

Geography 408 - Fall Semester 2018

Geography of Development

Section 15569

Time: 10:05 – 11:25 Wednesday & Friday

Room: Burnside Hall Room 306

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Office hours: by appointment

TA: forthcoming

Email: forthcoming

Office hours: by appointment

Please note that the Student Contact TA is your first point of contact for all questions regarding the course outline, mid-terms, on-line quizzes and final exam.

Course Description

This course will examine the geography of international development by looking at a selection of some of the more acute development problems and their attempted solutions, with examples drawn primarily from Africa and the Middle East.

The course begins with an overview of how international development works at the level of donors and science, along with the role of host governments and local communities--in pursuing agendas for development. Next we consider the broad issue of land rights, focusing on how land rights work in some areas of the developing world and how they are fundamental to development and to resolving a range of issues. We then examine the problem of armed conflict--the types, how they function, how they impact development, and the role of the 'peace process' in moving away from conflict and toward development. As an example of the latter we will look at the recovery of land rights systems after war.

We then move on to an examination of a series of selected topics important to development. These may include: 1) food security; 2) deforestation and desertification; 3) climate change; and 4) poverty; among others.

Course Material

The course will encompass lectures, readings, documentary videos and in-class exercises. Both PowerPoint lectures (a reduced version) and reading material will be available electronically on MyCourses, with some readings available on the Internet. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with MyCourses. Note that the PowerPoint lectures posted on MyCourses serve as a foundation only, the in-class lecture and exercises, along with readings are what will be tested on. Lecture and readings correspond in topic only but are otherwise independent--meaning lectures and readings do not cover the same material.

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation will include:

1. One in-class midterm exam:
 - a. Worth 35 percent of final grade
2. In-class exercises:
 - a. 'Pop solutions' and role playing
 - b. Worth 5 percent of final grade
3. Project:
 - a. Worth 25 percent of final grade
4. Final exam:
 - a. Not comprehensive
 - b. Worth 35 percent of final grade

In-Class Exercises

There will be two types of in-class exercises; 1) scheduled role playing scenarios; and 2) 'Pop solutions' exercises. Pop solutions will take place similar to a pop quiz--the date these will take place and total number of pop solutions are not known to students beforehand. In this exercise: a) students are presented with a development dilemma in the course of daily lectures, b) they assemble into their pre-determined groups to discuss the problem and derive one or more solutions, and c) the solutions are then written in bullet and paragraph form to be handed in during class with the names and ID numbers of all participating students. The way to do best on these is to attend class regularly.

Project

The topic and framework for the project will be announced in class once the semester is underway. The project is intended to be research heavy, and writing light—meaning the writing that is done to describe the work needs to be very polished.

Class Policies

Class policies follow McGill policies. In particular please note that:

1. Attendance: students are expected to attend class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain lecture notes from fellow students if classes are missed.
2. Accommodation for religious observances are dealt with according to McGill policy.
3. The midterm must be taken at the scheduled time in class. If the midterm is missed due to medical or another urgently important reason, then with proper documentation, the value of the midterm is added to the final exam.
4. If you wish to discuss a piece of graded assessment once it has been returned to you, this should be taken to the Teaching Assistant in the first instance. The first office hours after the midterm is handed back, will be at least 7 days AFTER the handback – i.e. there will be no immediate office hours that same week. This is to give you time to carefully reflect on your results before deciding whether to see the Teaching Assistant for further feedback. You then have 2 weeks (10 business days) to speak to the TA specifically about the midterm.
5. For information on university and department policies for student assessment, please go to <http://www.mcgill.ca/geography/studentassessment>
6. Supplemental work to improve grades is NOT allowed.

7. The instructor reserves the right to apply a curve to exam grades.
8. "McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information) (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)"

"L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

8. "In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)"

"Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue)."

Important Dates

Oct 24: In-Class Midterm Exam

Nov 30: Projects due the last day of class, in compliance with University Student Assessment Policy.

Final Exam: See University Schedule

Other dates: Announced in class

Tentative Schedule

Note that the schedule is approximate and is subject to change, with changes announced in class. Students are responsible for being aware of changes in the schedule and for keeping abreast of the material covered in class, so as to understand what material will be covered on the exams--this is best done by attending class regularly. If you miss classes your first point of contact to determine what was covered will be your fellow students, not the TA or the professor. Readings are available on MyCourses or the online.

Introduction

I. Course overview and the 'Development Machine'

- a. Course Introduction and Overview.
- b. International Development and How it Works – The Development Machine
- c. How the International Science Machine Influences Development;
- d. The Scientific Method and Development Policy

Readings:

1. The role of science in reaching development goals
<http://theconversation.com/the-role-of-science-in-reaching-development-goals-42071>
2. The fundamental role of science and technology in international development
<https://www.nap.edu/read/11583/chapter/2>

PART I. PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS:

Land rights & Armed conflict

II. Land Rights and Development

a. Fundamentals of land tenure

Readings:

1. *Land tenure, economic growth and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.*
2. *Customary Land Tenure in Sub-Saharan Africa Today: Meanings and contexts.*

b. The land tenure 'disconnect'

Readings:

Go to: <http://focusonland.com/> under 'Countries' read the following cases.

Note that you must download the country document to see all of it.

Ethiopia

Kenya

Mozambique

Other country cases that may interest you.

III. Armed Conflict

a. Fundamentals of armed conflict, conflict types

Reading:

1. *Armed conflict: trends and drivers.* (This is a longer document, However it covers the 2-3 lectures on armed conflict)

IV. The Peace Process

a. Operational aspects

Readings:

1. *From Conflict to Peace-building: The role of natural resources and the environment, UNEP.*
2. *Ad hoc humanity: UN peacekeeping and the limits of the international community in Gaza.*

b. Land tenure in a conflict context

Reading:

1. *Land, conflict and livelihoods in the Great Lakes Region: Testing Policies to the Limit.*

c. Land tenure case studies, drawn from: Iraq, Liberia, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Darfur, Mozambique, Colombia

Readings may be assigned.

In Class exercise: 'Return to the Land'

PART II. TOPICS IN DEVELOPMENT:

Climate, Food, Deforestation, Desertification, Poverty, Silos in International Development

(Topics covered as time permits, and not necessarily in this order)

V. Climate Change, Environment and Development

a. Fundamentals of climate change and development

Readings:

1. *Climate Change, Resources, Migration: Campaigning rhetoric or bleak reality? Just how serious a security challenge is climate change for Africa?*.
2. *In search of shelter: mapping the effects of climate change on human migration and displacement.*

b. Madagascar case study

Reading:

1. *Environmental change and adaptation in degraded agro-ecosystems: the case of highland Madagascar.*

VI. Food Security and Development

a. Fundamentals of food security

Readings:

1. *Food Security Basics*
2. Reading: *Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)* <http://www.fews.net/> Review the countries in the 'Areas of Highest Concern'

b. Ethiopia case study: Genetic erosion and food security

VII. Deforestation and land rights

a. Reception of rights and perception of rights.

Readings:

1. *Migrant land rights reception and 'clearing to claim' in sub-Saharan Africa: A deforestation example from southern Zambia.*

VIII. Desertification

a. Old and new perspectives

Readings:

1. *Land degradation neutrality*

IX. Poverty and Development

a. The UN perspective

Reading:

1. *Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet international development goals.*

X. Silos in international development: the case of Afghanistan

a. International Development and working in silos:

Reading:

1. *A volatile interaction between peace-building priorities: road infrastructure reconstruction and land rights in Afghanistan.*
2. *United Nations Aims to Break Down Silos Limiting Peacekeeping's Effectiveness*
<https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsgsm890.doc.htm>
3. *Silos or system?*