PS 401: The Political Economy of Development
Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Fall 2013

Class time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 4-5:15 PM in Education L185
Professor: Rikhil R. Bhavnani
Office hours: Wednesdays, 10-12 AM in 312 North Hall. To ensure that I can see everyone, please sign up in advance at http://wejoinin.com/sheets/ncnuK.
Email: bhavnani@wisc.edu

Course overview: Why are some countries are rich and others poor? To help answer this question, we start by examining leading theories of economic development. In light of these theories, we then examine the development experiences of three major regions of the world. We next consider a series of issues about development, including the effect of ethnic diversity, corruption, natural resources and women’s empowerment on economic development. We conclude with an examination of the effects of the international interactions—via trade, foreign aid, migration and war—on economic development.

Assignments and grading: The final class grade will be based on:
• Class attendance and participation, for 20% of the class grade. Questions and discussion are encouraged. Exams will draw heavily on materials covered in lecture.
• An in-class midterm, for 35% of the class grade.
• A final exam, for 45% of the class grade.

Disabilities: Students needing special accommodations to enable full participation in this course should contact me during the first week of class. All information will remain confidential. You may, in addition to contacting me, contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (www.mcburney.wisc.edu) at 1305 Linden Drive and 608.263.2741 regarding questions about campus policies and services.

Class plan (subject to modification):

Class 1 (9/4): Introduction

Class 2 (9/9): What is development? How can we measure it?
Class 3 (9/11): Poor countries in comparative perspective, and the economic lives of the poor

Class 4 (9/16): Growth theory

Class 5 (9/18): Policies

Class 6 (9/23): Geography

Class 7 (9/25): Culture

Class 8 (9/30): Institutions: The state

Class 9 (10/2): Institutions: Private property

Class 10 (10/7): Command economies, 1/2
Class 11 (10/9): Command economies, 2/2

Class 12 (10/14): The developmental state in East Asia

Class 13 (10/16): How did the West develop?

Class 14 (10/21): Midterm exam

Class 15 (10/23): Regime type

Class 16 (10/28): Gender

Class 17 (10/30): Accountability

Class 18 (11/4): Corruption
Class 19 (11/6): Resource curse

Class 20 (11/11): Ethnic differences

Class 21 (11/13): Trade, 1/2

Class 22 (11/18): Trade, 2/2

Class 23 (11/20): Aid, 1/2

Class 24 (11/25): Aid, 2/2
  • Moyo, Dambisa. 2009. *Dead aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa*: Macmillan.

Class 25 (12/2): Migration

Class 26 (12/4): Civil wars

Class 27 (12/9): Military intervention


Class 28 (12/11): Conclusions

Final, 12/20, 7:25-9:25 PM