

PSCI 564
Development and Political Economy
Fall 2025
Wednesdays 2pm-4:40pm, Harkness 329

Alexander Lee

Instructor:

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Graduate Office Hours: Thursdays, 2-4. Harkness 313

Course Goals:

This course surveys selected topics in the extensive literature on political and economic development. We will focus on differences in formal and informal institutions across countries. Topics will include the determinants of economic growth, the modernization hypothesis, distributional conflict, government corruption, the success and failure of states to deliver of public goods, among others.

Grading:

Class Participation — 30%

Three short research proposals (10% each) — 30%

Final Research Proposal — 40%

Course Policies:

Unexcused late work will be penalized a whole letter grade, and an additional letter grade for every additional 24 hours of lateness. Plagiarism or cheating will be treated seriously and reported to the Board of Academic Honesty.

Course Requirements:

Students must do all required readings, and be prepared to discuss them actively. **(30% of the grade).**

During the course, students must submit and present three short research proposal on a topic relevant to the course material, which should be a maximum of 500 words in length **(10% of the grade each)**. This proposal should outline 1) An existing theoretical or empirical puzzle, 2) an intuition as to a solution to this puzzle, 3) the data needed to test this puzzle, and 4) the identification strategy to be used.

As a final assignment, students must submit a research proposal that develops one of their shorter proposals, which should be a maximum of 3000 words in length. This proposal should outline include a more detailed literature review, discussion of theoretical hypotheses, and a serious discussion of how to obtain the data. For projects with publicly available data, successful projects will include a rough preliminary analysis.

Readings

Week 1: Introduction

August 27th: Introduction to the class and the subject

No Class September 2nd

Week 3: State Policy and Development

September 10th

Readings:

- 1) Rostow, William. *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-communist Manifesto*. Third Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. Ch.1-2.
- 2) Evans, Peter B. *Embedded autonomy: states and industrial transformation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995. P.3-20, 43-73.
- 3) Jones, Benjamin F., and Benjamin A. Olken. "Do leaders matter? National leadership and growth since World War II." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 120.3 (2005): 835-864.
- 4) Johnson, Noel D., and Mark Koyama. "States and economic growth: Capacity and constraints." *Explorations in Economic History* 64 (2017): 1-20.
- 5) Gerschenkron, Alexander. *Economic backwardness in historical perspective, a book of essays*, Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962. Introduction.

Week 4: The Effects of Democracy on Development

September 17th

Readings:

- 1) Casey, Katherine, Rachel Glennerster, and Edward Miguel. "Reshaping institutions: Evidence on aid impacts using a preanalysis plan." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127.4 (2012): 1755-1812.
- 2) Fujiwara, Thomas. "Voting technology, political responsiveness, and infant health: Evidence from Brazil." *Econometrica* 83.2 (2015): 423-464.
- 3) Harding, Robin, and David Stasavage. "What democracy does (and doesn't do) for basic services: School fees, school inputs, and African elections." *The Journal of Politics* 76.1 (2013): 229-245.
- 4) Martinez-Bravo, M., Padró i Miquel, G., Qian, N., and Yao, Y. (2022). The Rise and Fall of Local Elections in China. *American Economic Review* 112(9):2921-58

Week 5: State Capacity

September 24th

Readings:

- 1) Herbst, Jeffery. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000. Ch.1.
- 2) Lee, Melissa M., and Nan Zhang. "Legibility and the informational foundations of state capacity." *The Journal of Politics* 79.1 (2017): 118-132.
- 3) Scott, James. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999. Ch.1.
- 4) Migdal, Joel S. *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton University Press, 1988. Introduction to Part 1, chapter 1.
- 5) Suryanarayan, Pavithra, and Steven White. "Slavery, reconstruction, and bureaucratic capacity in the American south." *American Political Science Review* 115.2 (2021): 568-584.

Week 5: Networks and Parties

October 1st

Readings:

- 1) Cruz, C., Labonne, J., & Querubin, P. (2020). Social Network Structures and the Politics of Public Goods Provision: Evidence from the Philippines. *American Political Science Review* 114(2):486-501
- 2) Bussell, Jennifer. *Clients and constituents: Political responsiveness in patronage democracies*. Oxford UP, 2019. Introduction
- 3) Poertner, M. (2021), The Organizational Voter: Support for New Parties in Young Democracies. *American Journal of Political Science*, 65: 634-651

- 4) Poertner, M. (2023). Building the Party on the Ground: The Role of Access to Public Office for Party Growth. *Journal of Politics* 85(4):1516-1528

Week 6: Programmatic Politics Under Low Information and Capacity

October 8th

Readings:

- 1) Gottlieb, J., Grossman, G., Larreguy, H., and Marx, B. (2019). A Signaling Theory of Distributive Policy Choice: Evidence from Senegal. *Journal of Politics* 81(2):631-47
- 2) Bueno, N., Zucco, C., and Nunes, F. (2023). What You See and What You Get: Direct and Indirect Political Dividends of Public Policies. *British Journal of Political Science* 53(4):1273-1292
- 3) Martin, L., and Raffler, P. (2021). Fault Lines: The Effects of Bureaucratic Power on Electoral Accountability. *American Journal of Political Science* 65(1): 210–224.
- 4) Brollo F., and Nannicini T. (2012). Tying Your Enemy's Hands in Close Races: The Politics of Federal Transfers in Brazil. *American Political Science Review* 106(4):742-761

No Class October 15th

Week 7: Clientelism

October 22nd

Readings:

- 1) Auerbach, Adam Michael, and Tariq Thachil. "How clients select brokers: Competition and choice in India's slums." *The American Political Science Review* 112.4 (2018): 775-791.
- 2) Shami, M. 2012. "Collective Action, Clientelism, and Connectivity," *American Political Science Review*, 106:3, 588-606.
- 3) Wantchekon, Leonard. "Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin." *World Politics* 55.03 (2003): 399-422.
- 4) Stokes, Susan C., et al. *Brokers, voters, and clientelism: The puzzle of distributive politics*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. Ch.1, 5.

Week 8: Corruption

October 29th

Readings:

- 1) Bertrand, M., S. Djankov, R. Hanna and S. Mullainathan. 2007. "Obtaining a Driver's License in India: An Experimental Approach to Studying Corruption," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 122:4, 1639-1676.
- 2) Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. "Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123.2 (2008): 703-745.
- 3) Samphantharak, Krislert, and Edmund J. Malesky. "Predictable corruption and firm investment: evidence from a natural experiment and survey of Cambodian entrepreneurs." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 3 (2008): 227-267.
- 4) Olken, B. (2007). Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia. *Journal of Political Economy*, 115(2), 200-249.

Week 10: Bureaucracies

November 5th

Readings:

- 1) Dasgupta, Aditya, and Devesh Kapur. "The political economy of bureaucratic overload: Evidence from rural development officials in India." *American Political Science Review* 114.4 (2020): 1316-1334.
- 2) Banerjee, Abhijit, Raghavendra Chattopadhyay, Esther Duflo, Daniel Keniston, and Nina Singh. "Improving police performance in Rajasthan, India: Experimental evidence on incentives, managerial autonomy, and training." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 13, no. 1 (2021): 36-66.
- 3) Bhavnani, Rikhil and Alexander Lee. "Local Embeddedness and Bureaucratic Performance: Evidence from India" *The Journal of Politics*, 2018, 80.1, 71-87.
- 4) Toral, G., How Patronage Delivers: Political Appointments, Bureaucratic Accountability, and Service Delivery in Brazil. *American Journal of Political Science*. 68.2 (2024): 797-815.

Week 11: Trust, Social Capital and Diversity

November 12th

Readings:

- 1) Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. "Why does ethnic diversity undermine public goods provision?." *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 04 (2007): 709-725.
- 2) Tsai, Lily L. "Solidary groups, informal accountability, and local public goods provision in rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101.2 (2007): 355-372.

- 3) Putnam, Robert D., Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Y. Nanetti. *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*. Princeton university press, 1994. P83-136.
- 4) Inglehart, Ronald, and Wayne E. Baker. "Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values." *American sociological review* (2000): 19-51.

Week 12: Gender

November 19th

Readings:

- 1) Chattopadhyay, Raghabendra, and Esther Duflo. "Women as policy makers: Evidence from a randomized policy experiment in India." *Econometrica* 72.5 (2004): 1409-1443.
- 2) Karekurre-Ramachandra, Varun, and Alexander Lee. "Do gender quotas hurt less privileged groups? Evidence from India." *American Journal of Political Science* 64.4 (2020): 757-772.
- 3) Parthasarathy, Ramya, Vijayendra Rao, and Nethra Palaniswamy. "Deliberative democracy in an unequal world: A text-as-data study of South India's village assemblies." *American Political Science Review* 113.3 (2019): 623-640.
- 4) Goyal, Tanushree. "Representation from below: How women's grassroots party activism promotes equal political participation." *American Political Science Review* 118.3 (2024): 1415-1430.

No Class November 25th

Week 13: Ethnic Politics

December 3rd

Readings:

- 1) Dunning, Thad, and Lauren Harrison. "Cross-cutting cleavages and ethnic voting: An experimental study of cousinage in Mali." *American Political Science Review* 104.1 (2010): 21-39.
- 2) Posner, Daniel N. "The political salience of cultural difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are allies in Zambia and adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98.4 (2004): 529-545.
- 3) Lee, Alexander. "Ethnic diversity and ethnic discrimination: Explaining local public goods provision." *Comparative Political Studies* 51.10 (2018): 1351-1383.
- 4) Miguel, Edward. "Tribe or nation? Nation building and public goods in Kenya versus Tanzania." *World politics* 56.3 (2004): 327-362.