

SIS-337-No1H: International Development, Costa Rica

Nathan A. Paxton*

Office:

napaxton@american.edu

Summer 2012

Course Description and Learning Objectives

International Development (SIS-337) introduces you to the study of international development, as a field and a phenomenon. There are many academic fields that study aspects of this process, including history, geography, political science, economics, anthropology, sociology, demographics, and public health. The people and organizations involved in this work have taken a variety of approaches, whether by study and research, advocacy and action, criticism and reform, or some combination of all of these.

As a political scientist with training in international relations, international political economy, global health, and political theory, I approach the study of international development from the disciplinary perspectives of poli sci and economics. These will inform our discussions and my teaching. I do endeavor to bring other disciplines' insights to bear on our study.

In this course, we will do the following:

- *Develop* a foundational understanding of competing schools of thought in contemporary international development.
- *Integrate* theory and practice through applying theory to current events and historical cases via written work.
- *Assess* how theory and research are put into practice via institutions, programs, and policies.

*Syllabus ©2012, Nathan A. Paxton. v. 1.3.1

Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- *Compare* and contrast major schools of thought.
- *Explain* current events and historical cases drawing on different schools of theory.
- *Define* major historical trends in the international development practice.
- *Demonstrate* how different ethical commitments and concepts of service emerge from competing theoretical perspectives and specific cases.

Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code, which can be found in the University catalog. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course. You can read the University's full Academic Integrity Code here: <http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm>

Assignments

Students in this course will complete four components for their assessed grade.

Assignment	Percentage
Class Participation	20%
Ethnographic Exercise	20%
Journals	25%
Policy memo or video	25%
Blog Post for back at AU	10%

Ethnographic exercise

We will travel to the central market in San José or Ciudad Colón. In groups of 2 or 3, please take notes on what you see there, especially as you see it relating to the issues that we have or are discussing in class. Please try to talk with some of the merchants there, asking them (for example),

- Where do the goods they sell come from?
- Why do they sell this particular good or type of good?
- What sorts of people buy their goods?
- What do they do when they have trouble getting their goods?

After you complete the ethnographic data collection, you will have a few days to write up what you observed and to try to interpret and understand it in light of the reading and discussion we have been doing in class.

Journals

I will ask you to keep daily intellectual journals during your time in Costa Rica. These journals will be your opportunity to think through some of the texts and issues that you encounter in the course. To start yourself off, you may want to ruminate on a particular reading for the day, if there were points you found particularly difficult, interesting, or provocative. You might also take one of the “Questions for the day” here in the syllabus and use this as a jumping-off point for your thoughts. Finally, something may come up in class that you think bears more thinking about.

There are two ways that you can do the journal assignments, in public or in private, as it were. If you wish to keep the contents of your journal between you and me, you may write conventionally on your computer or by hand (please write as neatly as possible) and turn the entries in to me on designated days. Otherwise, Blackboard provides the facility to have a private journal that only you and I can read.

If you're comfortable thinking out loud, as many are in this day, you may set up a personal blog via Blackboard. Other students will be able to read your thoughts, and they will be able to make comments on them. If you wish to set up a blog to do your intellectual journals, please go to the course website,, where you will see a link for “Blogs.” Follow the instructions there.

The point of your blogs or journals will be to think through sets of ideas, rather than to create a final product of some sort. I am more interested in seeing you engage deeply with the history and ideas that the readings, your classmates, and I present. You can use these journals as a way of recording or trying out ideas, of examining potential final projects, or just recording your experiences in class and on our field trips.

AU Global Scholars blog post

Back up at AU, there will be a blog set up via blogger.com. I will be asking each of you to make one contribution to this blog, and we will have details on the first day of the program.

Final project

There will be a variety of options, including a policy memo, video project, social media project, and so forth. More details will be forthcoming soon.

Policies, Expectations, and Rules

Grading

No written work will be accepted for credit which you cannot verbally explain and defend in a cross-examination with the instructor, should he deem it necessary.

You will earn grades according to the following criteria.

I expect that American University students, on average, will be able to perform at roughly a B level.

- A Superior, outstanding scholarship and intellectual achievement
- B High attainment and notable degree of scholastic performance
- C Satisfactory performance, average level of achievement.
Understands the essential elements.
- D Deficient but passing. A grade of D indicates a bare minimum performance.
- F Failure to meet minimum standards.

Attendance and participation

You should attend all meetings of the course.

Students must, of course, participate in seminar each day. This requires actively contributing to our discussions, but quality is prized over quantity. Students will have to orally participate in each session to do their best, but I am more interested in excellent comments than in multiple comments. *Talking a lot is no guarantee of a high grade, but speaking not at all or infrequently will guarantee a low grade.* Simply showing up at each class will almost certainly result in some form of C for the participation component.

While students can do very much to affect their overall participation grade, the determination of their performance level is ultimately mine.

Syllabus changes

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus—whether in schedule, readings, or other details—but will make all such changes public and will provide them to students as soon as such determination occurs.

Required Materials

- “B & D”: Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo. 2011. *Poor economics: a radical rethinking of the way to fight global poverty*. 1st ed. New York: PublicAffairs
- “Collier”: Paul Collier. 2007. *The bottom billion: why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- “Easterly”: William Easterly. 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
- “Frieden”: Jeffrey A. Frieden. 2006. *Global capitalism: its fall and rise in the twentieth century*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton
- “Sachs”: Jeffrey Sachs. 2005. *The end of poverty: economic possibilities for our time*. New York: Penguin Press
- “Sen”: Amartya Sen. 1999. *Development as freedom*. New York: Anchor Books

Schedule of Lectures, Readings and Assignments

Readings marked with [BB] will be available on the course website. Those marked with [L] are available through the AU Library databases.

Daily schedule

We will be spending much time together each day. Mornings will be devoted to class time — discussion, lecture, and guest speakers — and afternoons will be devoted to small field trips, preparation, down time, and so forth.

- 9.00 – 10.30a: “Lecture”
- 10.30a – 12.30p: Discussion of texts, issues, lecture material, etc. Group activities. OR Guest speakers (on some days)
- 12.30 – 1.30p: Lunch
- Post-lunch: this will vary, and I will provide details on a daily or every-other-day basis. Updates will also be posted at the course website and (perhaps) through revisions to this syllabus. On days at UPeace, we will be on campus from 1.30 to 3.30, and we will return to Colón at 3.30.

Day 1(May 21, 2012): Introduction and History I

Today we will go over the program policies and goals, in addition to beginning a historical overview of development, as well as trying to figure out what “development” is.

Contextualizing

Questions of the day:

- What is development?
- Who are the subjects of development?
- Why develop?

Readings:

- Sachs, Chap. 1 (“A Global Family Portrait”)
- Sen, Introduction and Chap. 1 (“Development as Freedom”, “The Perspective of Freedom”)
- Easterly, Chap. 1 (“Planners v. Searchers”)

History I

Questions of the day:

- Why did the “first” globalization “work”?
- Why did some countries develop before others (historically speaking)?

Readings:

- Frieden, Chaps. 1, 4, 5 and pp. 77–80 (covering the first globalization to WWI)
- Sachs, Chap. 2 (“The Spread of Economic Prosperity”)

Day 2(May 22, 2012): History II

Questions of the day:

- Why did Bretton Woods work? What costs and benefits did it provide?
- What are some of the eventual consequences and results of the Bretton Woods system?
- Why have countries outside of Europe and North America embarked upon the model of industrialization? How well do you think it has worked? What about the countries (like Costa Rica) that have not followed this model?

Readings:

- Frieden, Chap. 12, 13
- Easterly, Chap. 8

Day 3(May 23, 2012): Theories of Development I — Liberalism, Marxism, Modernization

Guest Speaker (10.30 am): Prof. Claudio Ansorena (Costa Rica), Coordinator, M.A. in Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development, UPEACE

Questions of the day:

- What do liberal and Marxist theories have to say about why development does or does not occur? What do they get right and what do they get wrong?
- Why might modernization theory have initially proved particularly popular and persuasive?
- To what extent is it possible for all nations to develop?

Readings:

- Howard Handelman. 2005. *The Challenge of Third-World Development*. 4th ed. Prentice Hall, Chap. 1 [BB]
- Paul Alexander Haslam, Jessica Schafer, and Pierre Beaudet. 2009. *Introduction to international development: approaches, actors, and issues*. Ontario: Oxford University Press, Chap 3. [BB]
- Walt W. Rostow. 2008. The Five Stages of Growth in Seligson and Passe-Smith 2008, 173–80 [BB]
- (Recommended, if you want more historical background) Frieden, Chap 14

Day 4(May 24, 2012): Theories of Development II — Dependency/World-systems, Post-development

Guest Speaker (9 am): UPEACE Vice-Rector Dr. Amr Abdalla (Egypt), “Introduction to UPEACE”

Questions of the day:

- How well does dependency theory (or its world-systems variant) explain the differential levels of social, political, and economic development that we observe?

- What theories are we left with now? How satisfactory are they? Why/not?
- Given the theories we've examined, what should be the goal of doing development? Why? What is it that we are really trying to address?

Readings:

- Andre Gunder Frank. 2008. The Development of Underdevelopment in Seligson and Passe-Smith 2008 [BB]
- J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela. 1978. Modernization and dependency: Alternative perspectives in the study of Latin American underdevelopment. *Comparative Politics* 10 (4): 535–557 [L]
- Robin Broad and John Cavanagh. 2006. The Hijacking of the Development Debate. *World Policy Journal* 23 (2): 21–30 [L]
- Paul Alexander Haslam, Jessica Schafer, and Pierre Beaudet. 2009. *Introduction to international development: approaches, actors, and issues*. Ontario: Oxford University Press, Chap 4. [BB]

Day 5(May 25, 2012): Trip I

We will leave on our first long trip today. We traveled to Monteverde, to see its cloud forests and to explore the ways in which the region has pursued development over the last 75 years. We will do the following:

1. Tour the cheese/dairy factory that the Quaker settlers created in the 1950s
2. Hear from a local farmer/community leader, Guillermo Vargas
3. Receive a briefing from zoologist/climatologist Alan Pounds about the effects that global climate change appears to be having on the micro-environment of the cloud forest, and the consequences for the survival of various species of flora and fauna.

Day 6(May 26, 2012): Trip I

Our first long trip continues today.

Day 7(May 27, 2012): Trip I

Our first long trip concludes today.

Day 8(May 28, 2012): Int'l Institutions of Development

Questions:

- Do we have the “right” institutions for assisting in development on the international level?
- How effective are the international financial institutions? The United Nations system ones?
- If we are “stuck” with the current institutions we have, what are the possibilities for development and/or for changing those institutions?

Readings:

- Joseph E Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi. 2010. *Mismeasuring our lives: why GDP doesn't add up*. New York: New Press. <http://www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/en/index.htm>, “Executive Summary” [WWW]
- Marcus Taylor. 2009. The International Financial Institutions in Haslam, Schafer, and Beaudet 2009 [BB]
- David Sogge. 2009. The United Nations and Multilateral Actors in Development in Haslam, Schafer, and Beaudet 2009 [BB]

GUEST LECTURE (afternoon): *MDG's and Human Rights*: Prof. Mihir Kanade, Instructor and Director, Human Rights Centre, Department of International Law, UPEACE

Day 9(May 29, 2012): Political Regimes and Governments — Day 1

Questions:

- What is the “proper” role of the market? Why? What relationship should the market have to the state?
- What is more important: economic growth or democracy? Put another way, which comes first: economic development or political development? Why might the viewpoint you expressed be wrong?
- Sachs argues that bad governance is both cause and consequence of economic failure. Do you think this makes sense? If he is right, can anything be done?
- Easterly thinks Sachs's preferred remedy can destabilize democratic gains. What are your thoughts?
- What factors can bring about positive change in political systems? What is needed to bring them about?

Readings:

- Sen, Chaps. 5 & 6
- Easterly Chap. 4
- Collier, Chap. 5
- Sachs, Chap. 3

Day 10(May 30, 2012): Political Regimes and Governments — Day 2

Readings:

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. 2012. *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. 1st ed. New York: Crown Publishers, Chaps. 2, 3, 7, 15 [BB]
- B & D, Chap. 10

Day 11(May 31, 2012) Entrepreneurs, Microdevelopment, and the Market

Readings:

- B & D, Chaps. 7, 9
- Sen, Chap. 4
- Robert Pollin. 2007. Microcredit: False Hopes and Real Possibilities. http://www.fpif.org/articles/microcredit_false_hopes_and_real_possibilities
- You may also want to see David Roodman's CGDEV blog: http://blogs.cgdev.org/open_book/.

SITE VISIT: Trip to Central Market, San José for ethnographic data collection.

Day 12(June 1, 2012): Costa Rica and Development

GUEST LECTURE: Victoria Fontan, UPEACE Dept. of Peace and Conflict Studies Readings: Please see the course website.

- Selections from: Steven Palmer and Iván Molina, eds. 2004. *The Costa Rica Reader: History, Politics, Culture*. The Latin American Readers. Durham and London: Duke University Press
- If you are unfamiliar with Latin American politics, you may also want to see (chapters on BB): Michael Reid. 2007. *Forgotten continent: the battle for Latin America's soul*. New Haven: Yale University Press

June 2, 2012: Weekend Trip

RAINFOREST CANOPY TOUR: We will leave C.C. around 8.00 a.m. and return around 5.00 p.m. You should wear long trousers and closed-toed shoes, as we will be in the forest for the canopy tour.

But there should be no lectures, so there is no need to bring computers, notebooks, etc.

June 3, 2012: 3 June Sunday rest day

This will be a free day. Have fun!

Day 15(June 4, 2012): Field Trip

SITE VISIT: In the morning, we will visit a coffee "plantation".¹ We will provide trip details shortly, but we will be visiting this farm: http://www.actuarcostarica.com/app/cms/www/index.php?id_menu=231&pk_product=15

¹I know this is a problematic word for many *norteamericanos*, due to the history of enslaved labor in our country, and given the state of agricultural labor in the US, and even here. Nevertheless, this is what *ticos* call them.

Day 16(June 5, 2012): Health and Dev't; "Sustainable" Development

Readings:

- Sachs, Chap. 10
- B & D, Chap. 3
- Jeremy Shiffman, David Berlan, and Tamara Hafner. 2009. Has Aid for AIDS Raised All Health Funding Boats? *JAIDS Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes* 52:S45–S48. doi:[10.1097/QAI.0b013e3181bbcb45](https://doi.org/10.1097/QAI.0b013e3181bbcb45) [L]
- Ann Swidler and Susan Cotts Watkins. 2009. "Teach a Man to Fish": The Sustainability Doctrine and Its Social Consequences. *World Development* 37 (7): 1182–96. doi:[10.1016/j.worlddev.2008.11.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2008.11.002) [L]

Day 17(June 6, 2012): Debt, aid, trade; Globalization and development

Readings:

- Sachs, Chap. 13
- Easterly, Chap. 5
- Collier, Chap. 7
- *Stiglitz, Chap. 4 [BB]

GUEST LECTURE (morning): "Globalization": Prof. Veronica Hilillo, Instructor, MA in Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development, UPEACE

Day 18(June 7, 2012): NGOs; Sustainability

FIELD TRIP (morning): We travel to San José to meet with representatives from two development NGOs. Please be prepared to be polite, attentive, and ready with questions for them.

GUEST LECTURE (afternoon): "Sustainability and Sustainable Development": Prof. Jan Breitling, Assistant Professor Department of Environment, Peace and Security, UPEACE

Day 19(June 8, 2012): Ethical Dimensions; Wrap-up

Readings:

- Sen, Chap. 10
 - Peter Singer. 2010. *The Life You Can Save: How to Do Your Part to End World Poverty*. New York: Random House, Chaps. 6, 7, 9 [BB]
 - Michael Sandel. 2012. What Isn't for Sale? *The Atlantic Monthly*. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/04/what-isn-8217-t-for-sale/8902/>. [BB]
- (For more discussion of Sandel's argument, please see: Michael Ignatieff. 2012. The Price of Everything. *The New Republic*. <http://www.tnr.com/article/books-and-arts/magazine/103336/>)

michael - sandel - philosophy - liberalism - democracy - market - economy - morality - income-inequality. [BB]

- Ha-Joon Chang. 2011. The 2008 World Financial Crisis and the Future of World Development. In *Aftermath: a new global economic order?* Vol. v. 3. Possible futures series. New York: New York University Press [BB]