Developing Countries in a World Economy

POLITICAL SCIENCE 381-001 – SPRING 2026
AJ 360 – TR 11:00-12:15

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Office Hours:
TR 12:30-2:00
and by appointment

Course Objective: Roughly forty-four percent of the world's population lives at or below the World Bank poverty line of $6.85 per day. The poverty in which they live is shaped by decisions of their governments as well as those of developed countries and by the international economy. Conversely, scarcity alters the political behavior of individuals and governments. This class will explore the political dimensions of economic development. Building from a microeconomic foundation, we will examine both the domestic and international political context in which development takes place. While the course will be focused on explaining why certain political choices are made, broader normative considerations about what the international economy should look like are bound to arise.

Learning Outcomes

1. Conceptualize and measure development.
2. Understand the linkages between markets, institutions, policy, and economic growth.
3. Model the politics of development policy.
4. Understand the constraints and possibilities faced by developing countries in the international system.

Requirements: Your grade in this course will have five components. First, attendance is compulsory; you will receive a grade for class attendance. Second, you will receive a grade for your participation in class discussions; note that I reserve the right to assess participation through pop quizzes if I find class discussions lacking. Third, you will complete a series of eight small assignments culminating in a group presentation during the final week of class comparing the development experiences of three countries; these assignments will include response essays for the two Achebe novels. Fourth, you will write an in-class midterm on Thursday, February 26th. Fifth, you will take a final exam on Tuesday, April 28th at 9:45AM in class. The grade percentage of each component is as follows.

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Assignments	35%
Midterm	20%
Final	25%

Grading: If you feel that your work has not been evaluated correctly, I will be happy to discuss it with you and re-grade it. I do ask that such requests be made within a week of receiving the assignment back in a typed letter stating what answers you would like reviewed and why you feel they were correct. Please note that your grade may go up or down as a result of review and that such reviews are final. All late will be subject to an escalating series of penalties. Grades in this class will be assigned on the following scale.

A	92-100
A-	90-92

B+	88-90
B	82-88
B-	80-82
C+	78-80
C	72-78
C-	70-72
D+	68-70
D	62-68
D-	60-62
F	<60

Attendance Policy: Attendance of each class is to be considered compulsory and will be recorded each day. I will calculate your attendance grade (10% of the final score) as follows: one to two absences is an "A"; three absences is a "B"; four absences is a "C"; five absences is a "D"; six or more absences is an "F." If you do miss a class, you are responsible for any work that is assigned that day as well as any material that is covered. You should contact me and I will let you know what we did. If you miss a scheduled exam, you will be allowed to take a make-up, but only with a substantial penalty. If you know you are going to miss class or be unable to complete an assignment, let me know as quickly as possible. Absences are most easily dealt with in advance.

Electronics Policy: During class, you may not use laptops, tablets, or phones, except in case of emergency. This is designed to ensure both your engagement and the engagement of your classmates. If you have accessibility issues, you are welcome to request an accommodation.

Academic Integrity: I take the Student Academic Ethics Policy very seriously. Those who violate the policy will face repercussions. In particular, anyone caught plagiarizing material will receive a failing grade for the assignment and be summarily referred to the Honor Committee. The use of generative AI to complete assignments is to be regarded as prohibited unless explicitly allowed in the assignment instructions.

University Statement: We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Freedom of Expression: In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Additional Resources: Successful completion of the above requirements will assure you of a good grade in this class; you may find the following resources helpful. I urge you to make use of my office hours. If you are having problems with the lectures or the readings or are simply interested in pursuing issues further, feel free to come by my office. If you have scheduling conflicts, we can work around them and set up appointments at different times. I will also gladly answer questions over e-mail and this will be the most reliable way to get in touch with me. In general, if you are having problems with the course, it is best to come see me as early in the semester as possible. Also, the Learning Center offers a number of resources including free tutoring for a number of courses and more general assistance with writing and study skills. To make an appointment for such assistance, call 765-285-1006 or visit NQ 350. Finally, if you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please let me know as soon as

possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Course Reading: There are two required texts for this class that can be purchased at Student Stores. The other readings will be available on the web at the links provided in the schedule. Schedule entries represent readings that should be *completed* by the given week; more specific guidance will be given prior to the beginning of each week.

Achebe, Chinua. 1959. *Things Fall Apart*. Anchor House: New York, NY.

Achebe, Chinua. 1960. *No Longer at Ease*. Anchor House: New York, NY.

Schedule and reading assignments:

Week 1 – Defining Development (1/6, 1/8)

Reading:

Sen, A. (2001). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford Paperbacks. Intro and CH1.

Nyerere, J.K. (1962). "Ujamaa": The basis of African socialism. *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 1, 4-11.

TFA, Part I.

Assignment 1: Short essay – "What is Development?" - due Sunday (1/11) at midnight.

Week 2 – Measuring and Explaining Development (1/13, 1/15)

Reading:

Banerjee, Abhijit and Esther Duflo. 2007. "The Economic Lives of the Poor." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21(1): 141-167.

http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/basics/gdp.htm
http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/
http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/SurveyFindings/Summaryof2015GNHIndex.pdf
https://towardsdatascience.com/gini-coefficient-and-lorenz-curve-f19bb8f46d66

TFA, Part I.

Assignment 2: Group presentation – "Comparing Development Trends" – due Wednesday (1/14) at 11pm

Week 3 – Impact of Colonialism (1/20, 1/22)

Reading:

Marx, K. (1853). *The British Rule in India*. Marxists Internet Archive (Original publication in the *New-York Daily Tribune*, June 25, 1853).

Marx, K. (1853). *The final results of British Rule in India*. Marxists Internet Archive (Original publication in the *New-York Daily Tribune,* August 8, 1853).

Chamberlain, J. (1897, March 31). *The true conception of empire* [Speech].

Hochschild, A. (1998). *King Leopold's ghost: A story of greed, terror, and heroism in colonial Africa*. Houghton Mifflin. CH8.

Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. Howard University Press. CH5.

Assignment 3: Short country report – "Colonial Background" – due Sunday (1/24) at midnight

Week 4 – Whither Growth? (1/27, 1/29)

Reading:

https://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Business_economics/Perfect_competition.html

Easterly, W. (2001). The elusive quest for growth: economists' adventures and misadventures in the tropics. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Chapters 5, 8.

Banerjee, A. V., & Duflo, E. (2011). *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. Public Affairs. Chapter 1.

TFA, Part II.

Week 5 – Culture and Geography as Obstacles (2/1-2/8)

Readings:

Valenzuela, J. S., & Valenzuela, A. (1978). Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment. *Comparative Politics*, *10*(4), 535–557. READ pages 535-543.

World Bank Group (2015). *World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior*. World Bank. READ CH2.

TFA, Part II.

Diamond, J. (1999). *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*: WW Norton & Company. Chapter 5.

Sachs, J. D. (2006). *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. Penguin. Chapter 10.

Assignment 4: Short essay – "Okonkwo and Development" – due Sunday (2/8) at midnight

Week 6 – Policy (2/10, 2/12)

Reading:

Rodrik, D. (2008). *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 1.

Kanbur, R. (2017, June 25). *W. Arthur Lewis and the tradeoffs of economics and economists.* VoxEU.org**.** Centre for Economic Policy Research. https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/w-arthur-lewis-and-tradeoffs-economics-and-economists

NLAE, 1-10.

Assignment 5: Policy brief - due 3/29 at midnight

Week 7 – Institutions (2/17, 2/19)

Reading:

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty* (Vol. 4): Crown Business New York. Chapters 3, 4.

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian. (n.d.). *The Allende years and the Pinochet coup, 1969–1973.* Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations. U.S. Department of State. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/allende

Assignment 6: Institutions brief – due 4/5 at midnight

Week 8 – Politics (2/24, 2/26)

Reading:

Beeson, M. (2004). The rise and fall (?) of the developmental state: The vicissitudes and implications of East Asian interventionism. In Low, Linda (ed.). *Developmental States: Relevancy, Redundancy or Reconfiguration*, Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
Link: http://peurpchile.rrojasdatabank.info/beeson04.pdf

MIDTERM: Thursday, February 26th.

Week 9 – Dependency and South-South Cooperation (3/10, 3/12)

Readings:

Valenzuela, J. S., & Valenzuela, A. (1978). Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment. *Comparative Politics*, *10*(4), 535–557. READ pages 543-557.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (1985). *The history of UNCTAD, 1964-1984* (UNCTAD/OSG/286). United Nations. READ pages 8-18.

Daunton, M. J. (2023). *The economic government of the world: 1933–2023* (1st American ed.). Farrar, Straus and Giroux. CH19.

NLAE 11-19.

Assignment 7 – NLAE paper – due 3/22 at midnight

Week 10 – International Institutions and Bargaining (3/17, 3/19)

Readings:

Group of 77. (1967, October 25). *Charter of Algiers: Adopted by the First Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, Algiers, 10–25 October 1967***.** Submitted to the United Nations. https://uat.g77.org/landmark-documentscharter-of-algiers-algiers-algeria-10-25-october-1967/ Read Part I and SKIM the Programme of Action.

Prashad, V. (2014). *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South*. Verso. READ CH1.

Omoigberale, O. (2025). The expanded BRICS: A catalyst for global transformation or advocate for incremental change? *South African Journal of International Affairs*, *32*(1–2), 51–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2025.2518522

Week 11 – Multinational Corporations (3/24. 3/26)

Readings:

Méndez, E., & Van Patten, D. (2022). Multinationals, Monopsony, and Local Development: Evidence from the United Fruit Company. *Econometrica*, 90(6), 2685-2721. READ Intro, Historical Background, Mechanisms, and Discussion. Skim the rest.

Edwards, S. (2025). *Expropriation without compensation: Copper in Chile, 1970–1973* (NBER Working Paper No. 33572). National Bureau of Economic Research. https://doi.org/10.3386/w33572 READ Sections 1-3 and skim the rest.

Week 12 – Debt and Aid (3/31, 4/2)

Readings:

Steinwand, M. C., & Stone, R. W. (2008). The International Monetary Fund: A review of the recent evidence. *The Review of International Organizations*, *3*(2), 123-149.

Edwards, S. (2015). Economic Development and the Effectiveness of Foreign Aid: A Historical Perspective. *Kyklos*, *68*(3), 277-316.

Assignment 8 – Capital flow review – due 4/12 at midnight

Week 13 - Three Regions, Three Outcomes (4/7, 4/9)

Reading:

Franko, P. M. (2007). *The Puzzle of Latin American Economic Development*: Rowman & Littlefield. Chapter 3.

Haggard, S., Kim, B.-k., & Moon, C.-i. (1991). The Transition to Export-Led Growth in South Korea: 1954-1966. *The Journal of Asian Studies, 50*(4), 850-873.

Van de Walle, N. (2001). *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999*: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1.

Week 14 – China and AI (4/14, 4/16)

Readings:

McGee, P. (2025). *Apple in China: The capture of the world's greatest company*. Scribner. CH 11, 12, and 31.

Chen, K., & Zha, T. (2023). *China's macroeconomic development: The role of gradualist reforms* (NBER Working Paper No. 31395). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Spence, M. (2024, September). *AI's promise for the global economy*. *Finance & Development Magazine*. International Monetary Fund. https://www.imf.org/en/publications/fandd/issues/2024/09/ais-promise-for-the-global-economy-michael-spence

Week 15 – Presentations and Conclusions (4/21, 4/23)

FINAL EXAM: In-person – Tuesday, April 28th from 9:45AM to 11:00AM.