GOVT 271
Political Economy of Developing Country

Spring 2015
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
(T & R 1:10 - 2:30 PM, PAC 422)

Professor: Dennis L.C. Weng, Ph.D.
Email: lweng@wesleyan.edu
Office Hours: M W 10:00-11:30, or by appointment
Office/Mailbox: PAC 221
Phone: TBA

Course Objectives:
This course explores the political economy of development with a special focus on poverty reduction and inequality. We discuss the meaning of development, compare Africa, Latin American to East Asian development strategies, and evaluate approaches to famine prevention and relief. This comparative analysis will emphasize the interplay between domestic and international factors in shaping the paths to economic transformation pursued in these countries. We will also examine how political factors have influenced the choice of alternative strategies for economic transformation and structural adjustment. In addition, we will consider the impact economic choices have had on political institutions. Finally, we will evaluate current thinking about how to attack the challenges posed by domestic corruption and continuing poverty. In sum, throughout the course, we pay close attention to the role of procedural democracy, gender relations, market forces, and public action in promoting or inhibiting development.

Reading:
Students are expected to complete the assigned reading before coming to class. The following materials are required.

- Amartya Sen, *DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM*, 2000

In addition to these texts, students are responsible for all the assigned readings listed on syllabus. All these readings and other course materials will be accessible via Moodle for students to download. I may assign supplemental readings throughout the semester, as I deem necessary. Students are also strongly encouraged to follow current international affairs by regularly reading sources, such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, and/or The
Course Materials/ Copyright Statements
The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

Requirements (Grading):
You are required to attend all lectures and read the materials according to the schedule (see below). All absences require a written explanation in order to be considered to be an excused absence. Attendance is recorded and each unexcused absence will cost you a small fraction of your find grade. You may miss up to Three class sessions without penalty to your grade. I will examine your progress based on:

- Attendance, Weekly Memos, and Participation - 20%
- Short Paper (Country Profile Report & Presentation) 20%
- Group research project & presentation 30%
- Comparative theoretical essay 10%
- Peer evaluations of essays 10%
- Final Critical Evaluation 10%

Attendance/Class Participation/Memo – 20%
Attendance will be taken regularly. You may miss up to Three class sessions without penalty to your grade. You are responsible for all of the materials discussed in class and all of the assigned readings. Your participation is an important part of what makes the class go well. We should all come to class with a common baseline, upon which our discussion can build. In practical terms, this means everyone should come to class able to explain concisely the argument(s) or main point(s) of the reading for that day. There will also be exercises, presentations, and debates, which also count as participation, of course.

Weekly Memos (Each Missing Memo costs 1% of your final grade)
For each week, each of you is required to submit a short memo of two paragraphs (500 words or 1 page) on required readings. You will be assigned to one of the two memo groups (Group A & B). Members of Group A must submit a weekly memo to me via email by 10 p.m. on Monday, whereas members of Group B need to submit your weekly memo by 10 p.m. on Wednesday (one day before our class) and you will need it to discuss the readings in class. The first paragraph must restate the main argument of the readings, i.e., identifying both independent and dependent variables, summarize the author’s data, and analyzing how well it supports the author’s argument.

In the second paragraph, it must briefly suggest the strengths and the potential weaknesses of these readings. In addition, you need to have at least two discussion questions for our class discussion included in your weekly memos. It may be included either in your second paragraph,
or you can list your questions at the end of your memos.

**Important Note:** I often receive more than 100 emails in a given day, and I will need you to help me sort yours out of the mix. In the email’s subject line, please type “GOVT271 Week X Memo: ” followed by your last name so that I can better keep track of your emails. If you do not do this, I may inadvertently fail to give you credit for your email. Do not put anything else in the subject line. That way, if you need to email me regarding something else, I won’t mistake it for an assignment email. I will provide feedback on how you are doing on the memos at a few points in the semester, but a far better way to have them evaluated is to print them, bring them to class, and use them as the basis for our discussions. In addition to enriching our discussions, they are a great way for me to prepare for class – they help me see which points came across well and which did not and need emphasis. Finally, they are also a chance to explore ideas without the pressure of expanding them into full papers, though it is likely that great papers may well get their start as smart memos.

**Country Profile Report – 20% (5% - information collection, 5% - presentation, 10% - Report)**

Each student will be assigned a particular Developing Country to profile for the class. This country profile assignment consists of three parts: 1) Brief Statistical Information, 2) Presentation, and 3) Report Essay. For the brief information assignment, each student will collect some basic information for the assigned country by completing a brief country profile assignment (5%). The information collection assignment is due on Feb 12.

For the country profile essay, every student will write a 3-5 pages report on the assigned country and will make a 5-10 minute presentation of this report to the class at the beginning of the assigned class session. The guideline of your country profile report will be given. The profile report should include a brief discussion of the country’s geography, demography, society, economy, and politics. The report should also explore a contemporary issue in the context of that particular country’s history and profile. The written report is due on the date that the in-class presentation is scheduled (March 5th). This essay assignment is worth 15% of your final grade (5% for the in-class presentation and 10% for the written report). The written report will be graded on the basis of balanced treatment of each of the sections listed above (geography, demography, society, economy, politics, and a contemporary issue), coherent organization, and proper grammatical expression and organizational structure. The oral presentation will be graded on the basis of confidence of presentation, clarity of expression, and informed response to follow-up questions.

**Group Research Project – 30%**

Almost all research in pedagogy indicates that students’ work in small groups enhances both their mastery of the concepts taught and their enjoyment of the course. Plus, group endeavors better simulate the work environments most of you will face in your careers. Thus, the class will be divided into groups of three (or four in some cases), and much of the grade in the course (30%) will be determined by your work as groups. You will be assigned into groups and can then choose which area of the international development to master in order to write your group research project and brief your classmates. As long as you receive my approval, you may select
any topic relevant to international development. Or you may choose your topic areas from the following list:

Trade liberalization
Stabilization
Financial reform
Central bank independence
Privatization
Education
Health
Sustainable Develop/Environment
Natural Resource Curse
Social Safety Nets
Multilateral Finance
Income inequality
Conflict and Development
Civil Service Reform
Redistribution
Civil Rights Reform
Electoral and Constitutional Reform
Distribution of Wealth

If you select a topic outside this list, it will need to have the proper breadth of scope and salience.

**Group Research Paper**

**Objective**
With this assignment I intend that you learn to complete an in-depth, professional-style research paper on a specialized topic dealing with the politics of development. Completed successfully, the report should resemble professional political economy research on development, such as that found in the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science, International Organization, World Development*, or the *World Bank Research Observer*.

**Length and Style**
Length should be 30-40 pages. The project should be a research paper that develops and tests core hypotheses in the field of development. It should include extensive citations, formatted consistently, in line with APA or the Chicago Manual of Style. The paper should be attractive and easy to read.

**Prospectus/Proposal**
Roughly one month before the project is due, each group will need to complete a one-page justification for the project. The proposal must include a (1) research question (asking about relationships among variables), (2) hypotheses, (3) conceptual and operational definitions, (3) empirical research strategy, articulating a plan for collecting data in an unbiased fashion, and indicating possible sources for the research material, and (5) possible limitations of the project. The prospectus grade will be included in the final analysis of the project.
Faculty Consultations
Representatives from each group must meet with me at least one week before the prospectus is due. You are responsible for scheduling this appointment. In this consultation we can discuss research and writing strategies and anticipate potential problems.

Grading Criteria
Grading of the report will be based on the following criteria: (1) clarity, plausibility, and novelty of theory/hypotheses; (2) analytical rigor; (3) depth of research effort; (4) quality of writing — engaging, interesting, stylistically sound; (5) soundness of methodology; and/or (6) quality of data analysis. An earlier draft of the project is due for peer review at least one week before the group presentation. It will also be considered as part of the final grade. Grading weights for the project are as follows: prospectus = 10%, earlier draft = 20%, presentation = 20%, final draft = 50%.

Group Presentation
Near the end of the semester, each group will present their project to the class at large. The class will serve as critics and questioners of the approach and the recommendations of the groups. The presentations should be professional, engaging and lively — and will be so graded. Evaluations will also be based on group preparation, flow of presentation, understanding of the issue, and application of IPE theory to the issue area. Handouts, overheads, slides and other presentation enhancements are encouraged. These presentations should not exceed 15 min. in duration. Ability to hit the time mark will be included in my evaluation of the presentations.

Plagiarism
A note on plagiarism. Plagiarism is intellectual theft. It will not be tolerated in this class. Full citations must be included for every source you utilize, including those you paraphrase even loosely. Quotation marks must be used for directly quoted strings of three or more words. Citations must be included if you paraphrase another author, even loosely. Please consult style manuals (Turabian, Chicago, APA, etc.) for answers to specific citation questions.

Free Riding
The dilemma with groups is a classic one in politics: the problem of free riding. Thus, for each group project you will be given a group grade, and your individual share of the group grade will be determined by your fellow group members’ evaluation of your contribution to the group endeavor. Thus, a group that receives a group grade of “B” on an assignment may still have an individual (or two) that receives an “A.”
I strongly encourage you to be completely fair in your evaluation of your peers. Do not reward sloth! And do not punish hard work because of jealousy or personality conflicts. I will be asking for your individual evaluation of the other members of your group when appropriate.

Penalties for Failure in Groups
If through these evaluations it is determined that individuals are not pulling their weight in their group, those individuals may be dropped from the group and will be required to complete all of the course material on their own, including quizzes, project and presentation. Also, if it is clear
that a group has grown dysfunctional, the group may be disbanded and all individuals will be required to complete the assignments on their own.

**Comparative theoretical essay – 10%**
The theoretical essay should be 5 to 7 pages in length. It should identify a research puzzle or problem and explore the relevant literature that has addressed the topic area in the past. As you discuss the relevant literature, you should identify holes or gaps in the existing research that you might eventually fill with your final group research paper.
The audience for the essay is the instructor and your research group. The essay assignment is intended to be broadly conceptual, without empirical content. That is, you may not include extended examples of more than a few sentences, and you may not use any other type of quantitative or qualitative evidence to support your argument. You will need to make your case on logic alone. I strongly recommend that you read additional theoretical material beyond the course readings (which, in addition to your own research, I can suggest in office hours or by appointment) to enrich your essay. The Social Science Citation Index and Google Scholar are excellent ways to identify seminal works in a given literature and to trace the current threads of research that was inspired by those seminal ideas. Innovation and fresh ideas in your theoretical analysis will be rewarded. The point of this essay is to lay the foundation for and then build a compelling causal argument.

As you learned in other classes, you will need to identify a relevant research question in development, such as “how might shocks in foreign aid flows cause civil conflict?” or “do public goods policies for economic stability and social welfare cause electoral reform?”. The question should explicitly reference a researchable dependent variable and the independent variable that causes it to change. The cause and the effect must both be variables – that is, they must be able to take on different values at different times or across different places or units. The independent and dependent variable must be connected by causal logic: detailed reasoning that explains why the cause leads to the effect under study. You must include detailed causal mechanisms. You will also need to define both the independent and dependent variables conceptually in a way that can later be operationalized and measured reliably. Essays that cover the same ground as most of the other essays in the class must distinguish themselves through unique insight to be considered excellent. As a first-cut evaluation of your work, the conceptual essay will give me a chance to suggest areas of strength and weakness to which you can respond in your final group project. Thus, you should have your final group project topic in mind as you craft this essay because the final paper will be based upon this first piece of writing. The final portion of the essay should be dedicated to developing hypotheses that you can test in the group project. The hypotheses must be clearly articulated and testable.
The essay will be graded on an individual basis, but you should have the group project in mind as you compose it. You will likely be combining and synthesizing parts of each group member’s conceptual essays, though you will of course need to revise and synthesize appropriately. Recycling is encouraged, but mere repackaging is not. More coordination up front should make the final project easier to build toward.

To summarize, there are eight criteria for the essay:  
• It should not be empirical (no extended examples of more than a sentence or two), but broadly conceptual;
• It should review the literature on a topic of the author’s interest that is also relevant to development studies;
• It should identify holes or gaps in the literature;
• It should suggest a research question related to this unexplained or under-explored phenomenon in development;
• It should propose a causal argument that might fill the identified gap;
• It should conceptually define the dependent and independent variables relevant to the research question;
• It should detail the causal logic – including the development of compelling mechanisms – that link the independent to the dependent variable.
• It should conclude with testable hypotheses derived from the causal argument.

Peer Review of Theoretical Essay – 10% (5% each)
You will write two one-page peer reviews during the semester. The two will be of conceptual essays within your research group. Peer reviews should: (1) Restate the main point of the paper succinctly to make sure that it is understood. (2) Make recommendations for improvement. Authors should be able to use these reviews to make significant progress in their work.

Final Critical Evaluation of Group Project – 10%
The final critical evaluation will be a 5 pages analytic essay on another group’s project. Similar to your peer review assignment, but it is in a formal scholarly format. It should: (1) Restate the main point of the paper succinctly to make sure that it is understood. (2) Analyze and critique the paper’s argument. (Points of analysis could include the paper’s scope, quality of research question, clarity of ideas and expression, depth of inquiry, appropriateness to target audience, etc.) (3) Praise the paper’s strengths. (4) Check the sources carefully. (5) Correct style errors. (6) Make recommendations for improvement. Authors should be able to use these reviews to make significant progress in their work.

Grade Scale:
The numerical equivalents of the letter grades are

\[
\begin{align*}
A+ &= 98.3 \quad C- &= 71.7 \\
A  &= 95.0 \quad D+ &= 68.3 \\
A- &= 91.7 \quad D  &= 65.0 \\
B+ &= 88.3 \quad D- &= 61.7 \\
B  &= 85.0 \quad E+ &= 58.3 \\
B- &= 81.7 \quad E  &= 55.0 \\
C+ &= 78.3 \quad E- &= 51.7 \\
C  &= 75.0 \quad F  &= 45.0
\end{align*}
\]
POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY
I am committed to upholding the College Honor Code, including the Statement on Academic Responsibility. I have zero tolerance for plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty and will report students who engage in such activities to the Dean for Student Affairs. Students who are found to have violated the Honor Code can expect to fail the class.

Examples of plagiarism and dishonesty include (but are by no means limited to): neglecting to enclose direct quotes in quotation marks or use footnotes, verbatim or near-verbatim “paraphrasing”, getting someone else to write your paper under your name (this includes so-called “term paper mills”), using another student’s argument in your paper and attempting to pass it off as your own, switching exams with someone, looking at someone else’s exam or knowingly allowing someone to look at your exam or copy your paper, taking an exam for another student, illicitly obtaining paper topics or test materials before they have been distributed, etc. Know the standards for citation and use them. Carelessness and ignorance are NOT valid excuses for plagiarism! Ask me if you have any questions. For standards of citation, visit http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing.

A bad grade lessens in importance over time. Even the best students do poorly on an exam or a paper every now and again. You can recover from a bad grade, but being marked as a cheater will haunt you for the rest of your career. If you are encountering difficulty in the class, do not despair! Come talk with me and I will be more than happy to help you out.

NOTE: In addition to the above, students are expected to:
(a) know that this syllabus, including the calendar, is subject to change at the discretion of the professor;
(b) access and read related policy material at http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/plagiarism.html

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I. The Meaning and Goals of Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>A. Sen., The Concept of Development (On Moodle)</td>
<td>Group A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction to political economy of developing countries
A. Sen., Development as Freedom, Chapters 1 & 2

II. Measuring Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>A. Sen., Development as Freedom, Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Group B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Country for Country Profile Selected
Country Profile Assignment Form Distributed

III. Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Development and Change

2/03 A. Is there a Gap Between Rich and Poor?
Glenn Firebaugh, “Empirics of World Income Inequality,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 41-54

2/05 B. Historical Origin of the Gap
Angus Maddison, “A Millennial Perspective,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 95-102
Jared Diamond, “Why did Human History Unfold Differently on Different Continents,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 103-110

2/10 No Class – watch “The End of Poverty” and work on first assignment: Country Profile (Brief Statistics Data)

2/12 C. Domestic Income Inequality
Simon Kuznets, “Economic Growth and Income Inequality,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 143-156
Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, “Inequality and Insurgency,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 157-172
Andrew G. Berg and Jonathan D. Ostry, “Equality and Efficiency: Is There a Trade-off Between the Two or Do They Go Hand in Hand?” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 181-190

2/17 D. Classical Thesis: Convergence or Divergence?

2/19   **E. Modernization Theory in Political Science**  
David C. McClelland, “The Achievement Motive in Economic Growth,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 239-256  
Lawrence E. Harrison, “Underdevelopment Is a State of Mind,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 257-266  

2/24   **F. Dependency and World-System Theory**  
A. Sen., Development as Freedom, Chapter 10  

2/26   **G. Institutional Approaches to Explaining Development**  
Andre Gunder Frank, “The Development of Underdevelopment,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 283-294  
Heather-Jo Hammer and John W. Gartrell, “American Penetration and Canadian Development: A Case Study of Mature Dependency,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 295-308  

3/03   **Individual Presentation – Country Profile**  
Samuel Huntington "Political Development and Political Decay," *World Politic 17*, No. 3 (April 1965). (Moodle)

3/05   **Individual Presentation – Country Profile**  
3/06-3/22 **Spring Break**

Nancy Birdsall and Richard Sabot, “Inequality as a Constraint on Growth in Latin America,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 363-370


3/31 **H. The Role of Regime Type**
A. Sen., Development as Freedom, Chapter 6
Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, “Political Regimes and Economic Growth,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 351-362

4/02 **I. Natural Resources, Climate Change, and the Gap**
Paul Collier and Benedikt Goderis, “Commodity Prices, Growth, and the Natural Resource Curse: Reconciling a Conundrum,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 385-400
Christopher Eppig, Corey Fincher, and Randy Thornhill, “Parasite Prevalence and the Worldwide Distribution of Cognitive Ability,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 401-408
Melissa Dell, Benjamin F. Jones, and Benjamin A. Olken, “Climate Change and Economic Growth: Evidence from the Last Century,” in Seligson and Passé-Smith, pp. 409-422

4/07 **IV. Paths to Development**
A. Sen., Development as Freedom, Chapter 5 & 9

Victor Menaldo, “The New Political Economy of Natural Resources in
Latin America.” (Moodle)

4/14 Michael Sarel, “Growth in East Asia: What We Can and What We Cannot Infer,” (Moodle)

V. Addressing Impediments to Development: New Approaches to Reducing Corruption and Poverty

4/16 No Class – Work on research project - Academic Conferences

4/21 Robert Klitgaard, *Controlling Corruption*, Ch 1 - 3  
Group A
Research Project
Early Draft Due

4/23 Robert Klitgaard, *Controlling Corruption*, Ch 6, 7, 8  
Group B

V. Class Presentations & Conclusion
4/28 Group Presentations (Group 1 – Group 4)  
Q&A

4/30 Group Presentations (Group 5 – Group 8)  
Q&A

5/5 Course Conclusion  
Final Critical Evaluation Due (10%)

Group Research Papers Due Tuesday, May 12 by 5 p.m. No exceptions will be made to this deadline.