McGill University

INTD: 497: Research Seminar on International Development.
Fall 2015

CORRUPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Class meets: M 2.30-5.30pm
Class location: ARTS 260
Office hours: Tuesdays 10-11am,
Wednesdays 2.30-3.30pm or by appointment

Course Description:
This course explores an issue that affects developed and developing countries alike. Scholars, politicians, and civil society often conceive of corruption as a global problem that demands urgent attention. In terms of development, it is usually argued that corruption undermines economic development, wastes resources, and reinforces social inequalities. Every day we see a number of news on corruption appearing in media outlets around the world, and most of what we know about corruption comes from media reporting.

As a course designed for advanced undergraduate students, its main purpose is to provide the tools to understand and analyze the relationship between corruption and development, with 2 weeks that focus on the role of the media.

Rather than focusing on one country at a time or on a few countries in depth, we will use events and systems in various countries as illustrations. The readings are a collection of research on these issues and require the students to read prior to each class session and to engage the readings critically. We will test authors’ claims against the evidence they present, challenge the logic of their arguments, and question their conclusions.

This is a seminar, and as such it is structured based on discussion. We will not repeat what is found in the materials, on the assumption that students will come to class prepared. The reading load is heavy, and keeping up is essential to both your success as a student as well as the course’s!

Course Requirements:
The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Attendance and Participation (includes weekly assignments) 30%
- 2 Analytical Essays. 3 pages 30%
- Activities related to Final Project (details below) 40%

You must receive a passing grade (higher than 50%) for each component of the course in order to pass the course. Note that this means regular attendance and participation are required in order to pass the course, as well as submission of all written assignments. Any confirmed plagiarism or cheating results in an F for that assignment and, therefore, an F for the class, in addition to disciplinary action. Regular unexcused absence from the seminar will result in failing the class. By remaining in this class, you agree to these terms.
In order to calculate your final grade, I will sum all of the points you have received in the class and convert the points into letter grades using the following scale:

85-100 = A
80-84 = A-
75-79 = B+
70-74 = B
65-69 = B-
60-64 = C+
55-59 = C
50-54 = D
Below 50 = F

I will round up scores of 0.5 and higher and round down scores of less than 0.5. No exceptions will be made to the above system of converting points into letter grades.

Late penalties. Assignments will be penalized 2/3 of a letter grade if they are turned in within 24 hours, and an additional 2/3 of a grade for every 24 hours thereafter. Assignments will not be accepted after 72 hours, resulting in failing the paper, which means failing the course. Documented illnesses or family emergencies will be the only grounds for exceptions or extensions.

Attendance and Participation:
There will be a significant reading load week after week. The study of corruption and development usually includes methodologically and theoretically complex readings. I’ve tried to select accessible and interesting readings, but on some topics we will go through complex and dry texts. You are expected to come to class having completed ALL readings.

- Regular class attendance and participation: I will hand out a sign-in attendance sheet at the beginning of each class. You may miss two classes—or parts of two classes—for whatever reason (excused or unexcused) over the course of the semester without incurring any penalty. Beyond that, ALL absences will count against your participation grade. Participation in class discussions is required and students are expected to keep up with the readings. While speaking in class is important, please keep in mind that it is not just quantity that matters, but also quality.

- Weekly assignments (count toward participation):
1. Assigned students. Throughout the semester, each student will be assigned to help guide discussion on a class session. The students assigned on each week (three and in some weeks four) will be on call for that week, and are expected to participate actively and think about at least 3 discussion questions. These discussion questions need to be sent to the Professor by email by 8pm the day before class. Each student will be assigned to one week throughout the semester.
2. News coverage. Also throughout the semester, each student will be assigned to cover world news on corruption for a class session (not to coincide with the week in which you are an assigned student). The three students assigned on each week (some weeks there will be four) will work as a group, coordinate, and create a short (10 min) presentation on the corruption news of the week of their choosing. The three students assigned for each week are required to coordinate and circulate a 1-page summary of the news piece they are covering to the whole class by 8pm the day before the seminar. Each student will be assigned to cover the news on one week throughout the semester.
**Analytical Essays:**
Each student is required to write two reflection essay (3 double-spaced pages) concerning the issues covered in the assigned readings on a particular week. Critiques should focus on strengths and weaknesses of assigned readings, advancing some argument that deals with the issues discussed in the readings. Some ideas of what you can do in these analytical essays:

1. You can pick one theme that is discussed and either criticize the author’s approach or think of a different way of looking at it.
2. You can compare two author’s take on an issue and explain why you think one is more convincing that the other.
3. You can point towards issues that the readings left out, and that you think are necessary to consider within that specific theme.
4. Others!!!

In short, you have leeway as to the structure and content of the papers. The papers will be graded based on 3 criteria:

1. Writing and structure: I expect well-written and logically structured papers (avoid stream of thought).
2. Command of the readings: your paper should show a solid command of the materials covered by the readings for the week (this does not mean repeating and summarizing the arguments).
3. Argument: I want your papers to advance a clear thesis/argument that is well-constructed and advanced throughout the paper.

These papers should **STAY AWAY** from simply summarizing the readings. Papers will only be accepted by email by 8pm the day before class. No extension or incompletes will be given. Papers will be written for weeks in which you are not leading discussion or covering the news.

**Final Project:** For the main assignment for this seminar, I have decided to give you a couple of different options as to what to do. We will explain the options and come up with a way to set up the parameters of how to come with the groups (for those of you choosing to work in groups) in class.

**Option 1.** Work as a group (again, how to form groups is a decision we will make COLLECTIVELY in class) and choose a region (out these regions: South America, Central America, South-East Asia, Middle East, East Africa, West Africa, Southern Africa, Eastern Europe). Students in the group must collectively design and carry out a research project that explores some issue related to corruption and development in the region assigned.

**Option 2.** Work as a group (same caveat as above) and design and propose a development project to address some aspect of corruption in some place of the world. The group has to collectively decide upon a project and a place (region, country, province/state, city) where the project will be applied. You have absolute freedom to create the project you want, but you need to explicitly assess both the costs and potential benefits/outcomes of the project, as well as the constraints and opportunities generated by the location where you choose to implement the project. The projects must include:

- A detailed description of the project and the rationale behind it.
- A budget of the costs of carrying out the project.
- A timeline of implementation and of expected outcomes.

Syllabus INTD: 497-002. Balán / 3
• An analysis of the location background insofar as it affects the feasibility and potential effectiveness of the project.
• An assessment of the potential replicability of the project in other contexts.

If you choose one of the group options, the project will consist of three main tasks (which will be graded): proposal, paper and presentation. All grades for the final project will be at the group level (all group members receive same grade for each component of the final project)

I. Research Proposal: Each group must submit a 5-page research proposal for their research project or development project. This proposal should set up your research objectives and plans in order to carry out the study or project, presenting the idea you want to advance and covering the different components of the project or study. The proposal should cover the division of labor among the students in the group. The proposal also needs to clarify the sources of information you will use and how, and explain how it fits with existing research/development projects on your topic/region. Moreover, it needs to outline the relevant literature that your paper will address and use. You are encouraged to discuss these issues with the instructor. The more work you put into this proposal stage, the more detailed feedback you’ll receive from me. (5% of the final grade)

II. Presentation: In the two final weeks each group will present their project to the whole class (length of presentations to be decided according to number of groups). Your objective is to provide a clear and compelling brief on your research/development project. Presentations should not be read, and need to be well-planned and rehearsed. The use of visual aids and graphs is encouraged. Creativity and originality will be rewarded. In short, your presentations need to be awesome, and you should work on providing an entertaining and thoughtful talk that will make people remember your project. (10% of the final grade)

III. Final Paper: The final group research paper should be of around 40 pages. The theme and issues of the paper are up to the group to decide, in consultation with the Professor. You should use existing literature on the topic as a resource for your research paper or development project, but you should stay away from doing a literature review. (25% of the final grade)

Option 3. Work on an individual paper of roughly 20 pages. The research paper should address an issue related to corruption in a given country or region of your choice. The issue may be one or more of the topics covered in class. Alternatively, it can also cover a different issue (after instructor’s approval). Students may use the materials and ideas discussed throughout the class and will also need to do research on their topic and country or region. Your paper should propose a research question and advance a clear thesis, providing a number of arguments and evidence to support your thesis. You should use existing literature on the topic as a resource for your arguments and/or as a set of alternative explanations for your question. This is a research paper, and as such you should stay away from doing a literature review. I will ask you to turn in a research proposal, setting up your research objectives and plans, presenting the idea you want to advance, and covering the different components of the paper. This research proposal will be 5% of your final grade. The final paper itself will be 35% of your final grade.

Writing assignments have to be presented following these guidelines: double space, Times New Roman, font 12, 1-inch margins. All endmatter (figures, tables, charts, endnotes, and bibliography) does NOT count toward page limits.
Extra credit Opportunities:
1. Course Evaluations: To encourage filling out course evaluations I will give everybody in the class an extra 1% if at least 80% of the students enrolled fills out the course evaluations in time.
2. The Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) annual McDonald Currie Lecture will take place on Thursday, October 15, 2014, from 5:00-6:30 PM. The location, speaker and topic will be confirmed shortly. Attending students will receive an extra 1% that will count toward their participation grade. Please note that the participation grade is never to exceed the percentage established for the course. At the lecture, there will be a sign up sheet. Before the lecture begins, students should sign up, providing their name, student ID number, and provide a signature. Attendance for the full lecture is necessary to receive the extra credit.

Course and University Policies:
Integrity: 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/integrity for more information).
Special Needs: If you have a disability, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514.398.6009 before you do this.
Language: 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. Note that this right applies to ALL written work that is to be graded, from one-word answers to dissertations.
Course-Evaluations: End-of-term course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the students’ learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury.
MyCourses: This course has its own website on MyCourses. It will be updated regularly, so you are required to check it often. On the website, in addition to this syllabus, you will find other useful information regarding course assignments and classes. Other items of interest will also be posted.

Classroom Etiquette:
I want to create a nice and stimulating learning environment for you and your peers. To do this, I ask that you respect a few basic ground rules:
1- I will start class on time and expect you to arrive to class on time. I make important announcements at the beginning of class, plus I take attendance. In addition, people coming in late could disrupt the Professor and their fellow students.
2- Many students prefer to take notes with their laptops/tablets. This is fine; however, I expect (and kindly ask) you to refrain from activities unrelated to the class (eg. emailing, instant messaging, facebook, etc.).
3- Please remember to silence your cell phones.

ALL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN VIA EMAIL.
Note: In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1: NO CLASS (Neither FRIDAY, Sept 4th nor MONDAY, Sept 7th)

Week 2: Introduction to the Course: Studying Corruption and Development (September 14th)
Why study corruption? Why study development? Who is affected by corruption? Have you been touched by corruption? When and where?
• Please review syllabus

Week 3: Definition and Measurements (September 21st)
What is corruption? What are the different types of corruption, and why do distinctions matter? Can the level of corruption in a country be measured with any degree of accuracy? How? How is corruption different from bad policy?
Readings:

Total Pages: 61
Recommended:

Syllabus INTD: 497-002. Balán / 6

Class Assignment: Select a country of your interest (e.g. Nigeria, Russia, Mexico). Peruse the websites of Global Integrity (www.report.globalintegrity.org), Transparency International (www.transparency.org), and the World Bank Governance Indicators (http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/) and be prepared to discuss the extent of corruption in that country and the context in which it occurs.

Week 4: The Impact of Corruption (September 28th)
What are the main consequences of corruption? Are these consequences a result of corruption or is corruption a symptom of other problems in a society? Can corruption have positive effects?

Readings:

Total Pages: 94

Recommended:
• Leff, Nathaniel. 1964. Economic Development through Bureaucratic Corruption, American Behavioral Scientist, 8(3): 8-14. [Focus on main argument]

Week 5: Causes of Corruption (October 5th)
What explains differences in levels of corruption? Does Culture Influence the level of Corruption in a Society? How?

Readings:
- Treisman, Daniel. 2007. What Have We Learned about the Causes of Corruption from Ten Years of Cross-National Research? Annual Review of Political Science. 10: 211-244.

Total Pages: 140

Week 6: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving, Oct 12th)

Week 7: Grand and Petty corruption in Politics (October 19th)
How pervasive is corruption in politics? How does it take place? Campaign financing and vote/turnout buying: are they equally problematic?

Readings:

Total Pages: 66

Week 8: Corruption and Development (October 26th)
How does Corruption affect Development? Are some economic policies more prone to produce corruption? Is fixing corruption an effective and efficient way of tackling development?

Readings:

Total Pages: 118

Recommended:

**Week 9: Accountability and the Media.** (November 2nd)
What is accountability? How is it related to corruption? How can the media help ensure that we keep governments accountable? Does it help? How? What is the democratic role of the media?

**Readings:**

Total pages: 104

Recommended:

**Week 10: Media Coverage of Corruption: Scandals, Perceptions, and Reality** (November 9th)
How does the media cover corruption? What are scandals and how do they impact corruption prevention? Does the media “discover” or “uncover” corruption? Can the media be neutral or objective in its coverage?

**Readings:**

Total Pages: 117
Recommended:

Week 11: Addressing Corruption in the International Sphere (November 16th)
Can we find solutions to corruption in the international system? What are the difficulties in creating and managing effective anti-corruption efforts by the international community? How effective are international conventions and institutions in curbing corruption? How can they be made more effective?

Readings:
- Balan, Manuel, and Lorenzo Daieff. 2013. Promoting the Rule of Law abroad: Towards a Multi-dimensional approach. ISID Research to Practice Policy Brief No. 28. 1-23

Total pages: 72
Recommended:
- United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)
- OECD Anti-Bribery Convention

Syllabus INTD: 497-002. Balán / 10
• Sullivan, John and Aleksandr Shkolikov. 2008. “Changing Perspectives: how donors can work with the private sector to reduce corruption.” Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.

**Week 12: Curbing Corruption: Who, How, When? (November 23rd)**

What pitfalls await domestic agencies from combating corruption? 2. What are the prerequisites for anti-corruption agencies/commissions to be effective? 3. What conditions are necessary for a country’s judiciary to be effective in combating corruption? Can the medicine (of anti-corruption efforts) be worse than the disease?

**Readings:**

Total Pages: 140

**Recommended:**

**Week 13: In-Class Presentations of final projects (November 30th)**

**Week 14: In-Class Presentations of final projects (December 7th)**

**FINAL PAPER DUE on December 15th!**