Course Overview

Why are some countries more developed than others? To address this fundamental question, we will discuss both political and economic elements of development and the interconnectivity between them. In particular, we will study factors that are prevalent in less-developed countries such as weak institutions, ethnic and class conflicts, political instability, clientelism, government corruption and failure of public goods provision, and examine whether these factors can be the causes or consequences of underdevelopment. We will also study the effectiveness of various policy interventions, both international and domestic, in promoting development.

Requirements:

• Class participation. All required course material will be available through Blackboard. Students are expected to have read the assigned materials before the class in which they are to be discussed and participate actively in class. Most sessions will have 3 journal articles per session.

Apart from class attendance and participation, students will serve as discussion leaders twice during the semester. In the week that they are assigned to be discussion leaders, students will have to critically review the assigned readings and present a 15 minute brief of the general points made by the authors, highlighting the related as well as conflicting arguments, and underlying the respective works’ analytical strengths and weaknesses. Discussion leaders are expected to prepare 4-5 discussion questions. Discussant assignments will be made the first week of class. If more than one student is assigned to the same week, they should get together to agree how to best serve in their capacity as discussion leaders.

• Three reading responses, due 9am on Monday for the week’s readings. Reading responses should critically analyze major issues in several of the assigned readings for the week. Note that a reading response is not a simple summary, but a critical, focused analysis of the readings. I will not accept late responses and each response should not exceed 1000 words. You must write one response for Topics 1–4, another for Topics 5–8, and another for Topics 9–12.
Midterm exam. There will be one in-class midterm exam on October 28th. This exam will cover readings in Topics 1 - 6 of the syllabus.

Final exam. There will also be a take-home final exam, which will be handed out on the last day of class and due via email by 11:59 pm, Friday December 11. This exam will be cumulative but will focus more on Topics 7 - 12 of the syllabus.

Grading:

- Class participation: 20%
- Three reading responses: 30%
- Midterm exam: 25%
- Final exam: 25%

Readings:

Preliminaries

September 2  Introduction


September 7  Labor Day - No Class

September 9  Data Analysis Crash Course / Tools in Development Economics


Topic 1 Political Economy of Development

September 14

September 16

**Topic 2 History and Economic Development in the Long-Run**

September 21

September 23

**Topic 3 Institution and Development**

September 28
Economic Growth, 9(2), 131-165.

Recommended Reading


Topic 4 Political Economy of Public Good Provision

September 30


October 5 Fall Break – No Class

October 7


Topic 5 Democracy and Development

October 12


Recommended Readings

October 14


**Topic 6 Clientelism**

October 19


October 21


October 26 Review

October 28 In-class Midterm Exam

**Topic 7 Distributive Politics and Development**

November 2

November 4


**Topic 8 Ethnicity and Development**

November 9


November 11


**Topic 9 Ethnic and civil conflict**

November 16

November 18

**Topic 10 Corruption**

November 23

November 25

**Topic 11 Decentralization and Development**

November 30

December 2

**Topic 12 Foreign Aid and Development**

December 7

*Recommended readings:*

December 9