INTERNATIONAL STUDIES 393-SA
Development in the Global Context:
Participation, Power and Social Change

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Course Description

What is international development and under what conditions is it most likely to be effective and sustainable? This course combines intensive classroom as well as structured experiential learning and field research to examine international development with an emphasis on relationships of participation, power and social change. Instead of reading secondary literature, you will draw on first-hand experience and field research. The course examines fundamental debates over the nature and goals of international development, the causes of global poverty, the history of development approaches, the role of power in shaping development work and its outcomes, the theory and practice of community-based, and participatory development. Further, the course explores the perspectives, skills, approaches and roles for outsiders to effectively partner with local communities to advance social change.

To prepare you for your fieldwork, you will be introduced to the political, social, economic, cultural and geographic characteristics most relevant for development in the country and region in which you will be working. This includes language training.

During your fieldwork, you will apply these principles to design and implement a small-scale community development project with a team of peers and local community partners.

Your project experience, together with additional field interviews and research, will be used as a case study to explore these fundamental theoretical questions and controversies about international development through a series of written assignments.

After your fieldwork, we reconvene at Northwestern to systematically reflect on your experiences and research in the field and compare your experience with that of students who worked in other countries and different development sectors. We will focus on engaging key debates in development so that you can draw lessons and articulate your own arguments about international development work.

Course Learning Goals

By the end of this course students will be able to:
- Create and evaluate explanations of global poverty and individual development issues paying particular attention to system attributes; articulate how social, economic, political, cultural, geographical, historical and individual factors produce and reproduce conditions of global poverty; explain the implications for

international development, and apply that analysis to determine what is necessary to bring about broad development and social change in a specific community.

- Use a systems framework to make explicit theories and mental models being used in development work and then test those models, learn and improve the theories and models being used to make decisions.
- Describe the key characteristics and approaches of participatory, community-based international development, analyze the possibilities and mechanisms for scaling up local participatory projects to affecting change on a larger scale, assess the strengths and limitations of participatory, community-based approaches, situate these approaches relative to alternative and complementary approaches to development, and assess the conditions under which participatory, community-based approaches are most likely to be effective in facilitating development and social change.
- Analyze the relationship between privilege and power in pursuing sustainable social change and development, and in shaping and limiting the degree of change possible and the distribution of benefits from that change.
- Design, implement and evaluate a community-based, participatory development project in partnership with community members to help address a significant development issue, based on the resources and context in a specific community; evaluate how it is designed to enhance the collective and individual capacities of that community to bring about social change and development.
- Critically evaluate major theoretical and conceptual frameworks for international development, based on reading, research and experience to construct your own argument to address the debates over what the most important goal(s) of international development should be, what is necessary to achieve development, how to evaluate whether it is occurring, and to what effect on local populations and more broadly.

Course Structure and Components

This quarter long course has four integrated components:
1) Intensive, one-week pre-departure classroom work at Northwestern.
2) Application of development theories and approaches through the design and implementation of a community-based development project with local partners over eight to ten weeks. Students will work in: Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, India, Nicaragua, Kenya, or Uganda.
3) Field research and written assignments critically analyzing the central issues and debates in international development based on experience and field research during their eight-weeks abroad.
4) Structured analysis and reflection for three days at Northwestern after fieldwork, drawing on comparisons with students who worked and conducted research in other countries to advance student analysis of core development issues.

Course Readings

All readings are available on Canvas for this course. The readings include a varied combination of theoretical works, policy arguments, applied case studies, and evaluative articles.

The classroom portion of the pre-departure seminar is concentrated and intense. To get the most from the lectures and discussions you will need to have read the materials in advance of the relevant class session. **Students are strongly encouraged to have completed the reading and write responses to the reading questions for each reading before they arrive for the pre-departure seminar.** Then you will be in a position to prepare for class sessions by reviewing the readings and reminding yourself of the arguments and perspectives.

Assignments & Evaluation

The assignments for this course are designed to develop the skills and measure your progress in achieving the learning goals above.

Small Group Discussion and Small Group Assignments (40%)

All class sessions, language training, and small group discussions and activities are mandatory. This class will be taught primarily in seminar style in which the majority of each class session will be devoted to guided, small group discussions and group work. These discussions and assignments are designed to critically interrogate arguments and analytical techniques presented in readings, cases, and class lecture. Much of the learning during the seminar will come from your active participation in these small group discussions and activities are a major component of your course grade.

To get the greatest benefit from these discussions and activities, it is essential you come to class having completed the readings. **Note:** Each class session has a required homework assignment you are to bring to class, which will be used in small group discussions and activities. These assignments are mandatory.

Field Essays - Written Assignments (45%)
We will use your experience in the community and with your project to explore key theoretical and practical questions about international development raised in the pre-departure seminar. You will write four field essays in response to prompts that will ask you to draw on your experiences from your development project and additional field research to apply and analyze the frameworks, concepts and theories covered in the pre-departure classroom work. These assignments will also be important source materials for our discussions during the Final Reflection Summit back at Northwestern.

Final Group Reports and Presentations (15%)
Upon returning to Northwestern, each group will write a Final Summit Summary (10-12 pages) describing and analyzing their in-country work. In addition, during the Final Reflection Summit students will make presentations and conduct group work employing conceptual and theoretical tools from the course to analyze and critically assess what they observed.

All components of your grade will be evaluated on the standard Northwestern grading scale of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F. Grade reports are available on CAESAR soon after the end of the quarter. Grades are not given by phone, e-mail, or in person in the SCS office.

Academic Credit

Summer students: For successful completion of this course, you will earn one course unit credit from Northwestern University, which is equal to 4 quarter hours. This is equal to approximately 3 semester hours of credit.

Fall students: For successful completion of this course, you will earn three course units of credit from Northwestern University, which is equal to 12 quarter hours. This is equal to approximately 9 semester hours of credit.

If you need more detailed information, please contact conversion@northwestern.edu or call 312-503-0306.

Course Policies

Completing Course Requirements
Please note that failure to complete any of the assignments for this course will result in a non-passing grade for the course.

Academic Integrity
University policies on academic integrity apply to this course. Cheating (using unauthorized materials or giving unauthorized assistance during an examination or other academic exercise) and plagiarism (using another's ideas or words without acknowledgment) are serious offenses in a university. All quotations and ideas taken from others should be appropriately cited in all written work. For more information on University policy on academic integrity, see Academic Integrity Policy.

Students with Disabilities

If you have specific disabilities that require accommodation, please let me know at the beginning of the course so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Northwestern is committed to providing appropriate academic accommodations to ensure equal access to fully participate in academic programming. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact AccessibleNU http://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu, 2122 Sheridan Road, Room 130, (847) 467-5530, accessibleNU@northwestern.edu.

Course Schedule

Setting the Context: A Brief History of Global Development and Your Generation
This session will situate current issues and approaches to development by providing an overview of major development efforts since WWII. We will trace the evolution of theories of development interventions and legacies over the last 70 years. We will pay particularly close attention to identifying the "mental models" and assumptions (generalizations) about what will "work" and why. Different assumptions and models lead to different approaches, projects, and outcomes. Yet, these assumptions and models are often unstated and you need to be able to surface and test these assumptions and models to evaluate development approaches and outcomes. What are the experiences and legacies of previous development efforts? What are the assumptions and models animating development debates and approaches today?

At a personal level, many people in your generation are deeply concerned about and highly motivated to address the plight of people living in poverty and depravation around the world. At the same time, some have warned that the current enthusiasm for global engagement and DIY development may do more harm than good to people in the developing world. What are those concerns and how can they be addressed?

Readings
History of Development
- Mark McGillivray, "What is Development?" in Damien Kingsbury, et. al., *International Development: Issues and Challenges* (Palgrave McMillan, 2008), pp. 21-50.
- Brian Hanson, *International Development History Visualizations and Summaries*

Your Generation: DIY Development as the New Model?
- Nicolas Kristof, "D.I.Y. Foreign-Aid Revolution," *New York Times Magazine*, Oct. 20, 2010.
- Dave Algoso, "Don't Try this Abroad," *Foreign Policy*, Oct. 26, 2010.
- Ivan Illich, "To Hell with Good Intentions" address to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects (CIASP) in Cuernavaca, Mexico, on Apr. 20, 1968.
- Teju Cole, "The White-Savior Industrial Complex," *The Atlantic*, March 2012.

Optional Reading and Resources
- For more detail on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how they compare to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) see: http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/ng-interactive/2015/jan/19/sustainable-development-goals-changing-world-17-steps-interactive

What is Development? Why does it Matter?
The most fundamental question in development work is: what do we mean by "development"?   Simply put what are the goals or outcomes being sought through development? The reason that this is so important is that different goals require different types of approaches and projects and different measures and assessments of whether development is being achieved.

We will examine three alternative schools of thought prevalent in international development work: 1) development as the increase in individual and societal economic income and consumption; 2) development as the attainment of a broader set of human capabilities; and 3) development as realizing human rights. For each of these schools of thought we will analyze how each approach conceptualizes the problem to be solved and the challenges that must

be addressed to achieve development. How do different understandings of development shape the kinds of projects taken on; the ways they are designed; who is involved; and what criteria to use in judging success or failure?

Readings
- Case Study: Martha C. Nussbaum, "A Woman Seeking Justice," *Creating Capabilities: The Human Capabilities Approach* (Belknap Press, 2011), pp. 1-16.
- Amartya Sen, "Introduction" Development as Freedom (Anchor Books, 1999), pp. 3-11.
- Peter Uvin, "Final Synthesis and Questions," in *Human Rights and Development* (Kumarian Press, 2004) excerpts, pp. 175-184 and 195-201.

Session 3

Identifying and Analyzing the Causes of Global Poverty: A Systems Approach
This session will focus on using a systems approach to identify and understand poverty and the challenges of development. What is systems theory? How can we apply it to studying the causes of poverty and development?

What are causes that produce conditions of poverty? How can we think about the proximate and root causes? What are the differences between individual and structural causes? How do different causes interact and reinforce one another? How can understanding the causes of poverty help guide choices and priorities for how to intervene to create positive social change?

Readings
- Stan Burkey, "Understanding Poverty," *People First: A Guide to Self-Reliant Participatory Rural Development* (Zed Books, 1993), Chapter 1, pp. 3-25.
- Donella H. Meadows, "The Basics" and "System Traps . . . and Opportunities," *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), pp. 11-34 and 111-141.

Video Case Study
- Ecotipping Point - Rainwater Harvesting (Rajasthan, India) (11 min) https://youtu.be/DG2DtF_mWww

Session 4

Privilege, Power, Marginalization and Social Exclusion
What are the sources of privilege? How is privilege related to power? How do systems of privilege and power produce and reproduce communities of poor and marginalized people? How do systems of privilege and power affect international development efforts? To what extent can participatory community development challenge systems of privilege and power and be a means of "empowerment" of the poor and marginalized by enhancing their involvement in the decisions that affect their lives?

Readings
- Allan Johnson, "Privilege, Oppression, and Difference," in Allan G. Johnson, *Privilege, Power and Difference*, 2nd edition (McGraw Hill, 2006), pp.12-40.
- DFID (UK), "Who is Social Excluded and Why it Matters," *Reducing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion*, DFID Policy Paper, September 2005, pp. 3- 8.
- Aditi Malhotra and Nikita Lalwani, "In India, Caste Discrimination in Schools Fuels Dropout Cycles," *Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 2014.
- Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty* (Public Affairs, 2011), pp. 89-93.and 261-262.

- Case Study: CitéSoleil: Youth changing the face of their neighborhoods," in *"If change should come, we should bring it: Stories of Citizen-led Development in Haiti"* (Coady Institute, July 2013), pp. 16-18.

Session 5

Participation and Empowerment: Participatory, Strength-based, Capacity-building Community Development
Over the last two decades "participation" has become one of the most dominant concepts in international development. Embraced by those on the left and the right and from those seeking to change fundamental power relations to the World Bank. Participation has been identified as essential to achieve a wide range of development outcomes, including empowerment of the poor and marginalized; building capacity of developing communities; increasing project effectiveness; improving project efficiency; and project cost sharing. What does participation mean? Why is it seen as so essential for development? What are the assumptions and theoretical basis for these claims? What are the major debates over its meaning and role? How do they affect development work on the ground? How will they impact your work?

Northwestern University has been at the forefront of developing community-based development theories and practice under the moniker of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), which builds on long-standing Chicago traditions that reach back to Jane Addams and Saul Alinsky. What is ABCD and how does it relate to the family of other participatory, strength-based, capacity building approaches to development.

Readings
- Case Study: Joyce Carlson, "In the Stranger's Eyes," Harriet Hill and Jon Arensen (eds.), *The Best of Ethno-Info* (Nairobi Kenya, Summer Institute of Linguistics, Africa Area Anthropology Department, 1995) http://www-01.sil.org/anthro/articles/TheStrangerSEyes.htm, pp. 1-8.
- Gary Paul Green, "The Self-Help Approach to Community Development," in Jerry W. Robinson, Jr. and Gary Paul Green (eds.), *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice, and Service Learning* (Sage, 2011), pp. 71-82.
- Pablo Alejandro Leal, "Participation: the Ascendancy of a Buzzword in the Neo-Liberal Era," in Andrea Cornwall and Deborah Eade (eds.), *Deconstructing Development Discourse: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords* (Practical Action Publishing, 2010), pp. 89-100.
- Appreciative Inquiry in One Infographic
- Ladder of Participation

Session 6

From Community-based, Grassroots Action to Large Scale Social Change: Is It Possible and What Does it Mean?
International development is a slow, complex, unpredictable, non-linear process that unfolds over decades, if not longer. Additionally, the scale of the global challenges is so massive as to be overwhelming.   Community development approaches emphasize the importance of local context and engaging the active participation of those who are marginalized and excluded from society to achieve effective and sustainable development. How can community-based development build on and contribute to large-scale, long term change in those communities? How does one identify those processes in the field and what can be done by outsiders to promote them?

Readings
    Case Study: Ethiopia

- Gordon Cunningham, "Stimulating Asset Based and Community Driven Development: lessons from five communities in Ethiopia, in Alison Mathie and Gordon Cunningham (eds.), *From Clients to Citizens: Communities changing the course of their own development* (Practical Action Publishing, 2008), pp. 263-298.
- Brianne Peters, *Applying an Asset-Based Community-Driven Development Approach in Ethiopia, 2003-2001: Final Internal Evaluation* Report (Coady International Institute, February 2013), excerpts, pp. 1-3, 10-27.

Politics and Participation
- Glynn Williams, "Towards a repoliticization of participatory development: political capabilities and spaces of empowerment," in Hickey and Mohan (eds.), Participation from Tyranny to Transformation? (Zed Books, 1988), pp. 92-103.

Reflecting on Service Learning
- John Eby, *Why Service Learning is Bad*, March 1998, pp. 1-8.

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Final Reflection Summit
Schedule

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As part of the Final Reflection Summit when you return from the field, we will draw on the readings from the beginning of the summer, your field experience, your field essays and other journal entries to critically engage the issues and arguments from the pre departure seminar.

<u>**Session 1**</u>

Causes of Poverty and Development Challenges
What did you learn about the reasons that the problem our organization works on exists? What are the scope and causes of the problem, the role of political power in reproducing the problem and making change difficult, the theory of change and core development assumptions made by your organization and made in your work, the people within the community your organization works with and the capacities your organization was seeking to build in individuals and in groups, the patterns and degree of success or failure in the work of your organization and of your project, and explanations of those outcomes.

Reading
- Donella H. Meadows, "Why Systems Surprise Us," *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), pp. 86-100.

<u>**Session 2**</u>

Participation and Power in Community-Based Development
After your experience, what is your assessment of participatory, community-based development as an approach to development and social change? What do you think community-based, participatory development approaches can do well and what do they not do well? To what extent are these approaches scalable? Under what conditions? What are the implications for international development work?

Reading
- Review: Gary Paul Green, "The Self-Help Approach to Community Development," in Jerry W. Robinson, Jr. and Gary Paul Green (eds.), *Introduction to Community Development: Theory, Practice, and Service Learning* (Sage, 2011), pp. 71-82.
- William Moseley, "Graduation advice for aspiring humanitarians." Al jazeera English (print). 2014.

<u>**Session 3**</u>

What is Development?
Finally, back to the most fundamental question: what is development? After your work in the developing world, how would you answer the question, what is development? Think back on the economic, human capabilities and rights based approaches. What should be the highest priority? Why? How does that differ from what you thought before your field experience and field research? Given your definition, how should we evaluate whether development is occurring? What are the most important indicators? How would you assess them?

Reading
- Review: Your response for the first day of predeparture class questions on "What is Development?"
- Ivan Illich, "Needs," Unfinished Manuscript. 1990.

<u>**Session 4**</u>

Revisiting Possibilities for Development and Social Change
To what extent should "Big Ideas" and scalability drive our thinking and approach toward global development? To what extent does international development work need to address and change power relationships in society to be successful? What degree and type of transformation is possible without challenging existing power relationships? Under what conditions is it more or less likely that power relationships can be effectively challenged? How does this inform your view of the relationship between power and development outcomes?

Reading
- Michael Hobbes, "Stop Trying to Save the World: Big Ideas are Destroying International Development," *The New Republic*, November 17, 2014.
- Amanda Moore McBride and Eric Mlyn, "Innovation Alone Won't Fix Social Problems," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept 2, 2015