ACR 826
International Development Theory and Practice

Instructor: John Kerr  jkerr@msu.edu, 325 Natural Resources Building, tel: 353-0762

Class Hours: Tuesdays 3:00-5:50 PM, 223 Natural Resources Building

Office Hours: by appointment (best to contact first by email or phone)

Course Description

This course is intended to situate the current controversies about various approaches to international development and world poverty alleviation in the context of the evolution of international development theory and conceptualizations of development and poverty since the end of World War II in 1945. The continuing challenges of world poverty and global inequalities are central to this course. The course is designed to assist students from different disciplinary backgrounds to understand the concept(s) of development, the dominant paradigms of international development, the shifts in development paradigms over time, and recurrent themes in international development. Current issues, concerns, and strategic alternatives are discussed and related to actual cases of international development cooperation. The purpose is practical as well as critical, that is, to search for approaches to international development that work.

The course aims for an interdisciplinary approach to addressing critical dimensions of international development. Key concepts are introduced through background readings, case studies, discussions, and group exercises. Readings, in-class presentations and assignments are used to stress the need for an interdisciplinary approach to international development.

The fourteen weeks of the course will cover the following topics:

1. Introduction
2. Definitions and concepts of poverty and development
3. Environment and development (sustainable development)
4. Economic modernization theories of development
5. Neo-Marxist and self reliance theories of development
6. Trade policy debates
7. Agriculture and development
8. Governments: facilitators or impediments to development
9. Improving governance
10. The debt crisis and structural adjustment
11. Development assistance and foreign aid
12. Globalization and the WTO
13. Making the market work for the poor?
14. Human capital and conditional cash transfers

Required Text

The reason for requiring this book is that it is a very thorough, unbiased summary of theoretical literature about international development in the second half of the 20th century. It is a good sourcebook for most topics we discuss.

This will be available at bookstores in East Lansing. Note that the first and second editions are identical, in case you buy it on line.

Other readings will be available on Angel. Some of them are from books from which we’ll only read a chapter or two but you might consider buying the book if you think you will write a paper related to the topic or would like to have a good reference book handy. Most books we will use in the class are available very cheaply on-line if you buy them used. Other books to consider buying are:


(Another interesting book on a popular approach for studying what works in poverty alleviation)


(Has chapters on several topics we will cover)

Easterly, William. 2006. The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Penguin Press.

(Written as a direct rebuttal to Sachs – see below.)


(A short, very interesting book on an approach with growing popularity worldwide)

Karlan, Dean, and Jacob Appel. More than good intentions: how a new economics is helping to solve global poverty. Dutton.

(Similar to Bannerjee and Duflo. Very readable, excellent.)


(A leftist criticism of the big ideas of development. Thought provoking but sometimes overly cynical.)


(A famous but controversial book that we will read a little bit from; not my favorite but good to be familiar with.)


(A classic, even though we will only read a little bit from it. Takes a broad view of what constitutes development.)

Todaro, Michael, and Steven Smith: Economic Development.

(A very long, very readable book on the economics of development that is a good reference for just about any topic related to economic development. There are at least 10 editions. The newest edition is extremely expensive but slightly earlier editions are much less expensive if you buy them used.)
Format

Class sessions will follow a seminar format. During the first half of each 3-hour session the instructor or a guest lecturer will summarize key issues related to the week’s topic. Class discussion will focus on concepts and problems raised in weekly readings that each student is expected to have read prior to each session. The instructor will facilitate discussion through writing assignments and in-class exercises.

Assignments and Evaluation

Graded assignments include weekly reflections, a short presentation, two short papers, and a final exam. Students also will be graded on class participation, which includes working with me to help organize once during the semester to organize a session of the class.

1. Reflections on each week’s reading

Each student should submit reflections on the readings 8 times during the semester. These should be at least 1 single spaced page and not more than 2 single spaced pages, basically your observations or comments on what you find interesting, controversial or useful in the readings. These reflections must be posted to the course web site in advance since they will contribute to class discussion. We will decide as a group the schedule for posting reflections. (Normally for an afternoon class the agreed upon time ends up being early evening the day before.)

In addition to these 8 reflections papers, at the start of the course each student will write a short (half page to one page) statement of his or her perspectives on development, what it means, some priorities, and ideas for how to achieve them.

The weekly reflections and entry paper will be graded as a whole and will work as follows. Assuming a student submits all 8 weekly reflections (after the entry paper), he or she begins with a score of 85/100 and it will go up or down based on the instructors’ assessment of their quality and the effort put into them. (A high quality reflection covers all the required readings and raises interesting points about them.) A student will lose 12 points for each reflection paper not submitted. Then the whole score will be pro-rated to be worth 20 percent of the total class grade. I will let people know after the reflections in the early part of the class if they have the right idea, and I will notify anyone anytime if I am looking for something different in the reflections. The reflections can be written in an informal style; I will not grade for spelling and grammar but if by chance your style is too relaxed for me to understand then I will ask you to sharpen it in subsequent papers. (As an example, recently I had a student whose reflections gave me the impression she couldn’t write well and couldn’t get her ideas across on paper. It turned out I was mistaken; she was an excellent writer when she tried. But in her reflections initially she used her own personal style of shorthand, with half-sentences and abbreviations that made it very hard for me to follow. This is the kind of thing I ask you to avoid.)

2. Presentation

Each week two or three students will give a short presentation on key issues related to the readings. It will be timed and part of the grade is to keep it to no more than 5 minutes. The main purposes of this assignment are: 1) raise some good points for discussion, 2) practice giving a good, short presentation.

Please keep in mind that it is very difficult but very important to be able to give a good but concise presentation. It would be much easier to talk for 10 or 15 minutes than 5 but the point of the assignment is to keep it very short. We will use a timer and enforce the time strictly.
Each student will give one presentation during the semester; it will be worth 10 points out of 100 toward your grade. Assessment criteria are that it should be clearly presented, well organized, linked clearly to other readings so that other students understand why it belongs, get interesting points across, stay within the time allotted, and have useful visual aids as appropriate. (Sometimes visual aids aren’t needed and you don’t have to use powerpoint if you prefer not to.) The exact rubric will be posted on Angel.

3. Working with me to organize one session of the class

The students who give a five-minute presentation will also be responsible for working with me to organize the class in a useful way. Of course I’ll work closely with them and the main purpose of this assignment is to give people a role to help set the agenda in a way that interests them.

There are many things we can do and many ways you can help, for example by identifying an interesting video, helping think of a useful discussion question and/or leading a discussion session, helping design and/or lead a role play activity that demonstrates some useful points, or some combination of these things. If we have some kind of role play, it’s important not just that we undertake the activity but also that we take some time for discussion of it afterward in order to digest some key lessons.

Another possibility could be a guided, interactive discussion. For example, one year in another class one student led the whole class through an exercise related to game theory, all applied to another case that was presented the previous week.

Finally, it's also fine to just focus on discussion, either in the large group or small groups. If we have some variety it will probably work best.

Organizing the discussion or activity is part of your participation grade for the class. Grading criteria are simply that you take some initiative and be engaged in the process. Of course coming up with and executing a good idea is the best thing of all, but it’s hard to grade on that basis because sometimes something seems like a great idea but for one reason or another it doesn’t work out too well.

4. Two short papers

Two short papers will be required during the course of the semester, each between 1500 and 2000 words not excluding references. I will select a number of topics for the papers and students are free to choose from among those topics. Papers should be analytical, drawing on relevant theory as appropriate, and address the topic from multiple perspectives. The papers will be due in October and December; you will be free to set your own due date within certain time periods but you must select the date in advance and stick to it.

These papers must follow a formal academic style, with all ideas from the literature cited properly. The papers must be free of spelling and grammatical mistakes; if you are not confident about your writing you should consider taking a draft to the MSU Writing Center (http://writing.msu.edu/) or have one of your friends look at it before you turn it in.

5. Final exam

The final exam will be in-class during the final exam period. Officially our exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 15 from 3 PM to 5 PM but we will revisit this once everyone knows their schedule. Students can write the exam on paper or on their laptop and they may consult their notes. The exam
questions will follow two main types: 1) identification questions in which the answer requires defining a concept, explaining its relevance to international development, and giving an example from the readings or class discussion; and 2) short essay questions that require synthesizing an idea and applying it to a particular context.

I will try to organize the exam in a way that minimizes time pressure. The objective will be to write clearly and concisely, with no rewards for being verbose. Also, for students whose first language is not English or who have other reasons for needing more time, I will allow extra time beyond the two hours officially designated for the exam. I will not grade on spelling and grammar; the paper just needs to get its point across clearly.

6. Class participation

This refers to attending class, writing your entry statement, contributing to class discussion (either in class or on line), and helping me organize one session. The grade will be established as follows: everyone begins with a score of 85/100 and it goes up or possibly down based on the instructor’s assessment. Normally it will go up for anyone who is engaged in the class.

Overall grades for the class will be determined as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflections on readings (8 during the semester plus entry paper)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two short papers due October and December</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>One five-minute presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
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Grading scale for the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92 to 100%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 92%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 to 84%</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>75 to 79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 to 74%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 to 69%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>No Credit</td>
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Graduate Specializations

This course may be taken for credit for the CASID/WID Graduate Specialization in International Development. This specialization is available as an elective for students who are enrolled in master's and doctoral degree programs at Michigan State University. The specialization in international development is designed to: (a) provide an opportunity for graduate students to obtain a comprehensive and contemporary academic experience in the field of international development studies; (b) sensitize graduate students with an interest in development studies to their professional obligations and responsibilities; and develop an intellectual environment that will foster the growth of research and teaching in the area of development studies. For more information see http://www.isp.msu.edu/CASID/students/specializations/graduate.html or contact Rob Glew at CASID.
The course is also an approved specialization for the Ethics and Development graduate specialization: http://www.msu.edu/unit/phl/EandDWebsite/index.htm

It also can be used to meet the FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies). FLAS students must take one language course and one course that is at least 25% related to their geographic area of interest. You can easily satisfy the 25% requirement by focusing some of your assignments on a geographic area. (If your issues paper and some of your reflections address your geographic area of interest you will meet the requirement.)

Please note:

Unexpected events take place and factors out of our control can obstruct our plans. I will be highly sensitive to such things, and students with personal circumstances that hamper their ability to carry out certain tasks on time are encouraged to contact me in advance. By contrast, it is much more difficult to be flexible if students do not make the effort to contact me in advance.

Course Outline and Readings (some readings will be updated)

Week 1  September 6
Introduction

Week 2  September 13
Definitions and Concepts of Poverty and Development

Required:


Sen, Amartya. Development as freedom, pp 3-11: development as freedom and what it means, why it matters

Also: Each person will choose an additional short reading and will be part of a group that discusses them in class. Hard copies will be available in class. Please select one with which you are not familiar, and preferably one that reflects a view very different from what you normally think about. We will end up with five groups of about 4 people choosing each reading; the groups will give a 5-minute presentation about this reading to share with the rest of class.

Recommended:


Shiva, Vandana. Development, ecology and women, pp 33-42

Wade, Robert. The rising inequality of income distribution. in Seligson and Passe Smith –pp 31-39

Chambers, Robert: Seasonal dimensions of rural poverty.

**Week 3 September 20**

**The environment and economic development**

(Guest lecturer: Robert Richardson)

**Required:**


Ho, Peter. 2006. Trajectories for Greening in China: Theory and Practice. Development and Change 37(1): 3-28. (pp 1-18 required; the rest describes the other articles in the special issue and you can skim that part.)


**Recommended**

Mainstreaming risk. Chpt 12: Sustainable development from below.


UNDP, Poverty and Climate Change: Reducing the Vulnerability of Poor Through Adaptation

DFID: Impact of Climate Change on the Vulnerability of the Poor

Barlow, Maude. 2008. Chapter 1 in Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water


The Economist. 2006. Clean water is a right: but it also needs to have a price. The Economist, November 6, 2006.

Week 4 September 27
Economic Modernization Theories of Development

Required:

Easterly, William. 2001. The elusive quest for growth. Chpt 2, pp 25-44, Aid to investment. (pages 25-32 required, the rest optional but encouraged. The key idea is to understand the motivations for the modernization school of thought.)

Martinussen, chapters 4-5, pp 49-73. Major theoretical currents in development economics; Theories of growth and modernization.

Lewis, W. Arthur. 1954. Economic development with unlimited supplies of labour. The Manchester School vol XXII, no. 2 (May): 139-91. NOTE: only sections 2, 5 and 8 are required. The others add details to the model and the main point of reading this is to get the key ideas. (pp 60-64, 72-75, 83-87).

Film: Commanding Heights: The Battle of Ideas. Episode 1: The Battle of Ideas. This video is available on the web at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/story/ch_menu.html. Also go to the
Commanding Heights home page www.pbs.org/commandingheights for information about the entire video series. See the reading guide for a discussion of the first episode.

Please watch all of Episode One by October 12. It is about two hours long.

Recommended:


Various original articles discussed in Martinussen (e.g. Rosenstein-Rodan, Nurske, Hirschman, etc.)

Week 5 October 4
Neo-Marxist development theories and self-reliance

Required for everyone:

Martinussen, chapter 7, pp 85-100. Neo-Marxist theories of underdevelopment and dependency.


Recommended:


Martinussen, chapter 6, pp 73-84. Structuralist theories and industrial development

Martinussen, chapter 8, pp 101-113. Neo-Marxist theories of underdevelopment and dependency; Modes of production and social classes.

Various original articles discussed in Martinussen.

Week 6 October 11
Trade policy debates

Todaro, Michael, and Steven Smith C. Economic Development, 8th edition. Excerpts on trade theory and
trade policy:

- Pp 515-525: intro, five questions, primary commodities, comp adv.
- 531-533: traditional arguments for and against trade
- 556-567: trade strategies, export promotion, import substitution


**Recommended**


**Week 7  October 18**

The Role of Agriculture in Economic Development

**Required:**


Martinussen, chapter 10, Focus on agricultural development 129-142.


**Recommended**


World Development Report 2008. Several chapters may be useful to those of you interested in agriculture.


**Week 8 October 25**

**Governments: Facilitators or Impediments to Development**

**Required:**

Martinussen, Chpt 17, The political economy of development. pp. 237-251 only. *The rest of the chapter on new institutional economics is optional.*


**Recommended:**


Martinussen, Chpt 18, pp 257-274. State or market?


**Week 9 November 1**

**Improving governance and decentralization**

**Required:**

Guggenheim, Scott. 2006. Crises and contradictions: understanding the origins of a community development project in Indonesia. In A. Bebbington, S. Guggenheim, E. Olson, & M. Woolcock (Eds.), The search for empowerment. Social capital as theory and practice at the World Bank. West Hartford: Kumarian Press. *(No need to read the entire paper – read the first several pages to understand how the program works.)*

Martinussen, chpt. 15, pp. 210-216. Decentralization and local-level politics.


**Recommended:**


Uvin, Peter, Pankaj Jain, and David Brown. Think large and act small: toward a new paradigm for scaling up. World Development 28(8): 1409-1419.

**Week 10 November 8**

**Debt Crisis and Structural Adjustment**

**Required:**


IMF Factsheet: Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. (2 pages)


**Recommended**

Easterly, William. Think again: debt relief. In *Foreign Policy* November/December 2001 (and several letters to the editor responding to him in the March/April 2002 issue.)


Stiglitz, Joseph. The burden of debt. Chapter 9, pp 211-244, in *Making Globalization Work*.


**Week 11 November 15**

**Foreign Aid**

**Required:**


Easterly, William. 2006. The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Penguin Press. Chapter 1, Planners vs. Searchers, Chapter 10, Homegrown Development (pp 345-347 and 363-364 only), and Chapter 11, The Future of Western Assistance.

**Recommended:**

See Center for Global Development web site for a wide variety of articles on foreign aid and other issues related to international development.


Collier, Paul. 2007. Aid to the rescue? In The Bottom Billion.


Karlan, Dean, and Jacob Appel. More than good intentions: how a new economics is helping to solve global poverty. Dutton.


Easterly, William. 2006. The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Penguin Press.

**Week 12 November 22**

**Globalization and The WTO**

**Required**


**Recommended**


See Joseph Stiglitz’s home page for numerous readings related to this and many other topics related to the course. [http://www2.gsb.columbia.edu/faculty/jstiglitz/papers.cfm](http://www2.gsb.columbia.edu/faculty/jstiglitz/papers.cfm)


International Monetary Fund. 2000. Globalization: threat or opportunity?

Watkins, Kevin, and Joachim von Braun. No date. Time to stop dumping on the world’s poor. IFPRI, Washington, DC.


Week 13 November 29
Making the market work for the poor?

Required:


Hazell, Peter, and Jerry Skees. 2005. Insuring against bad weather: recent thinking. (pp 1-5 required; the rest is optional.) Forum for Agricultural Risk Management in Development.

Recommended:


Cousins, Ben, et al. 2005. Will formalizing property rights reduce poverty in South Africa’s ‘second economy’? Policy Brief 18, Program for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of Western Cape. (6 pp.)


See the following web page for more info on microfinance: http://www.gdrc.org/icm/icm-documents.html


Week 14 December 6

Human capital development and Conditional Cash Transfers


Recommended

Todaro, chpt. 9. Human capital: education and health in economic development. (pp 360-379 only)


Easterly, William. The elusive quest for growth. Chapter 4, pp 71-84. Educated for what?


Santiago Levy lecture
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-dt_sz5spE&playnext=1&list=PL697984547755D783&index=1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFRst5sfDhQ&list=PL697984547755D783&index=3&playnext=2


Week 15 Finals week
December 15 (Thursday) 3:00-5:00 PM is the official final exam period for this class.

We will have a final exam but we will determine which day to actually hold the exam once people find out their schedules.