

IAS 3323: Political Economy of Development

Department of International and Area Studies
University of Oklahoma
Fall 2022

Instructor: Professor Natalie Letsa

Class Schedule: M/W 1:30 – 2:45pm; Farzaneh Hall 148

Office: Farzaneh Hall, Room 315

Office Hours: Schedule a meeting at: <https://calendly.com/nwletsa>

Email me if you need to find a different time to meet!

Email: nwletsa@ou.edu

Course Description

Why are some countries rich and why are some countries poor? Scholars of poverty and development have offered many different approaches to answering this question, and the primary goal of this course will be to understand, unpack, and challenge these different approaches. We will learn about structural, institutional, historical, and cultural approaches to understanding development, with an overarching emphasis on the role of the state. In order to evaluate these foundational theories of economic development, we will focus on the empirical nature of political economy. The course will introduce students to issues of causality as well as provide in-depth case studies from countries across the world.

Required Texts:

Collier, Paul. 2008. *The Bottom Billion*. Oxford University Press.

Assignments and Grading

Assignments in this course are designed for you to learn more about special topics in political economy, practice analytical writing, and demonstrate your knowledge of the course material. The calendar of assignments is below:

Reading Quizzes: Eight total (20%); I will drop your lowest score

Group Presentation- Intermezzo: Date TBD (10%)

Midterm: Monday, October 10 (20%)

Response Paper: Wednesday, August 31 and Monday, November 7 (20%)

Take Home Final Exam: Friday, December 16 at 8am (30%)

Course Schedule and Readings

Section I: The Concept of 'Development'

Week 1: Economic Development in Local and Global Context

Monday, August 22

Readings: NONE

Wednesday, August 24

Readings:

Banerjee, Abhijit and Esther Duflo, 2006. "The Economic Lives of the Poor." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21(1).

Week 2: Measuring 'Economic Development'

Monday, August 29

***Bring a laptop to class today!

Readings:

BBC: "Contrasts in Development"

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zs7wrdm/revision/1>

Deutsche Bank Research, 2006. "Measures of Well-Being: There Is More to It than GDP"

Wednesday, August 31

Readings:

Morten Jerven, 2015. *Africa: Why Economists Get It Wrong*. Chapter 4: pages 103-123.

**Response paper due

Week 3: The History of 'Development'

Monday, September 5

NO CLASS TODAY (Labor Day)

Wednesday, September 7

Readings:

Moyo, Dambisa, 2009. *Dead Aid*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Chapter 2: p. 10-28

**Reading quiz #1

Section II: The Historical & Structural Causes of Development

Week 4: The Formation of States

Monday, September 12

Readings:

Bates, Robert. 2010. *Prosperity and Violence*. W.W. Norton & Company. Chapters 3-4: 34-66.

Intermezzo: The Peace of Westphalia

Wednesday, September 14

NO CLASS TODAY; LECTURE WILL BE POSTED ONLINE

Readings:

Herbst, Jeffrey, 2000. *States and Power in Africa*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 1: pages 9-32.

Week 5: Geography, Colonialism & the Resource Curse

Monday, September 19

Readings:

The Bottom Billion, Chapter 4 (pp. 53-63)

Wednesday, September 21

Readings:

Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson. 2006. "Understanding Prosperity and Poverty: Geography, Institutions, and the Reversal of Fortune" (pp. 19-35) in *Understanding Poverty*, edited by Banerjee, Bénabou and Mookherjee.

**Reading quiz #2

Week 6: Geography, Colonialism & the Resource Curse (cont'd)

Monday, September 26

Readings: Rodney, Walter. 1972. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Verso Books. Chapter 6: 245-290.

Intermezzo: The "Congo Horrors"

Wednesday, September 28

Readings: *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 3 (pp.38-52).

Intermezzo: Ken Saro-Wiwa

**Reading quiz #3

Week 7: Diversity, Culture, and Social Capital

Monday, October 3

Readings:

Miguel, Edward. 2006. "Ethnic Diversity and Poverty Reduction" (pp. 169-184) in *Understanding Poverty*, edited by Banerjee, Bénabou and Mookherjee. Oxford University Press.

Wednesday, October 5

Readings:

Putnam, Robert, 1994. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press. Chapter 4: pages 83-120.

**Reading Quiz #4

Intermezzo: The Protestant Work Ethic

Section III: Proximate Causes of Development

Week 8: Violence and Civil War

Monday, October 10

MIDTERM

Wednesday, October 12

Readings: *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 2 (pp.17-37).

Intermezzo: Sendero Luminoso

Week 9: Governments, Economic Policy and Corruption

Monday, October 17

Readings: Listen to this podcast with Russ Roberts and Barry Weingast (EconTalk, August 2013): http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2013/08/weingast_on_the.html#

Wednesday, October 19

Readings:

The Bottom Billion, Chapter 5 (pp. 64-75).

Intermezzo: Imelda Marcos

**Reading Quiz #5

Week 10: Poverty Traps

Monday, October 24

Readings:

The Bottom Billion, Chapter 1 (pp. 3-13).

Wednesday, October 26

Readings:

Mookherjee, Dilip. 2006. "Poverty Persistence and Design of Antipoverty Policies" (pp. 231-41) in *Understanding Poverty*, edited by Banerjee, Bénabou and Mookherjee. Oxford University Press.

**Reading Quiz #6

Section IV: The Instruments

Week 11: Education and Population

Monday, October 31

Readings: Easterly, 2002. *The Elusive Quest for Growth*, Chapter 4 (pp. 72-85).

Intermezzo: Pakistani Ghost Schools

Wednesday, November 2

Readings: : Easterly, 2002. *The Elusive Quest for Growth*, Chapter 5 (pp. 87-99).

**Reading quiz #7

Intermezzo: China's One Child Policy

Week 12: International Aid

Monday, November 7

Readings:

Moyo, Dambisa, 2009. *Dead Aid*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Chapter 3-4: p. 29-68

**Reading Response Paper Due today!

Wednesday, November 9

Readings:

The Bottom Billion, Chapter 7 (pp. 99-123).

Intermezzo: The Millennium Villages Experiment

Week 13: Other Forms of International Intervention

Monday, November 14

Readings: *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 8 (pp.124-134).

Wednesday, November 16

Readings: *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 9 (pp.135-156).

**Reading quiz #8

Week 14: Taxation & Revenue

Monday, November 21

Readings:

Besley, Timothy and Torsten Persson, 2014. "Why Do Developing Countries Tax So Little?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(4): 99-120.

Wednesday, November 23

THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS!

Week 15: International Trade, Globalization, and Technology

Monday, November 28

Readings:

The Bottom Billion, Chapters 6 (pp.79-96)

Intermezzo: The Battle of Seattle

Wednesday, November 30

Readings:

Stiglitz, Joseph. 2006. *Making Globalization Work*. W.W. Norton & Co., Chapter 3: pages 61-101.

Week 16: Reading Week

Monday, December 5

The Bottom Billion, Chapter 11 & Postscript (pp. 175-195)

**Take Home final exam handed out in class

Wednesday, December 7

NO CLASS: Work on your final!

***Take Home Final exam is due on Friday, December 16 at 10am

Class Policies: I do not take attendance or base your grade on participation. However, if you choose to be present in class, I expect you to respect the classroom. Your phone should be kept in your bag, and you should use your laptop exclusively for the class; e.g. taking notes, researching an idea or topic we are discussing. I always upload my lectures to Canvas after class, but please note that my lecture slides are a very poor substitution for my actual lecture. I will not accept late assignments unless you have a medical or personal emergency.

Academic Integrity: Please review <http://integrity.ou.edu>, especially the “Students Guide to Academic Integrity” and “9 Things You Should Know about Plagiarism.” You are responsible for learning the conventions of proper attribution and citation of sources. Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty of any kind are a violation of University policy. In the age of constant media consumption, online paper mills, and copy-paste digital content, students can find it challenging to maintain their ethical bearings. But please remember that a single act of academic dishonesty can have dire, irreversible consequences for your career. There is no statute of limitations on plagiarism, even in cases discovered years after graduation. *If you ever have a question about academic integrity, do not hesitate to consult the instructor.*

Religious Holidays: It is the policy of the University of Oklahoma to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. If you will need to miss class or another course obligation as a result of a religious holiday, please notify me via email in advance.

Accommodations: If you have a disability that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, please notify the instructor as soon as possible so we can arrange accommodations necessary to ensure your full participation. Information on accommodation is available at the University Disability Resource Center: <http://www.ou.edu/drc/home.html>

Diversity and Classroom Etiquette: Diverse experiences and perspectives will make our discussions interesting, and everyone is encouraged to share their point of view. Remember, however, that you must always be considerate of your fellow students. I am committed to making the OU community a safe and welcoming place for people of all backgrounds and identities. I will not tolerate interruptions or disrespectful behavior of any kind. Should you notice any disrespectful or discriminatory behavior, please report it to me immediately.

Pregnancy and Childbirth: Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of pregnancy- or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html for commonly asked questions.

Policy on Children in Class: Babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the feeding relationship (breastfeeding or via bottle). You and your baby are welcome in class anytime. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving them with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your child needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

Title IX Resources: For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24.7, counseling services, mutual no contact orders, scheduling adjustments and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office 405-325-2215 (8-5) or the Sexual Assault Response Team 405-615-0013 (24.7) to learn more or to report an incident.

Writing Center: Most universities have a writing center, a place for students, faculty, and staff to meet and talk about writing. The Writing Center here at OU is a resource I encourage you to use. Part of good writing is seeking feedback from many different readers. The writing consultants at the Writing Center are able to talk with you about your writing—at any stage in the process and for any course you are taking. You can make an appointment (online or by phone, 405-325-2936), or you can drop in whenever they are open. For more information, see <http://www.ou.edu/writingcenter.html>