COURSE OVERVIEW

This course examines key questions about the politics and economics of development: why some nations are effectively governed while others are not; why some countries are democratic while others are authoritarian; why the rule of law is respected in some contexts but not in others; why some nations are wealthy, while others remain poor; why poverty rates have declined rapidly in some places, while poverty is deep and pervasive in others. In short, we seek to answer fundamental questions about how “good” government arises and how politics shapes economic development, poverty alleviation, and human well being.

These are among the most important questions in the social sciences, and the central goal of this course is to introduce students to the variety of answers that researchers have put forth to answer them. An additional goal of this course is to help students better understand how social scientists try to answer these questions, why answering them can be so challenging, and why the answers we have can sometimes be unsatisfying.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course has the following learning objectives:

• Students will be able to define and identify key elements of political development.
• Students will understand the variety of arguments and explanations that social scientists have put forth to explain dynamics of development.
• Students will gain expertise in one country and will be able to assess the utility and limitations of these arguments in reference their case.
• Students will be better able to concisely and clearly communicate their ideas in writing.

CLASS MEETINGS

The course meets twice per week (Tuesdays and Thursdays). Class meetings will include a mix of lecture and discussion. In order to understand the themes and debates presented in lecture, to participate actively in discussions, and, ultimately, to get as much as possible out of this course, it is essential that students complete all required readings prior to lecture.

BLACKBOARD

All course documents, including the syllabus, will be posted on the blackboard page for this course at http://blackboard.gwu.edu. To log on to Blackboard, you will need to use your Net ID and email password. If you have any questions about how to use the system, try going to http://helpdesk.gwu.edu.
READINGS

The course reading is intended to complement the lectures and to serve as a basis for discussion. Both lectures and readings will be covered on the exam and one is not a substitute for the other. Students are expected to locate journal articles using the library’s electronic resources. Book chapters and articles that are not available through the library will be available on Blackboard.

We will read a substantial portion of one book. Copyright laws prevent me from posting these readings on Blackboard. I will place the book on reserve at the library and they will be available for purchase at the bookstore. It is also available at a reasonable price on Amazon and other online book sellers. The book is:

Francis Fukuyama, 2014, Political Order and Political Decay, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (POPD on the syllabus)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance: Course attendance is not required. However, the substance of lecture will often differ from the content of the readings. Lectures and readings are designed to be complementary. If you do not attend many lectures, it will be difficult to do well in the course.

Participation: Active participation is central to your learning and to the success of any course. Class time will involve a mix of lecture and discussion. Visiting office hours to discuss substantive issues related to the class will also count as participation.

Country Expertise: Each student will be assigned ONE country about which to become an expert during the course. The final paper (see below) will ask you to write about this country. From the beginning, you will be expected to learn a bit about your country as it relates to the topics of each week, and to come prepared to discuss the experience of your case. In particular, as you read the assigned reading for a particular class session, you should ask yourself the following questions: Does this argument or theory apply to my country? Why or why not?

Students may select a country from a list that will be distributed the first day of the course. If you have a particular country that you would like to investigate that is not on the list, I am open to letting you select your own. However, you must come talk to me about this in the first two weeks of the course.

Quizzes: There will be FIVE very short in-class quizzes at various points in the semester. I will announce the quizzes and the topic the week before they are given. The quizzes will focus on facts and ideas that all GWU students studying the politics and economics of development should know before they graduate. Make-up quizzes will not be permitted, but I will drop your lowest quiz score in the calculation of the final grade.

Midterm: There will be a midterm on March 19. The midterm will include a mix of short answer and short essay questions.

Final Paper: You will write a 10-page final research paper. The prompt will be provided shortly after the midterm. The paper will focus on your country of expertise. Those who begin learning about their country early in the semester will be best positioned to write good research paper. The final paper will be due by 5pm on the day that our course is assigned its final exam time.
Grades will be calculated as follows:

- Participation - 10%
- Quizzes - 20%
- Midterm - 35%
- Final paper - 35%

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

I expect that students will hold themselves to the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty of any form will not be tolerated. The GW Code of Academic Integrity defines academic dishonesty as: “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity. If you have questions about what constitutes proper use of published or unpublished sources, please ask me. Also, please review the Code at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

**STUDENT SUPPORT**

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please see http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/. The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. See the following website for more info: http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

January 13: Course Introduction

January 15: Living in Poverty


January 20: Dimensions of Political Development

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “What is Political Development?” (Chapter 1)

PART II: THE STATE

January 22: Defining “Good Government”

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “Bureaucracy” (Chapter 3)

January 27: Pathways to an Effective State — Competition and Conflict

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “Prussia Builds a State” (Chapter 4)

January 29: Pathways to an Effective State — Social Mobilization

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “The End of the Spoils System” (Chapter 10)

February 3: Effective Government and Well Being


February 5: Corruption and Well Being


February 10: Careers in Development, Susan Langford (GWU career center)

February 12: No class

PART III: THE RULE OF LAW AND “GOOD” INSTITUTIONS

February 17: Geography, Initial Endowments, and the Colonial Factor

February 19: Culture and the Rule of Law


PART IV: DEMOCRATIZATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

February 24: Taxation, Representation, and Early Cases of Democratization

Michael Ross, “Does Taxation Lead to Representation?” *British Journal of Political Science*. (link [here](#))

February 26: Democracy’s Third Wave


March 3: Does Democracy Help the Poor?

Michael Ross, “Is Democracy Good for the Poor?” *American Journal of Political Science*. (link [here](#))

March 5: Democracy and Good Governance

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “Good Government, Bad Government” (Chapter 13)

March 10-12: Spring Break

March 17: Midterm review

March 19: Midterm

PART V: APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT

March 24: Macro-approaches — Developmental States

Fukuyama, *POPD*, “The Strong Asian State” (Chapter 23)

March 26: The “Anarchist” Critique of State-Led Development

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Chapter 7

March 31: The Micro-Level Approach to Development


April 2: The micro-level approach to improving governance and accountability

Read at least 2 policy briefs on the Experiments in Governance and Politics Network website ([www.e-gap.org](http://www.e-gap.org)). Come prepared to discuss.
PART VI: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

April 7: Ethnic Politics

Edward Miguel, “Tribe or Nation”, World Politics. (link here)

April 9: Natural Resources

Michael Ross, “Oil, Islam, and Women,” American Political Science Review. (link here)

April 14: Gender Issues and Development

Chattopadhyay and Duflo, “Women as Policy Makers,” Econometrica (link here)

April 16: Open topic, TBD

TBD

April 21: Open topic, TBD

TBD

April 23: Wrap-up