

The University of Texas at El Paso
POLS 4348 Politics of Developing Countries
(aka Political Economy of Development)
Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Taeko Hiroi

Office: Benedict Hall 312

Office Hours: MW 9:15-10:00 am; and by appointment

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Class Time/Location: MW 10:30-11:50/ Miners Hall 300

Course Description

What explains the vast inequalities in the world? Why are so few countries rich and so many are impoverished? Why have some experienced growing wealth, stability, and freedoms while some remained poor, repressive, and violent? The twentieth century saw widening gaps in the distribution of wealth and the standards of living both among countries and within these societies. At the turn of the century, the rich were still getting richer and the world's most poor stayed poor. This course will explore various answers to this extremely important issue. Will the world's inequalities eventually close? Are the current inequalities caused by centuries of exploitation of the global South by the West? Should feeble institutions, poor governance and bad leadership in the developing world take most of the blame for their poverty? Or have the vast world inequalities been predetermined by factors, such as geography and natural resource endowment, that are beyond human control? Will foreign aid be an effective solution for promoting development in the global South?

The course has four central objectives. The first objective is to make you familiar with the important theoretical approaches to the study of the developing world. The second is to make you familiar with various databases commonly used in the analysis of development and deepen your critical thinking and analytic skills through the extensive use of these databases. The third objective is to help you develop your public engagement skills through hands-on group and individual projects. The fourth objective is to familiarize you with some of the challenges and pressing issues confronting developing countries.

This course will help you develop the following UTEP Edge skills: Leadership, confidence, problem-solving, global awareness, communication, teamwork, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, and social responsibility.

Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- 1) define key concepts and ideas in the political economy of development;
- 2) identify principal problems of developing countries;
- 3) analyze the causes and consequences of (under)development, inequality, poverty, and instability;
- 4) write effective grant proposals and public engagement essays; and

- 5) evaluate various policy proposals for development.

Required Textbook

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012). *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. New York: Crown Publishing Group.

Other readings are available through UTEP Library (e-journal) or on the course's Blackboard website. You may need to connect to UTEP via VPN to access some journal articles remotely.

Course Requirements

Class participation

I expect every student to contribute to our collective learning by coming to every class, having completed assigned readings and being prepared to discuss them. You will be evaluated on both the quality and quantity of your participation. Please note that some of the class sessions may occur online through Blackboard in order to facilitate and encourage different forms of learning and participation. You will be notified ahead of time when online class sessions are scheduled.

Readings

You are expected to complete assigned readings before the class period for which they are assigned. Doing assigned readings before class sessions will help you better understand the lecture and make useful contributions to class discussions. Lectures may not necessarily duplicate assigned readings. However, you will be responsible for acquainting yourself with the materials in the readings. The reading schedule is found at the end of this syllabus. I reserve the right to assign you short additional readings as appropriate.

Global Inequalities Report (Group)—Due September 30

This is a group project involving writing a report of approximately 3 pages (no shorter than 3 and no longer than 4 pages) assessing the extent of global inequalities and presenting it in class. Group assignment and detailed instruction will be given in class and/or on Blackboard (Bb).

Reflection Paper (Individual)—Due October 21

Write a short, one-page reflection paper answering one of the key questions on the effects of geography on economic development. Detailed instruction will be given in class and/or on Blackboard (Bb).

Op-Ed/Public Engagement Writing Assignment (Individual)—Due November 13

Write a short article (2-3 pages) on a topic related to global inequalities and poverty. It should be a persuasive advocacy article in the style of an op-ed or a blog post, intended for a broad audience. You should include at least three references to the course's assigned readings. I recommend that you use additional external references in addition to the course's assigned readings. You are encouraged to submit it to a newspaper, blog, or other publication outlets to try to get it published. If you publish it in a newspaper or other publication outlets that are not your own before the end of the semester, we will celebrate your success and you may request extra

credit for your accomplishment. Detailed instruction will be given in class and/or on Blackboard (Bb).

Grant Proposal (Group)—Proposal Submission by November 27 on Bb; Presentation on December 2

Students will work in groups of 4-6 to propose a specific development intervention. Each group will complete and present a grant proposal for their proposed project modeled on a real template from the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development, or similar intergovernmental or governmental organizations (for example, see [USAID's grant and opportunities website](#)). Group assignment and detailed instruction will be given in class and/or on Blackboard (Bb).

Exam—December 4

You will take an exam on December 4. Questions will be based on the readings, lectures, and class discussions. Please do not be late. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will not be allowed to enter the exam room and your exam is considered missed. I will consider giving a make-up exam only for a valid, documented emergency.

Grades

Final grades are determined as follows:

Course Requirement	Weight (%)
Participation	10
Global Inequalities Report	10
Reflection Paper	10
Op-Ed/Public Engagement Writing Assignment	20
Grant Proposal	30
Exam	20
Total	100

Final Grade Scale	
90% ≤	A
80% ≤ & < 90%	B
70% ≤ & < 80%	C
60% ≤ & < 70%	D
<60%	F

Course Materials

Course materials are intended for your personal use only. An unauthorized use, dissemination, distribution, publication or replication of course materials is strictly prohibited. Course materials refer to those made available to you through this course and/or by me and teaching assistants.

They include, but are not limited to, materials made available on Blackboard (such as power point slides, lecture outlines, and supplementary readings), study guides, and exams.

Course Policy

Please comply with the following policies to maintain an effective and pleasant learning environment for everyone.

- **No electronic devices, except a laptop computer, are allowed during class sessions.** This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, tablet computers, and video and voice recorders. If you bring them to class, they must be turned off and stored in your bag at all times. If you need to keep your cell phone on for emergency, please notify the professor ahead of time.
- **You may bring a laptop computer.** We will explore some important databases that are commonly used to assess development of different countries, regions, and the world. We will graph some data. An MS Excel-installed laptop will be handy in class. You may also use your laptop to take notes. No other activities (e-mailing, web surfing, posting and reading on the social media, etc.) are allowed. If you are found to be doing activities that are not explicitly permitted by the professor, you will lose your laptop privilege and will not be allowed to use it during class sessions for the rest of the semester.

You may check out a laptop from the Equipment Checkout Department at the Technology Support Center, Library Rm. 300. Please see the checkout policy and procedure on its [website](#).

- **Please maintain respectful and appropriate behavior within and outside the classroom.** Meaningful and constructive dialogue is encouraged in this class, which requires mutual respect, willingness to listen, and tolerance of opposing points of view. Respect for individual differences and alternative viewpoints will be maintained at all times. One's words and use of language should be temperate and within acceptable bounds of civility and decency. Disruptive behaviors, including excessive talking, arriving late to class, leaving class early, sleeping, reading newspapers or books, and using unauthorized electronic devices (including taking pictures or video- or voice-recording) during class meetings, are not permitted. Repetitive and/or seriously disruptive behavior, including, but not limited to, fighting, using profanity, personal or physical threats or insults, displaying hostility or rudeness towards other students, TAs, or the professor, and damaging property, may result in your removal from class, and reporting to the Dean of Students and/or police. Expectation of respectful and appropriate behavior extends beyond the physical classroom.
- The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus and the course schedule. If changes are made, students will be notified in class or on Blackboard.
- Please note that some of the class sessions may occur online through Blackboard. You will be notified ahead of time when online class sessions are scheduled.

- Please check the course's Blackboard page often. I may distribute handouts and make announcements on Blackboard as well as in class meetings.
- **Arrive early on the exam day.** If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will not be allowed to enter the exam room unless prior arrangements are made with the professor. Anticipate potential problems. Traffic and parking are constant problems in El Paso and at UTEP. Tardiness will not be a valid justification for a make-up exam.
- **Late assignment**—Late submission of assignments will be accepted with a penalty of one reduced letter grade per 24 hours. Please note that the clock begins ticking immediately past the due. For example, if an assignment is due on Monday at 10:30 am, an assignment submitted at 10:45 am of the same day is considered late and will received a reduced grade. Please be aware that if you miss a presentation as scheduled, you will also lose your presentation grade.
- **Please do not email me your assignments.** I will not open documents attached to emails.
- **Make-up exams are considered only with a timely presentation of proper documentation indicating the nature of the emergency, and the make-up exam, if granted, must be taken immediately.** Valid emergencies include an unexpected emergency room visit due to illness, death in your immediate family, etc. Regular, scheduled appointments with your doctors are not considered emergencies. No make-up exams will be given for missing an exam due to tardiness. If you miss an exam without a valid documented emergency, please do not request a make-up exam. Due to university policy and fairness to other students, it will not be granted. Please note that make-up exams may have content and style that are different from the original exams.
- You are welcome to email me if you have questions or need to make an appointment. Please **use your UTEP email and provide your name, your UTEP ID number, and the class to which you are referring.** Please do not call to inquire about your class performance. Due to confidentiality, I will not be able to discuss these matters over the phone.

Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is NEVER tolerated by UTEP or the Department of Political Science. All cases are reported to the Dean of Students for possible disciplinary action. All work submitted must be original and your own; students may not submit graded work from another course. Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. **Cheating** may involve communicating with another student or possessing unauthorized materials during a test. Falsifying research data, reports, or academic work offered for credit is also a form of cheating. **Collusion** involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. One example of collusion is preparing a discussion post for another person or having someone prepare a discussion post for you. **Plagiarism** involves the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether you mean to or not. For example, if you copy parts

of or whole papers off the Internet without proper citation of the sources, it is a form of plagiarism. Lack of proper citation of sources is considered plagiarism even if borrowed ideas are paraphrased.

Accommodations

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Course Schedule

*The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus and the course schedule. If changes are made, students will be notified in class or on Blackboard.

August 26 *Overview*

August 28 *American Political Science Association Meeting--No class*

Part I: The Basics

Sept 4 *Will We All Be Rich in the End?*

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (DR hereafter), Chapter 1.

Sept 9&11 *What Is Development, Poverty, and Inequality? How Are These Measured?*

Key questions: How should development be defined? How should development be measured? How is development related to inequality, poverty, and other pertinent indicators?

- Amartya Sen. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Introduction and Chs. 1 & 4. (available on Bb)
- Andrew G. Berg and Jonathan D. Ostry, “**Equality and Efficiency**” **FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT, September 2011, Vol. 48, No. 3.**

Sept 16&18 *Patterns of World Development*

Key questions: What have been the historical patterns of world development? Have the gaps been narrowing or widening? What factors might explain these patterns? What are the recent trends in development?

- Maddison, Angus. 2001. *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*. OECD. Excerpt available on Bb.
- UNDP, *Human Development Report 2016*, Ch. 1.

Sept 23&25 *Convergence or Divergence? Classic Theories*

Key questions: What are the implications of modernization theory and convergence thesis for developing and poor countries? What are the implications of dependency theory? Are they convincing? Does the integration of developing and poor countries into the world economy help or hinder their development? Do the data support the theory?

- W. W. Rostow. 1959. "The Stages of Economic Growth." *The Economic History Review New Series* 12(1): 1-16.
- Dos Santos, Theotonio, 1970. "The Structure of Dependence," *American Economic Review* 60(2): 231-236.

Sept 30 *Presentation of Global Inequalities. *Global inequalities report due in class.*

Part II: Deep-Rooted Sources of Development

Oct 1&7

Colonial Legacies

Key questions: What effects did colonialism have for development in Africa, Latin America, and Asia? Why have certain former colonies, like the U.S. and Australia, successfully developed? How much impact does colonialism still have for the development of former colonies today?

- DR, Chapter 9.

Oct 9, 14,
16, 21

Geography and Natural Resources

Key questions: What are the effects of geography and natural resources on economic development? To what extent do natural geographic features matter for economic development today? Which plants and animals made people geographically lucky and why? Are natural resources blessing or curse? What do the data suggest about the relationship among natural resources, economic development, and political regime?

- DR, Chapter 2
- *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond (Documentary)

**Reflection paper due on October 21*

Part III: States, Institutions and Governance

Oct 23, 28,
30

States and Institutions

Key questions: Can the state promote development, and if so, under what circumstances? What is the “developmental state” and how useful is the concept? What explains East Asian countries' relative success compared to Latin American and African countries? What institutions hinder development and why?

- DR, Chapters 3, 5, 7, 8 & 11.
- Haggard, Stephan. 2004. "Institutions and growth in East Asia." *Studies in comparative international development* 38(4): 53-81

Nov 4&6

Corruption and Development

Key questions: What is corruption and what forms does it take? What is clientelism, and how is it different from corruption? How do corruption and clientelism affect development? How do political and economic development affect the extent or type of corruption and clientelism?

- The World Bank, *World Development Report 2015*. “**When Corruption is the Norm.**”

Nov 11&13

Why States Fail

Key questions: What is a failed state and what features does it have? Why do states fail?

- DR, Chapters 12 & 13.

**Op-ed due in class on November 13.*

Part IV: Can the International Community Help?

Nov 18&20 International Community and Development

Key Questions: How have different experiences with the world shaped different patterns of development? Can foreign aid help promote development? What do the data suggest? How do international factors interact with the domestic factors to affect development?

- DR, Chapters 4, 10 & 15.
- Alesina, Alberto and David Dollar. 2000. "Who Gives Foreign Aid To Whom And Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth* 5(1):33-63.

Nov 25&27 Catching up and summing up. *Submit grant proposal on Blackboard by November 27.

December 2 Grant Proposal Presentation

You must come to class having read all the grant proposals submitted on Bb.

December 4 Exam