INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 322
Poverty and Development

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This course will examine development processes in poor countries, focusing on the causes of and solutions to widespread poverty. Student activities will center around team research of a specific country, with the final product being a realistic development plan for poverty alleviation. In past classes, some teams have implemented their projects either as part of the course or in follow-up work.

IR 322 is focused on the national level, emphasizing the policy issues that arise from nations living within the systemic context discussed in IR 222 and applying development theory to a particular case. Students are expected to take both courses in the same semester, creating an intensive immersion in both the general theory of international political economy and its specific application in solving concrete development problems.

The centerpiece of IR 322 will be a semester-long team research project in which each group will study the development problems of a single country, applying general theory and empirical findings to the particular case. Each team will monitor the development performance of a particular nation and regularly report to the class on it. During the first part of the course, the emphasis of that monitoring will be descriptive: what developmental processes and trends are underway in the nation? In the second part of the course, the emphasis will shift to explanatory questions: why is development proceeding as it is? Increasingly throughout the semester, our focus will be directed as well toward prescriptive issues: how can specific problems be solved?

The culminating product of that project will be a development plan designed to achieve real progress in solving the poverty and development problems of the chosen country. Depending on student interest, the oral and written presentation of that development plan will be directed toward an actual funding agency or conducted within a role playing context in which the team will seek to convince an important actor – a head of state, World Bank official, foreign aid staffer, NGO director, or multinational corporation executive, for example – that the development plan should be adopted and resources expended in pursuit of it. Students will be encouraged to consider planning projects of international social entrepreneurship which might be implemented at a later date.

Important goals of the course are to provide students with experience in working within a team environment and writing/presenting for a particular audience, both skills that are essential in LAL (life after Lehigh). If possible, students will also gain experience in “doing development” on the ground.
READINGS


- Additional readings will be available via CourseSite.

- Students should monitor contemporary events with a high-quality news source, particularly with respect to their chosen country.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

There will be no exams. The bulk of the course grade will be made up of seminar participation and a team project. The grading procedures will be very flexible (i.e. vaguely defined) to take advantage of the instructor’s ability to closely evaluate all aspects of student performance in such a small class with such frequent open-ended assignments. **Attendance and participation in class discussions are required; reading the assigned material prior to the class at which it will be discussed is also required.**

**Contributing to the effort of your group, including attending all meetings and facilitating completion of assignments, is also required.** You will have the opportunity to grade your team members. Any student not thought to be contributing to the group effort will be either removed from the group or dropped from the course.

Many class meetings will have brief written assignments designed to facilitate discussion and insure that the reading has been completed. These will take the form of either CourseSite assignments (marked “CS” in syllabus), which require posting a brief message in the Discussion Board segment of CourseSite, or email assignments directly to the instructor. **Both are due by 8 am the day of the class meeting for which they have assigned.**

The form of the “project” component of the course is described in the hand-out available on CourseSite under Course Assignments. It will be centered around group research in which students explore development problems in specific countries and formulate plans to cope with them. This involves a team-written background report at the end of March and a final team report at the end of the semester. Both will involve an oral presentation. Intermediate assignments will guide the teams toward those reports.

SCHEDULE

Readings and assignments should be completed before the session for which they are assigned. Students will need to monitor closely our progress through the syllabus. It would not be unusual if we were to fall behind. The BB assignments are listed in a shadowed text box. Class sessions will consist of an ongoing dialogue between the readings and the research results reported by teams.
Part One: How developed (poor) is your country? Definitions, Perspectives, and Descriptions.


Readings:  
• David Bornstein, “Restless people,” “The role of the social entrepreneur,” and “Morality must march with capacity (about James Grant),” chapters 1, 8, and 19 in How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas (Penguin India, 2005). Remainder of book is recommended.  
• Interview with Muhammad Yunus, CNN/Asia.

BB handout: Consult the assignment “Introduction to group projects” on CourseSite (under “Assignments”). Also read “Teamwork” on CourseSite (under Course Documents).

BB assignment: Post your preferences for the country you wish to study on the Discussion Board on CourseSite (under “Country interests”). Explore possibilities with others. Continue to monitor this Discussion Board to see what others are saying about country choices.

January 20  Th  “Money doctors, Economic hit men, Social entrepreneurs”. Introduction to development in the context of North-South relations. Introduction to the course and the project. Introduction of seminar participants. Team work. Our mission is to prescribe policies for our countries which will alleviate poverty and improve development prospects.

Advisors from the North have long played a controversial role in the development of the South. Like us, they have professed to be helping the poor, but have they? Perkins says “no”: they are only “economic hitmen” who create and exploit dependency. Bornstein says “yes”: they can be “social entrepreneurs” who solve social problems rather than earn profits, like Jim Grant, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, or former Lehigh IR majors Ben Gucciardi and Lisa Boyd and those associated with Engineers Without Borders and the Cambodia project illustrate that students can become social entrepreneurs even as undergraduates.

Drake has a more complex answer: “money doctors” offer advice and money, which produce variable outcomes. In-class discussion will focus on his questions. What tools have they used? What theories have they propounded? (Rapley, Midgley and Krugman provide alternative preliminary guides: Note the tension between Midgley’s thesis and Krugman’s footnote 2. Guess which one is an economist.) What interests have they served? What has been their impact on 3rd world development processes? All of this is preliminary to the central question of this course: What kind of money doctor do you want to be? What do you want to achieve? Reflect on the IR 222 assignment for help in answering those questions.

Reading:  
• Paul W. Drake, “The Political Economy of Foreign Advisers and Lenders in Latin America”, chapter 1, Money doctors, foreign debts, and economic reforms in Latin America from the 1890s to the present (SR Books, Wilmington, Delaware, 1994)
• Interview by Amy Goodman for *Democracy Now* of author John Perkins, “Confessions of an Economic Hit Man”
• Rapley, Chapter 1.

**Email assignment (NOT CS) ASAP:** Consult the assignment “Introduction to group projects” and review the postings of others concerning country interests. Email me your preference for the project: countries, members, scenarios. What country(ies) would you like to study? Who would you like to work with? If we are all prompt with this assignment, we can assign teams today and begin our research. If not, we’ll start the semester behind.

**BB Assignment:** As soon as country teams are confirmed, begin the “Geography” assignment for January 27. See Jan. 27 session below for details. **Achtung! If this assignment seems more like work than fun, you are in the wrong course – and probably the wrong major!**

January 25 Tu **The meaning of development**, especially in the liberal and Sussex schools. The values component of development (like the values component of trade dilemmas). Understanding the meaning of development – knowing what you are trying to accomplish – is central to everything else in this course. We will return to it daily. Read with special care the Seers piece, a true classic that has profoundly influenced thousands of political economists. When I picked it up the first time, I was an economic liberal. An hour later I wasn’t.

Introduction to **the measurement of development**, which is frequently confused with its meaning. What’s wrong with GDP? Seers and Nobel laureate Sen both offer a humanist’s critique. Coleman suggests that it’s the wrong target for more practical reasons. *The Economist* notes that it’s a lot harder to measure than we usually assume. Anand and Revallion introduce a major critique of neo-liberalism, that GDP itself matters less than how it is allocated. Team/country assignments.

**Reading:**
• Denis Goulet, “’Development’...or Liberation?” *International Development Review* 13, 3 (September 1971)
• Coleman, “Measuring Real Progress”, Redefining Progress [website](http://www.redefiningprogress.org).
2005.


**Recommended:**

- Rapley, pp. 1-3 (Introduction).

**Assignment:** Come prepared (i.e. prepared) to dissect the position of Seers, especially what he means by “development”. Does Sen agree? Ommmmmmmmmmmm. Repeat after me: “All measures of development are built upon alternative conceptions of the meaning of development.” Ommmmmmmmmmmm. To describe a nation’s level of development in a way that would satisfy Seers (hint: Moon, too!), what statistical data would you have to gather? Not a trivial question – see the assignment for February 2. Come prepared.

**Team email assignment:** Describe your members, country, and likely scenario. Provide contact information. [Explore your team’s strengths and weaknesses, but you need not report them to me. Who can write? Who can PowerPoint? PhotoShop? Who can produce an Excel graph? Who speaks the language? Who has an economics background? Who’s a slacker? How’s the meeting schedule?]

**Team assignment:** Explore your country. See the geography assignment for the next session. It should be well underway by now. Find a source of contemporary news coverage.

**January 27**

- The measurement of development (continued). Patterns of development. Basic Human Needs.

**Reading:**

Basic geography. Summarize highlights in rough draft briefing form.

Team Paper I: What is development? How will we measure it (in Paper 2 and thereafter)? Steps: 1. Please meet to initiate a semester-long discussion concerning the definition(s) of development you will eventually adopt as an appropriate "guiding star" for your nation and goal for your proposal. At this stage, be sure that this discussion reflects the full range of meanings of "development" we have encountered thus far. 2. For each element of this composite definition of the level of development of a nation (and/or progress in improving it), consider how it might best be measured. 3. Explore what data is available from reputable sources that matches these measurement strategies. 4. Begin working on gathering the data, which will be required for Paper 2, but don’t stop there.


Team assignment: Conduct a crash course on the basic geography of your country. Share the highlights with your team members so that you all have a basic understanding and each of you has more detailed knowledge on some facet of that geography. For the moment, the purpose of the assignment is to get you acquainted with your country, but take good notes because you will need to write about this in more detail soon in the context of geographical theories of development. Physical geography: what does the country look like in terms of land forms, transportation access, climate, agricultural conditions, natural resources. Economic geography: what does the country produce and why? What other options are available? Political geography: the structure of government, level of democracy, human rights, political culture, major political figures, political history. Human geography: religion, language, culture, ethnic groups, classes, inter-group issues.

February 1 Tu Why do poor people stay poor? Clues from the urban-rural divide. “Urban bias” as an element of development that reflects economic, political, social, culture, environmental, and technical causes. Lipton’s book is one of the great works in the history of development studies; it undermines the growth vs. equity conception of trade-offs that sustain ideological divisions in the study of development.


Team CS assignment: After meeting to discuss the best way of measuring the level of development of a nation and/or progress in improving it, post a description of your nation in terms of those measures. Be prepared to present this data to the seminar. Look at the contributions of other teams, learn from them how it can be done better. Make sure you emphasize the meaning of development that you think best captures your goals, which will constitute Part 1 of the Background Paper.
February 3  Th  Review/evaluation of Paper 1. Issues to consider in preparation for Paper 2. Preview the sequence of assignments culminating in the final paper. Data sources. Some common problems. How to write for a professional audience.

**Readings:**  
- The hand-out on “The use of statistics”.
- Read the other teams’ Paper 1.

February 8  Tu  **Social, Political, and Environmental Implications of Economic Development Choices.** Development is a multi-dimensional process with intertwined economic, political, social, cultural, and technological components. It operates over a very long time period, better measured in decades (over even centuries) than years. Current choices have far-reaching implications that require broad vision. In El Salvador, coffee was introduced as the main crop and nothing would ever be the same. Be careful what you wish for! How is the dynamic suggested by Burns different from that which underlies the orthodox economic conception of stages of growth?

**Reading:**  

**CS assignment:**  
- What is the key sentence on page 132?  Why?  
*Hint:* Many students have told me that they didn’t really understand IR 125 until they had taken IR 322. Here’s where it starts: do you see the five laws of political economy illustrated here? Bonus point for correct answer; 3 bonus points for *first* correct answer.

Optional **CS assignment:**  
- All measures of development are built upon alternative conceptions of it. For example, the HDI and GDI are measures that emphasize basic needs attainment and gender equality rather than the aggregate production emphasized by GDP per capita, etc. How would you measure the "sustainable development" of your country? Creative or indirect measurement of difficult concepts is often necessary. How would you recognize a country with relatively large or relatively small inequality on dimensions like class, gender, sector, region, etc. How would you measure it?

February 10  Th  Review and Catch Up. We will use this session to catch up on whatever topics remain from either IR 222 or IR 322.

**Part Two: Why is Your Country So Poor? Applying Theories of Development and Underdevelopment**

With paper 2 we have now completed the basic **descriptive** task: We know the major patterns of poverty and development in our countries. We know to what degree and in which respects our countries are developed. It is now time to begin the **explanatory** task – understanding why those patterns exist and what potential exists for changing them.

**Team Assignment:**  
Submit to TRAC Fellow Paper#2 (First draft, NOT rough draft) that describes how developed your country is, informed by your
understanding of what development means and what your priorities are among its many elements.

**Note:** Remember why you want to assess different dimensions of development. First, the pattern of relative successes and failures may suggest the causal dynamics that dominate your country’s path of development. Second, because money doctors must adopt their own version of the Hippocratic Oath — first, do no harm! Or, if you prefer, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Third, you must begin to think about your priorities among various development problems for your final proposal.

Your final proposal must begin by deciding (1) if any change must occur in your country, and, if so, (2) what kind. You can’t know that until you project what the future will look like and one way of doing that is to look at the present and recent past. Another is the theoretical approach we’ll be taking for the next three weeks or so. See the project description for the requirements of the background report, because if you do this right, you will have completed the first item under “Problems and Opportunities” for the background report. Use charts, graphs, and statistics.

**Hint:** This would be an excellent time to begin thinking about items 2-5 under “Goals and Opportunities”. For example, what are the most positive elements of your country’s development status? (potential on which to build?) What are the greatest weaknesses (problems to be resolved?)

February 15  Tu The roots of explanations for poverty and assessments of national developmental potentials in alternative theories of development. Each development theory – and there are many – identify key factors that are posited to determine the speed and direction of development. According to each, there are requisites of development – conditions that must be present or processes that must be at work in order for successful development or poverty alleviation to occur. Their presence or absence can be used to characterize a nation’s development potential. Universal vs. contingent policy advice. Matching particular national characteristics with the assumptions of general development theories in order to evaluate national development strategies. We begin our survey of the requisites of development suggested by various theories by judging the potential and problems of your country through the lens of geographic theories and other long-term considerations suggested by “Why the West?” discussions. Consider alternative approaches, ranging from Page’s attempt to extract universal lessons from a group of model nations, to Hamilton’s attempt to predict the growth potential of one group of nations on the basis of important requisites identified in another group (take note of his warning on “policy volunteerism”) to Sachs’ explicit checklist of factors he extracts from his experience. Review of the assignment for the background paper, Team Paper #3.

**Reading:** • Rapley, chapter 3

February 17  Th  Seeing the growth potential and problems of your country through the lens of neo-classical (Solow) growth models and growth accounting: growth as a function of land, labor, capital, and x-efficiency (total factor productivity). Mobilizing, employing, expanding, and improving factors of production. The requisites of development from the standpoint of orthodox theories.

After this morning’s emphasis on the capital and efficiency terms, we will focus this afternoon on land and climate constraints, and on building labor and human capital through education and improved health. Some of this will return us to the broader-gauge theories we have previously discussed, allowing us to integrate narrower economic theories with broader political economy ones.


Assignment: Read the handout on Assessing Development Potential again. Meet to begin preparing for the next team assignment. What information do you need?

February 22  Tu  The One Gap. The centrality of capital accumulation in neo-classical growth theory (Solow models). Demonstrating the role of investment in predicting empirical growth rates. Using the concept of the One Gap and Harrod-Domar equations to choose a target growth rate. Detecting a 1-gap. Alternative measures of savings rates and their meaning. Alternative sources of savings, including external finance, to close the “1 gap”. Because closing the immediate One gap from external sources usually opens the long-term Two gap, we will re-visit the dangers of external reliance. Krugman puts it best: “There are no miracles.”

February 24  Th  Development finance and the two gap. Introduction to the balance of payments and balance of payments accounting. Trade balances. What is your country’s trade balance? Trade compression and economic crisis. Are there discernable trends in the terms of trade? Analyzing the import basket and composition of exports. Which exports could be expanded? Which imports could be limited?

Capital flows. Sources of external finance and the Two gap. What is happening to the value of your nation’s currency? Why? What pattern of capital flows can you detect from the balance of payments? Does it accord with descriptive narratives? What is the debt level? To whom is it owed? Is foreign direct investment present? Can/should it be expanded? Where are the opportunities?
The requisites of development from the standpoint of radical schools. Debt. What are your options for closing the 2-gap? Ben Franklin: “Think what you do when you run into debt; you give to another power over your liberty.” Avoiding external dependence. Foreign aid and worker remittances.


**Recommended:** • Lex Rieffel, Restructuring Sovereign Debt, chapters 2-4. Skim or read if you are interested in debt issues.

March 1-3 Tu/Th No class. Ghana break

March 7- March 11 Mon - Fri Spring Break - no class

March 15 Tu Recognizing and closing the Three gap. Budget deficits. State spending for development. The requisites of development from the standpoint of the planning school. State functions.

March 17 Th Class and social structures. Governance issues. What are the requisites of development from the standpoint of the radical school? How can they be measured?

March 22 Tu Catch Up.

**Part Three: Development strategies: How can your country develop (solve its poverty problems)?** Solutions may lie in broad gauge government policies, small scale projects of NGOs, or anything in between. Nearly all the class sessions in this part of the course can be adapted to focus on potential solutions being considered by the various teams and some sessions near the end have been left open to choose those topics which arise in the team research.

March 24 Th Discussion of Paper 3.


**Readings:** • J. Gregory Dees, “The meaning of `social entrepreneurship?’”
• Re-read the chapters from Daniel Bornstein, 19 in How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas originally assigned for 15 January.
• Sachs, The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time (Penguin, 2005)
• William Easterly, review of *End of Poverty,*
• William Easterly, from *White Man’s Burden.*
• Amartya Sen, “*The Man Without a Plan,*” *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2006 (Review of
  Easterly’s *White Man’s Burden*)
• The UN Millennium Project [http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/)

**Recommended:** See the “social entrepreneurship collection” on CourseSite, which may give you some ideas about the kind of things that can be done by the brave and energetic. Many of the people discussed there are actually Lehigh alums.

March 31 Th Catch up.


**Team Assignment:**  **Background Reports due: the development experience and prospects of nations.** See assignment for details

April 7 Th  **Presentation of background reports.**

April 12 Tu Tu What can we do about agriculture? What **should** we do about it? For many poor countries, conventional wisdom is that poverty alleviation involves dealing with agriculture and/or the rural economy dominated by it. Others deny that agricultural productivity, especially in Africa, is an appropriate target of policy. We will delve as deeply as we can into the diagnosis of agricultural problems in our countries. Agricultural productivity. Inputs. Government programs. Possible initiatives.

**Reading:**  • Andrew Dorward et. al., “A Policy Agenda for Pro-Poor Agricultural Growth”

• Additional reading TBA for agriculture in the selected countries.


April 14 Th Development strategies involving foreign direct investment from multinational corporations. Investment incentive packages. Meeting the conditions of multinational corporations. The policy requisites of joining a commodity chain.
Reading: • Milner, “Trade Strategies and Economic Development: Theory and Evidence”
  • Moon, “Exports, Outward-Oriented Development, and Economic Growth”
  • UNCTAD, World Investment Report 1998, Chapter 4, “Host country determinants of foreign direct investment” (skim)

Review: Rapley, chapters 1-5.

BB assignment: Does Moon believe that nations should emphasize exports in seeking development? Do you agree?

April 19 TBA

April 21 Th Conceptual introduction to development field methods. Links among development goals, guidelines and activities. Introduction to the project/program cycle. Identifying good practices.

Review: • Notes from Development Team presentations to EWB, Spring 2009. (PowerPoints on CourseSite)

Reading: • Richard Caldwell, CARE Project Design Handbook, 2002, Chapter 1 (skim pp.17-27; read remainder reflectively, recalling similar ideas we have encountered in other contexts).

• World Bank. 2003. Social Analysis Sourcebook

April 26 Tu Development diagnostics: stakeholder analysis, institutional mapping, needs assessments. Logical frameworks (logframes). Understanding the operating environment. Information gathering and field ethics. Surveys. Interviews. Focus groups. Participatory approaches

Reading: • DFID, chapter 2,3,4, 5, 7
• Caldwell, chapter 2.

April 28 Th TBA

Sundry sessions that may be fit in:
Special EWB Session, Poverty in Honduras and What Engineers and NGOs Need to Know About It.
Special EWB Session, Lessons of Successful NGOs
Special EWB Session, Social Capital
Special EWB Session, Field Methods and the Application of Lessons to the Honduras Trip.