

Political Science 3350

The Politics of Development

Dr. Tracy L. R. Lightcap
Office: Room 204, Callaway Academic Building
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 12:40 - 1:40 or by appointment.

Required Readings

We will be reading three books and several papers in this course. The books are:

- Brian Smith. 2013. *Understanding Third World Politics*. New York: Palgrave McMillan.
- James Ferguson. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development", Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- George A. Collier and Elizabeth Quaratiello. 2005. *Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*. Oakland: Food First.

We will be some reading additional articles, some on the LEARNING PORTAL and some found on the internet.

Course Objectives

This course is a focused comparative analysis of the dynamics of societies in transition. It is intended to give students a basic understanding of:

- some of the ideas and theoretical approaches used in comparative political studies, particularly those applying to developing areas;
- of the indigenous societies in developing areas and how they were transformed in the colonial period;
- of the historical basis for political power in modern developing states;
- of the social environments and political cultures of developing polities;
- of the political processes and institutions in developing states;

- and of the interaction of political and economic factors affecting the performance of political systems and the impetus for political change.

To accomplish this will not be easy; there are 134 states (more or less) in the world's developing areas and most of them have characteristics that seem at first glance to defy generalization. In this course, we begin with an extensive overview of the generalities we can establish and some of the theories that have been used to explain them. Then, we will take a country by country approach, i.e. we will look at different countries that are representative of some of the general themes. In each instance we will focus on the two major problems these new states have: fostering economic development and managing political change. First, we will look at an example of attempted economic and political reform: **Lesotho** (pronounced Le - soo - too). Like many countries in the developing world, Lesotho has what appears at first glance to be problems stemming from a failure to adopt modern institutions. As we shall see, however, surface appearances in Lesotho conceal a syncretic adaptation to a long and complex history of interaction with a powerful settler society, the Republic of South Africa. That adaptation, structured by great inequalities in economic and political power, and its misinterpretation by international aid agencies is revealed as the source of Lesotho's perceived difficulties.

Next we will look at one of what some have called the "newly industrialized countries": **Mexico**. As we will see, it is illuminating to look at the Mexican political system through comparative lenses. Our study will use the Zapatista movement and its causes to show that our "neighbor to the South" is a vastly more complex society than a generation of Americans raised on *El Mariachi* movies realize! Its long and turbulent political history (Mexican independence was proclaimed in 1810), its achievement of a form of political stability and economic growth in the 60's and 70's, and the subsequent turmoil as the mechanisms that had sustained the Mexican boom collapsed in the 80's and 90's make Mexico interesting to analysts in developed and developing countries. Comparisons of Mexico's difficulties with the neo-liberal paradigm of development and the responses to it with similar problems in Lesotho should be enlightening.

Finally, we will examine an alternative path to development: the Indian state of **Kerala**. Kerala (pronounced Ker' - uh - luh) is perhaps the best example of a state that uses popular participation and a concentration on alleviating poverty as a path to development. While this solution to the problems of development has not been widely adopted by developing countries in the past, it has been recommended as a possible path to take in the future (by none other than the World Bank!). We can gain insight into the difficulties and limitations - both political and economic - of this choice by a close examination of Kerala's policies. Again, a comparison of Kerala with both Lesotho and Mexico should allow us to begin to make generalizations about empowerment and the course of development in the new states.

Course Requirements

Grades

This will be a slightly different class than you have had before in political science. There will be no tests and no “term papers”. Instead, your grade will be determined by your performance in class and by writing 5 medium length (4 - 6 pages) papers on topics to be announced later. We will be paying close attention to writing in this class, but a very specific kind of writing. You have probably had courses on how to write in general before. In this class, however, you will learn to write like a political scientist. The skills you will learn here will be of inestimable use to you in the future, whether you continue in political science or in some other field. What we are going to do is get you to where your ideas on politics can be read by others with profit. It is not too much to say that this, along with research techniques, might be the most important thing you learn from us. The world is divided into those who make sense when they write and those who do not. I believe you can guess that those who make sense have a leg up in life.

Your participation will also be graded. By this I do not mean that you will be rewarded for showing up for class; it should be understood by everyone by now that attendance is the basis for everything else. Participation will be graded instead on the basis of your contributions to the class’s discussions. If you do the readings and think about them, you should do well. In addition, I’m going to ask you to complete 2 *Gapminder* class exercises about the developing world. As you can see, there is a reason for the higher weight I’m giving participation in this course. Each of the papers will account for 18% of your final grade, i.e. a total of 90%. Class participation will account for the remaining 10%.

Attendance

I will be taking attendance at each class. You can take up to four unexcused absences in this class. After that I will subtract 2 points from your final grade for each unexcused absence. Since being late to class disturbs both me and your classmates, I will charge you with an unexcused absence if you are late twice (i.e. two late appearances = 1 unexcused absence). If you are late, be sure to check with me after class to see that you were marked present! This is your responsibility and yours alone.

Class Etiquette

I have few rules about this. If you have a hat on, take it off. If you have a cell phone, turn it off; if you have an iPod, turn it off too. No eating in class, but you can bring a drink; we all get thirsty. If you think you may need to “answer a call of nature”, as they used to say, do it before class (needless to say, this one may have to be violated occasionally). I am not making these restrictions because I am a martinet. They are intended to keep everyone’s attention on what we are doing in here.

This is not a one way street, of course. If I expect you to pay attention, you can expect me to keep you interested. I cannot guarantee that will always happen, but you have my promise that I will make every effort to see that it does.

Course Structure

This course will be taught by a mixture of lectures and group discussions. I expect you to complete each reading assignment by the time we begin the corresponding section of the syllabus. I have tried to keep the overall burden relatively low, but some sections will require an extra effort.

Honor Code

Needless to say, you will be expected to abide by your Honor Pledge and by the regulations of the Honor Code. If you are not sure what these are, consult the Honor Code Handbook. We will be going over the more exact aspects of this in class early on.

Course Outline

The course will follow the outline below. I will make every effort to stick to this schedule, but if revisions are required I will inform you before hand. If we must reschedule any aspect of this syllabus, you and your classmates will be consulted.

1. Introduction to the Developing World and How to Analyze its Politics (Feb 3 - 6)
Smith, Chap 1 Pankaj Mishra. 2012. "Why weren't they grateful?" (LEARNING PORTAL)
Daron Acemoglu. 2003. "Root Causes: A Historical Approach to Assessing the Role of Institutions in Economic Development". (LEARNING PORTAL)
2. Global Change and Economic Development (Feb 8 - 13)
Smith, Chaps 2 and 3
David Moles. 1999. "Dependencia and Modernization." (LEARNING PORTAL)
(This guy writes science fiction for a living, but this is really good.)
Jose Ocampo and Dale Johnson. 1971. "The Concept of Political Development." (LEARNING PORTAL)
3. Weak States and Weak Parties (Feb 15 - 22)
Smith, Chaps 4, 5 and 6
Edward Miguel. 2004. "Tribe or Nation? Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya Versus Tanzania." (LEARNING PORTAL) (You can safely skip the tables and text on pps. 353 - 354 and 356. You can (believe it) understand this material if you try, however. I'd be glad to help.)
Patrick Radden. 2013. "Buried Secrets: How an Israeli Billionaire Wrested Control of One of Africa's Biggest Prizes." (LEARNING PORTAL)
4. Political Instability and Development (Feb 24 -29)
Smith, Chaps 7, 8, and 9
Daniel Posner. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." (LEARNING PORTAL)
The Economist. 2013. "How to Stop the Fighting, Sometimes." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Film: *The Year of Living Dangerously*

5. Democracy and Development (Mar 2 - Mar 5)
Smith, Chaps 10 and 11
William Easterly. 2010. "Democratic Accountability in Development: The Double Standard." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Nicholas Eubank. 2011. "Taxation, Political Accountability, and Foreign Aid: Lessons From Somaliland." (LEARNING PORTAL)
6. Lesotho: "Traditional Societies" and "Problems of Development" (Mar 7 - 12)
Ferguson, pp. 1 - 100
7. Lesotho and "Development" (Mar 14 - 19)
Ferguson, pp. 103 - 193
8. The Anti-Politics Machine (Mar 21 - 23)
Ferguson, pp. 194 - 227, 251 - 288
9. Mexico: Land, History, the People, and Their Politics (Mar 28 - Mar 30)
Collier and Quaratiello, pp. 1 - 87
10. Structural Adjustment and the Mexican Economy (Apr 9 - Apr 13)
Collier and Quaratiello, pp. 89 - 124
11. The Structural Adjustment of Mexican Political Institutions and Its Environmental and Political Consequences (Apr 16 - 18)
Collier and Quaratiello, pp. 125 - 154
12. Another Way? Kerala's Path to Development (Apr 20 - 25)
Richard Franke and Barbara Chasin. 1991. "Kerala State, India: Radical Reform as Development." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Joseph Tharamangalam. "The Perils of Social Development Without Economic Growth: The Development Debacle of Kerala, India." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Richard Franke and Barbara Chasin. 1996. "Is the Kerala Model Sustainable? Lessons From the Past, Prospects for the Future." (LEARNING PORTAL)
13. Kerala's Choices and Social Change (Apr 27 - May 2)
K.P. Kannan. 2000. "Poverty Alleviation as Advancing Basic Human Capabilities: Kerala's Achievements Compared." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Patrick Heller. 2001. "Moving the State: The Politics of Democratic Decentralization in Kerala, South Africa, and Porto Alegre." (LEARNING PORTAL)
Ronald J. Herring. 2000. "Political Conditions for Agrarian Reform and Poverty Alleviation." (LEARNING PORTAL)
14. Final Thoughts on Politics and the Prospects for Development (May 3 - 7)
Amartya Sen. 1990. "Individual Freedom as a Social Commitment." (LEARNING PORTAL)

1 LaGrange College Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate creativity by approaching complex problems with innovation and from diverse perspectives.
2. Students will demonstrate critical thinking by acquiring, interpreting, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reason out conclusions appropriately.
3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in communication skills that are applicable to any field of study.

2 Student Learning Outcomes for POLS 3350:

1. Students will show a basic understanding of some of the ideas and theoretical approaches used in comparative political studies, particularly those applying to developing areas. (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3. Assessed by essays, class discussions, and exercises.)
2. Students will show a basic understanding of the indigenous societies in developing areas and how they were transformed in the colonial period and of the historical basis for political power in modern developing states. (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3. Assessed by essays, class discussions, and exercises.)
3. Students will show a basic understanding of the social environments and political cultures of developing polities. (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3. Assessed by essays, class discussions, and exercises.)
4. Students will show a basic understanding of the political processes and institutions in developing states and of the interaction of political and economic factors affecting the performance of political systems and the impetus for political change. (Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3. Assessed by essays, class discussions, and exercises.)