Politics, Society, and Economy in the Third World

Course Description

This course examines various aspects of political, economic, and social development in the “Third World” (also known as the “developing world”). The vast majority of people in the contemporary international system live in the developing world, encompassing more than 150 countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. Despite their great diversity, many nations of the developing world share a number of common characteristics, such as poverty, legacies of colonialism, external vulnerability and dependency, internal political and social instability, challenges of state-building, state failure, ethnic conflict, human rights abuses, and so forth. This course aims to help students to identify and critically analyze the major issues and challenges facing the developing nations.

The main objectives of the course are fourfold:

1) to introduce you to the key concepts and major theoretical perspectives in the study of the developing world;
2) to recognize the political and socioeconomic differences between developed and developing countries and the significant variation within the developing world;
3) to develop analytic skills to explore various factors that shape political, economic, and social development and underdevelopment in the developing world; and
4) to investigate the impact of the changing dynamics of the international system on the developing world.

The course consists of four parts. The first section provides a brief overview of the main challenges of the Third World development, the meanings of key concepts, such as “Third World,” “development,” “poverty,” and “inequality,” and the major analytical approaches to the study of the developing world. For the rest of the course, we will explore different aspects of underdevelopment and challenges of Third World countries. Part II: International Political Economy will explore different economic development experiences in the Third World. Part III: Conflict and Instability will explore the underlying causes of military conflicts and security problems in the Third World. Part IV: State and Society in the Third World will aim to enrich your understanding of the complex relationship between politics and culture in the Third World. In addition, we will examine in detail the different development experiences of six developing nations: China, India, Nigeria, Iran, Mexico, and Brazil.
Required Texts


All the required books are available for purchase at the area bookstores. They are also on reserve at the university library. All the required articles are available online (The hyperlinks to the articles are provided in the ANGEL-version of this syllabus. Many of them are available through the library website. I did my best to provide the permanent link. However, if the link does not work, please go to the library website ([http://www2.lib.msu.edu/](http://www2.lib.msu.edu/)) > Choose “E-resources” under “Resources” > Type the title of the journal > Find the article by the year/issue number or search by the author’s name or the title of the article.

In addition, you are expected to follow news on the developing world in the major newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist*, and *The Financial Times*. I will occasionally post important news articles to ANGEL, which may be discussed in class.

Requirements

1. **Class Participation and Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class session except in cases of illness, family emergency, or religious holidays. Missing more than three class sessions without appropriate documentation (such as a doctor’s note) will hurt your participation grade (*Students who have failed to attend at least two-thirds of the classes without due cause will receive a 0 for this course*). Each student is expected to complete the required readings BEFORE CLASS and to participate actively in class discussion. Class participation is measured by the quality of your thoughtful contributions to the class discussion.

2. **Reading Memos:** Each student is required to write **EIGHT one-page memos** (single-space) during the semester (You need to submit four of them before the midterm and the rest after the midterm). The memo should include a brief summary of the main arguments of the readings, your *critical* reactions, and two *questions* for class discussion at the end. Upload your memos to ANGEL by **10:00pm** the night before the class session for which the readings are assigned. This assignment will not be graded. However, *failure to submit at least eight memos will hurt your participation grade severely*.

3. **Case Studies / Group Presentations:** Each student will select one country from the list of countries covered in the JKK book (i.e. China, India, Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria, and Iran). A group of about five students will be assigned to make a 40 minute professional Power Point presentation (approximately 7-8 minutes for each presenter).
Each chapter is composed of five sections. Thus, each member of the group will be expected to research and present on one of the five sections. Each student is expected to use at least five sources besides the textbook. While you are expected to present as a group (thus, the coherence of the whole group presentation will be considered), grades will be based on individual performance on your presentation. The date of your presentation will be decided on January 20. You are required to submit your Power Point slides to ANGEL by 9:00pm the day before your presentation. You should not read your presentations or rely heavily on your notes. Doing so will be severely penalized.

4. Exams: There will be two in-class exams. Both exams will test your understanding of the readings, class lectures/discussions, and other class activities. Each exam will consist of ID questions (i.e., identification of key concepts, events, and people, etc), short answers, and one essay. The final exam will be cumulative, though it will be mostly drawn from the second part of the course after the mid-term. No make-up exams will be given except in case of medical or family emergency (Appropriate documentation will be required).

5. Research Project:

   a. Proposal: You need to meet with me to discuss your research topic early in the semester. After your topic is approved by the instructor, you are required to write and submit a formal proposal of 3-4 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font) by Friday, February 25 at 4:00pm. The proposal should include your central research question, your (tentative) argument, a short literature review (i.e., your critical evaluation of what has been written about your topic; it is NOT an annotated bibliography), and a preliminary bibliography (in addition to the 3-4 pages). The proposal should be properly cited.

   b. First Draft (Optional): You are encouraged to submit the first draft of your research paper. The draft should be at least 9-10 pages. It should not be a rough draft. If you decide to submit the first draft, you need to make a substantial progress on your final draft, based on my feedback and your continued efforts. It is due on Tuesday, March 29 at 4:00pm.

   c. Final Paper: The final draft should be 10-12 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, minimum 15 titles in the reference list). There should be a separate front page with the title of the paper, your name, and your e-mail address. You should insert page numbers on every page. Writing style will be considered in grading the paper. It is due on Friday, April 29 at 4:00pm.

Grades

Every assignment must be completed to pass this course. Final grades will be based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study Group Presentation 10%
Midterm Exam 20%
Final Exam 25%
Research Paper 25%

Key Dates

- February 25 (F): Proposal due by 4:00pm*
- March 1: Mid-term Exam
- April 29 (F): Final draft due by 4:00pm*
- May 2 (M): 3:00-500pm: Final exam

* For each day your paper is late, your grade will be deducted by 0.5. Please submit a hard copy of your paper in my mailbox AND upload its electronic file to ANGEL by 4:00pm. When you upload your paper to ANGEL, you need to use Explorer or Firefox, because ANGEL does not support Safari or Chrome. It is your responsibility to upload your file properly.

Honors Option

Students enrolled in MC 320 may receive honors credit for the course. If you are interested in the honors option, please let me know during the first week. To receive honors credit, you must write a second research paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, minimum 15 titles in the reference list) and a book review (5-6 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) of the following book.


You must receive at least a grade of 3.5 in the course to receive honors credit.

Academic Integrity

JMC and MSU policies on academic integrity and plagiarism will be strictly enforced in this course. See the JMC’s student Handbook section, Standard and Expectations, and the MSU’s policies on plagiarism available in the following link:
http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/plagiarism.html

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) (http://www.rcpd.msu.edu/Home/). To notify the Center, call (517)353-9642. The Center is located in 120 Bessey Hall. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations.

Note: This syllabus is subject to minor changes at the instructor’s discretion.
Course Schedule and Readings

January 11 (T): Course Overview

- Syllabus

PART I: UNDERSTANDING THE THIRD WORLD

January 13 (Th): What is the Third World?


Recommended

January 18 (T): What is Development / Underdevelopment?


Recommended

January 20 (Th): Poverty and Inequality

- Jeffrey Sachs, “Exclusive Book Excerpt: The End of Poverty,” Time March 14, 2005, Available at:
  - http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1034738-3,00.html

Recommended

January 25 (T): Sources of Poverty

• Collier, chapter 4, “Landlocked with Bad Neighbors,” pp. 53-63.
• Collier, chapter 5, “Bad Governance in a Small Country,” pp. 64-75.

January 27 (Th): Modernization and Dependency Theory

• Handelman, chapter 1, “Understanding Underdevelopment,” pp. 15-27.

Recommended


PART II: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

February 1 (T): Development Strategies


Recommended:


February 3 (Th): Comparative Development Experiences

• Nancy Birdsall, Dani Rodrick, and Arvind Subramanian, “How to Help Poor Countries,” Foreign Affairs 84 (4) (July/August 2005), pp. 136-152.
• Carol Lancaster, “Development in Africa: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly,” Current History 104 (May 2005), pp. 222-227.
• Steven Radelet, “Emerging Africa: How 17 Countries Are Leading the Way (Brief),” http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1424419/
**Recommended**


**February 8 (T): Globalization, Poverty, and Inequality**


**Recommended:**


**February 10 (Th): Foreign Aid**


**Recommended:**

PART III: CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY

February 15 (T): State-Building, State Failure, and State Collapse


Recommended:

February 17 (Th): Security Predicament in the Third World

• Ayoob, chapter 3, “Interstate Conflict and Regional Insecurity,” pp. 47-70.

February 22 (T): Ethnic Conflict


Recommended:

February 24 (Th): The Post-Cold War Security Predicament in the Third World

• Ayoob, chapters 6 – 9, pp. 115-199.
• Andrew S. Natsios and Michael Abramowitz, “Sudan’s Secession Crisis: Can the South Part From the North Without War?” Foreign Affairs (January/February 2011).

Recommended
• Andrew S. Natsios, “Beyond Darfur: Sudan’s Slide Toward Civil War,” Foreign Affairs 87 (May/June 2008), pp. 77-93.

February 25 (F): Research Proposal Due at 4:00pm
March 1 (T): **MIDTERM-EXAM**

**PART IV: STATE AND SOCIETY IN THE THIRD WORLD**

March 3 (Th): Democracy and Democratization

- Handelman, chapter 2, “Democratic Change and the Change to Democracy,” pp. 28-57.

Recommended:

March 8 & 10: **SPRING BREAK**

March 15 (T): **CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: China**


March 17 (Th): **CLASS CANCELLED**

(I will be traveling to participate in an academic conference. The date of a make-up class will be determined by student availability).

March 22 (T): **CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: India**


Recommended:

March 24 (Th): **Democracy and Development**


Recommended:

March 29 (T): Religion and Politics


Recommended:

March 31 (Th): Women and Development


Recommended

April 5 (T): CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: Nigeria


Recommended

April 7 (Th): CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: Iran

• Ervand Abrahamian, “Iran,” in JKK, chapter 7, pp. 310-353.

April 12 (T): Revolutionary Change
• Handelman, chapter 8, “Revolutionary Change,” pp. 219-243.

April 14 (Th): The Military and Politics

• Handelman, chapter 9, “Soldiers and Politics,” pp. 244-275.

April 19 (T): CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: Mexico

• Merille S. Grindle, “Mexico,” in JKK, chapter 4, pp. 156-199.

April 21 (Th): CASE STUDY PRESENTATION: Brazil


April 26(T): What Can We Do To Help Poor Countries?

• Collier, chapter 8, “Military Intervention,” pp. 124-134.

April 28 (Th): Where Do We Go From Here?


April 29 (F): Research Paper Due at 4:00pm

May 2 (Monday): 3:00-5:00 pm: FINAL EXAM