed out, Review for Exam
March 10: Midterm

Working in/at Development: The second part of the class will address policy making on development and also explore consider the ‘big business’ of development. It will consider important questions currently under discussion in capitals: What are the key practical obstacles facing development in developing and developed societies? How much and what kind of development assistance is most effective?

March 12, 14: Introduction to the Development Business:

• Collier, The Bottom Billion, pp. 99-195
• Arian de Haan, How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development, pp. 1-63.

Recommended Readings for Reference

• Readings from the World Bank and USAID, Blackboard -- some project documents http://www.usaid.gov/doing-business-usaid

March 26, 28, 31: The Necessity (?) for Aid. One school of thought holds that well-designed assistance programs can provide the missing ingredient to initiate sustainable development. What principles underlie this thinking? Who controls the agenda and drives the ‘development train’?

• Arian de Haan, How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development, pp. 64-150

Recommended Readings for reference

April 2, 4, 9, 11: The Illusion (?) of Aid: Another school of thought argues that most foreign aid helps to prop up ineffective governments, strengthens corruption and does not lead to self-sustaining development. How can help overcome these externalities and inefficiencies in aid? What strategies of assistance would be most effective in overcoming these problems.

- Arian de Haan, *How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development*, pp. 64-150

Recommended Readings for Reference


April 16: Quiz and Class Exercise

April 18, 23, 25: Health Policy and Well Being How effective has international assistance been in addressing inequalities in health care and living standards globally? To what extent have donors successfully addressed global inequality in health and living standards?

- Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape*, pp. 1-263

April 28, 30: The Great Escape? What is the most effective approach to a development assistance strategy? Who should set the goals? What is the method of determining the most effective approach to assistance? How much advice should be given? How much financial assistance should be given?

- Jeffrey Sachs, “the Case for Aid,” Foreign Policy, Blackboard or Selected Readings on blackboard [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/01/21/the_case_for_aid](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/01/21/the_case_for_aid)

May 2, 5, 7: Development Assistance Frameworks

- Each group will present their DAFs for the class: 2 per day