

PLS 341: POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT

Nazarbayev University

Spring 2023

BASIC INFORMATION

Professor: Karol Czuba

Lectures: Monday, available on Moodle and PeerTube no later than 11 am; Wednesday, 11–11.50 am, 8.321 (provisional arrangements; see the Class Organization section below for details)

Seminars: 11–11.50 am, 8.321

Office hours: Monday, 3.30–4.30 pm, and Wednesday and Friday, 9.30–10.30 am, 6.214; you can optionally book an appointment with me here: <https://karolczuba.youcanbook.me>

Contact: Moodle forum and messages

OUTLINE

The course serves as an introduction to the politics of international development in the period since World War II. It considers the big questions in international development:

- What explains the coexistence of deprivation and plenty in the contemporary world?
- Why are some parts of the world so poor, repressive, and violent, while others are rich, free, and peaceful?
- Why have some experienced economic growth while others have seen their economies stagnate or decline?
- What efforts to effect or stimulate economic and political development and to address the violations of human rights have been undertaken, and to what extent have such efforts been successful?

The course is divided into four sections.

The *first*—and shortest—part covers the basic concepts and conditions relevant to the content of the course: development (and political development), poverty, illbeing, inequality, exclusion, and violence. In the first week of the semester we will begin to examine the presence and effects of these phenomena in different parts of the world, and especially in the Global South.

In the *second* part of the course we will discuss scholarly explanations of the divergent development trajectories followed by different countries and regions of the world. Scholars have attributed this divergence to factors such as the internal logic of progress (modernization and neoliberalism), geography, and history (dependency/underdevelopment theories and institutionalism). We will analyze and critique these explanations and their applicability to various settings.

The *third* section considers the role of politics—and all things political—in development. In particular, we will investigate the importance of states and state capacity in development, the origins of capable states, the developmental performance of authoritarian and democratic regimes, the costs

of state efforts to effect development, relationships between states and societies, and the ways in which these relationships affect development, including through regime change (democratization), formation of politically salient identities and cleavages, and conflict.

The *fourth* part of the course examines possible solutions to socially disadvantageous development trajectories—development interventions, efforts to foster democracy and socially beneficial institutions, trade, and migration—and the efficacy of these solutions.

Throughout the course, we will engage with some of the most important scholarly contributions to the literature on international development.

OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course has multiple objectives, which correspond to the knowledge and skills that you should attain during the semester. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Define key concepts covered in the course.
2. Understand explanations of development and the lack thereof, recognize their assumptions, and evaluate their explanatory power, including in relation to specific countries.
3. Explain the relationship between development and natural endowments, institutions, colonialism and other historical legacies, political order, regime change, and conflict, both globally and in particular regions and countries.
4. Identify efforts intended to address poverty, inequality, and exclusion as well as assess their benefits and drawbacks.
5. Productively contribute to your own and fellow students' learning through careful and critical engagement with the course material and active participation in class discussions.
6. Conduct your own research, develop and substantiate arguments, and communicate your analysis and findings through both speaking and writing.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

This is an introductory course in that I do not assume that you will have any prior knowledge of the subject matter and in that we will only address a small fraction of the many political and socioeconomic phenomena relevant to international development, theories intended to explain those phenomena, and rich empirical evidence that scholars and others have collected in different settings. At the same time, this course will challenge you. We will cover concepts, theories, explanations, and empirical evidence that may be difficult to understand. To make sense of the course content, you will need to build on the skills that you have already begun to develop and to think about it carefully, logically, critically, and creatively. In other words, you will need to think like a social scientist, a scholar of politics and international development.

This is a difficult set of skills to acquire and I am committed to helping you develop it. I fully expect that some of the material I ask you to absorb and the tasks I want you to complete will be challenging and confusing. Indeed, I will expose you to new content and ways of knowing and thinking precisely so that you come up against and grapple with the limits of your own

understanding. All this new-ness can be destabilizing and disorienting. This is good because not having the knowledge and skills needed to decipher social reality forces us to learn, to discard erroneous preconceptions, to make sense of existing explanations and develop new ones, to collect new empirical evidence that challenges our assumptions, and to communicate what we have learned to others through careful and clear writing and speaking based on evidence, rather than emotional arguments. I welcome your every question about any aspect of the course and this learning process, but you will also need to work hard to benefit from and do well in the course.

Involvement in class activities is an integral and necessary component of learning in the course. Active learning fosters students' ability to think clearly, logically, and critically and to develop essential analytical skills. Because my students are active participants in their learning, I expect you to be prepared for, attend, and productively contribute to our classes.

Equally important to this learning process is the development of your ability to conduct your own research. I have designed the assignments and the final exam in this course so that you will not only have to demonstrate your knowledge of the course material, but also collect additional empirical evidence, critically assess scholarly arguments, develop your own perspective, and—since academic work is a collaborative endeavor—present your analysis and findings in a coherent and articulate manner, in both writing and speaking, to me and to your fellow students.

SYLLABUS ADJUSTMENTS

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may disrupt my plans for the course. I also welcome your feedback and suggestions for changes to the course that you think would facilitate your learning. For these reasons, the syllabus is subject to change—at any time during the semester and at my discretion. I will endeavor to notify you of any syllabus adjustments as far in advance as possible.

CLASS ORGANIZATION

On Mondays and Wednesdays, I will deliver lectures. As we transition from a fully online learning environment, I am interested in comparing the pedagogical benefits of asynchronous online and synchronous in-person lecture delivery. For this reason, in the first few weeks of the semester, I will replace Monday classes with fully asynchronous lectures that I will post on Moodle and PeerTube every Monday (no later than at 11 am); you are welcome to watch or listen to the lectures at any point before the start of Wednesday classes, which will be in-person. After a few weeks, I will gather feedback on your experiences of lectures in the course and, depending on your preferences, retain the initial hybrid arrangements or move the lectures fully online or in-person. Friday classes will be in-person and take the form of seminars intended to ensure your active engagement with course material and help you to make sense of lectures and readings. Participation in these seminars is mandatory, as is attendance of all synchronous classes. I will measure your engagement by administering quizzes on the content of readings and lectures in some classes. Your class involvement grade will reflect your performance on those quizzes as well as your active participation in class discussions.

Depending on the epidemiological situation and prevailing regulations, classes may be held online. Online lectures will be fully asynchronous; I will make them available to you before scheduled class time. Online seminars will be synchronous and held on Zoom during scheduled class time. All course readings and other content that you will need in the course are available online. I hope that this organization of classes will help all of you to engage with course material. I am also always available to discuss specific challenges that you may encounter at any point during the semester.

ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

Grading scheme

Research project proposal	5%
Research project essay:	
Initial draft	20%
Final draft	20%
Term test	15%
Final exam	25%
Class involvement	15%

Research project submission deadlines

Proposal	February 22
Essay:	
Initial draft	March 29
Final draft	April 26

Test and exam dates

Term test	February 17
Final exam	TBA

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Research project

The research project is the main assignment in the course. Its primary purpose is to help you to develop your research skills, gain hands-on experience of conducting your own research, and, in the process, consolidate your knowledge and understanding of the politics of development. The project has three components: a research proposal and two drafts—initial and final—of the research essay.

Research project proposal

The purpose of the research proposal is to assist you in selecting an essay question from a list that I will provide, locating sources, and organizing your ideas as well as to provide you with feedback about your work that you can use as you prepare your research essay. Each proposal should be 1 page long. It should: a) identify your selected question; b) state your thesis; c) outline the key arguments that you intend to advance in support of that thesis; d) specify your research design; and e) explain what scholarly and nonacademic sources you will draw on in your research essay. You should attach a one-page proposed bibliography to your proposal. You do not need to have read all the sources prior to proposal submission, but you will need to justify your choices.

Research project essay

In the research essay you will answer one of the questions provided by me. You will build on the work you did while preparing the research proposal and develop a cogent argument that demonstrates your knowledge of the existing scholarship on the topic and ability to use empirical evidence found in secondary sources to develop your own explanation.

The research essay must be on the same topic as the research proposal. The essay should be 10-12 pages long and follow the standard structure of a university essay. It should draw upon at least 20-25 *academic* sources; you may also use nonacademic sources.

Assessment of the essay will be in two parts.

First, you will prepare and submit to me an initial draft of your research essay.

Second, you will revise the essay based on feedback that you will receive from me. The second grade for the essay will reflect the improvement that you have made to the assignment as well as the quality of your research and presentation and the cogency of your argument.

Term test

The term test will comprise short-answer questions intended to test your familiarity with material covered in the lectures and readings.

Final exam

You will write a two-part exam. The first component will consist of short-answer questions. In the second part of the exam you will write an essay on a topic selected from a list that I will provide.

Class involvement

The class involvement grade will reflect the productive contributions that you make to our seminar discussions. During the discussions you will need to demonstrate that you have read and reflected on the readings, paid attention to the content introduced by me in lectures, and carefully listened to your fellow students' contributions as well as ask questions and offer your own answers and analysis on class topics. To help you prepare for classes, before some seminars I may place discussion questions on Moodle.

Needless to say, you must show up to be a part of the shared intellectual work of the course. I expect you to attend every scheduled class meeting. See the Policies section of the syllabus for exceptions.

In some seminars I will administer quizzes to ask a few questions about the content of course readings or other relevant course content. These are low-stakes exercises intended to ensure and measure your engagement with course material. The quizzes will not be announced in advance and they cannot be made up if you miss a seminar or are not online at the start of the scheduled class time, no matter the reason. The quiz in which you did worst during the semester will not count towards your final grade.

Particularly helpful Moodle forum posts may also count towards your class involvement grade.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Writing standard

Development of the ability to express your ideas and knowledge in writing is a key component of your university education. Your grade is dependent on you turning in assignments that clearly convey your analysis and findings using standard language, format, citation style, etc. I encourage you to work with the Writing Center to improve your writing. I will use my discretion in requiring students to use the Writing Center if assignments are consistently poorly written.

Research support

University librarians are available to help you locate appropriate scholarly sources, learn to use reference management software, and perform other foundational research tasks. You can schedule an appointment with a librarian here: <https://nu-kz.libcal.com/appointments/>. Alternatively, you can reach out directly to April Manabat, the subject librarian for Political Science; her email address is april.manabat@nu.edu.kz.

Assignment formatting

All assignments should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in Times New Roman 12-point font. All citations should follow the American Political Science Association Style Manual (<https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/>).

Assignment submission

You will submit all assignments on Moodle. Every assignment should be submitted by 11.59 pm on the day that assignment is due.

I strongly advise you to keep rough and draft work *and* final copies of all of your assignments. You should keep all assignments until the marked assignments have been returned to you and the grades have been posted.

Late submission

I will apply a late submission penalty of 1% of the assignment grade per weekday (Monday to Friday) to the components of the research project submitted after the submission deadline.

I will not accept late submission of the term test and the final exam.

Assignment return

I will grade and return all assignments submitted on time no later than two weeks after submission.

Grade appeals

If you wish to appeal your grade for any assignment, you should approach me no earlier than 72 hours and no later than two weeks after that assignment was returned to you. To appeal the grade, please submit a 150–200-word written explanation of why you wish to have the grade reviewed to me. I will decide whether or not to review the grade based on the strength of your argument. If I decide to review the grade, I may keep the grade that you originally received, reduce it, or increase it.

Grading scale

A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
B-	75-79%
C+	70-74%
C	65-69%
C-	60-64%
D	55-59%
D-	50-54%
F	0-49 %

POLICIES

Contact

I strongly encourage you to raise questions not answered by the syllabus during classes and office hours.

You are very welcome to stop by my office during office hours anytime you wish to speak with me. These office hours are open to all students. If you prefer to speak with me privately, please make a booking on my youcanbook.me page.

I am also happy to answer short questions via the course forum on Moodle or Moodle messages. If your question is of general interest, you should post it in the forum, which I hope will become a useful source of information for students in the course. Questions that require more than one short response should be addressed during classes or office hours. I will respond to forum posts and messages within one full working day. I have every confidence that you know better than to message your professors to ask questions answered in the syllabus. To streamline electronic communications in the course, you should only use Moodle to contact me. If you email me, I may miss your message; I will also only respond to your questions via Moodle messages.

Attendance

I expect you to participate in every scheduled class meeting (except asynchronous online lectures) and I will take attendance.

You may have up to three emergency absences before your grade is negatively affected. These absences may be used for any reason. The three emergency absence dates are “no questions asked”; that is, you do not need to communicate with me the reasons for your absence.

Except for documented medical emergencies, each additional absence will result in a reduction of your overall class involvement grade by 25%. I will also reduce your class involvement grade if you habitually arrive late or leave early.

It is your responsibility to obtain from fellow students notes on the material covered in classes that you miss.

Academic misconduct

Academic misconduct is defined broadly, to include a wide variety of behaviors that conflict with the values and mission of NU. Students should become familiar with the NU Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (Student Code), which is the official document outlining policies and procedures around academic misconduct at NU. Students are responsible for complying with NU policies, as well as those described in the syllabus for an individual class, whether the student has read them or not.

Copyright and data protections

The materials that I create for the course and share with you are my intellectual property and are to be used solely for your learning in the course. The materials may not be reproduced or shared with others outside the course without my written permission.

Online copies of student assignments and other student data will only be stored on university servers or using services (such as Google Drive and Moodle) governed by NU’s data protection policies.

SCHEDULE AND READINGS

All readings are available online through Moodle or links in the syllabus. There is no textbook assigned in this course.

Please pay attention to specified page numbers; in many cases only a section of a particular reading is required.

All readings listed in the syllabus are required.

I may amend the schedule and readings to align them better with the learning needs of students in the course. For this reason, the schedule is tentative and subject to change as we move through the course material this semester.

PART I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1: Deprivation and plenty in the contemporary world—introduction to the politics of development

Sen, Amartya. 2000. “Preface” and “Introduction: Development as Freedom.” In *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knoff. xi-xiv and 3–12.

Fukuyama, Francis. 2014. “Chapter 1: What is Political Development?” In *Political Order and Political Decay*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

PART II. EXPLAINING DEVELOPMENT

Week 2: Modernization and neoliberalism

Rostow, W.W. 1960. “The Five Stages of Growth: A Summary.” In *The Stages of Economic Growth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 4–16.

Williamson, John. 1990. “What Washington Means by Policy Reform.” In *Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?*, edited by John Williamson. Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics.

Harvey, David. 2005. “Introduction.” In *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 1–4.

Week 3: Geography

Diamond, Jared. 1997. “Prologue: Yali’s Question” and “Chapter 4: Farmer Power.” In *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 1–18 and 63–70.

Correia, David. 2013. “F**k Jared Diamond.” *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 24(4): 1–6.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. Chapter 1: The Challenge of State-building in Africa.” In *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 11–31.

Week 4: Historical legacies 1—colonialism and dependency/underdevelopment

Acemoglu, Daron, James A. Robinson, and Simon Johnson. 2002. “Reversal of Fortune: Geography and Institutions in the Making of Modern Income Distribution.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117 (4): 1231–1237 and 1278–1279.

Hickel, Jason. 2017. “Aid in Reverse: How Poor Countries Develop Rich Countries.” *The Guardian*, January 14. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/jan/14/aid-in-reverse-how-poor-countries-develop-rich-countries/>.

Frank, Andre Gunder. 1966. “The Development of Underdevelopment.” *Monthly Review*, 18 (4): 17–31.

Week 5: Historical legacies 2—institutionalism

Rodrik, Dani, Arvind Subramanian, and Francesco Trebbi. 2004. “Institutions Rule: The Primacy of Institutions Over Geography and Integration in Economic Development.” *Journal of Economic Growth* 9 (2): 131–136.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91 (5): 1369–1370 and 1395–1396.

Week 6: Parts I and II review and term test

PART III. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Week 7: States, state capacity, and the origins of capable states

Fukuyama, Francis. 2014. "Chapter 1: What is Political Development?" In *Political Order and Political Decay*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. (review your notes or reread)

Opalo, Ken. 2020. "Fiscal Capacity in African States." *An Africanist Perspective Blog*, January 9. <https://kenopalo.com/2020/01/09/fiscal-capacity-in-african-states/>.

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 567–76.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. New York, New York: Cambridge University Press. 169–91.

Acemoglu, Daron. 2005. "Politics and Economics in Weak and Strong States." *Journal of Monetary Economics* 52 (7): 1199–1205 and 1223–1224.

Week 8: Developmental states and contemporary state-building

Evans, Peter. 1995. Chapter 1: States and Industrial Transformation." In *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 4–18.

Kohli, Atul. 1994. "Where Do High Growth Political Economies Come from? The Japanese Lineage of Korea's 'Developmental State.'" *World Development* 22 (9): 1269–1271 and 1285–1288.

Doner, Richard F., Bryan K. Ritchie, and Dan Slater. 2005. "Systemic Vulnerability and the Origins of Developmental States: Northeast and Southeast Asia in Comparative Perspective." *International Organization* 59: 327–61.

Grindle, Melanie S. 2017. "Good Governance, R.I.P.: A Critique and an Alternative." *Governance*, 30 (1), 17–22.

Week 9: Seeing like a state—the developmental pitfalls of administrative ordering of society and nature

Ferguson, James. 1994. "Preface." *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development", Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. xiii–xvi.

Ferguson, James. 1998. "Development and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho." In *The Post-Development Reader*, eds. Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree. London: Zed Books, 223–33.

Scott, James C. 1998. "Introduction" and "Conclusion." In *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1–8 and 342–357.

Hickel, Jason. 2019. "The Dark Side of the Nordic Model." *The Al-Jazeera*, December 6. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/12/6/the-dark-side-of-the-nordic-model>.

Week 10: Neopatrimonialism and state-society relations

- Bratton, Michael, and Nicholas Van de Walle. 1997. Chapter 2 (“Neopatrimonial Rule”). In *Democratic Experiments in Africa*. 61–68.
- Migdal, Joel S. “The State in Society: An Approach to Struggles for Domination”. In Migdal, Joel S., Atul Kohli, Vivienne Shue. 1994. *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*. New York: Cambridge University Press: 7–34.
- Miguel, Edward. 2004. “Tribe or Nation?: Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania.” *World Politics* 56 (3): 327–339, 343–348, and 360–362.
- Collier, Paul, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner. 2009. “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 61 (1): 1–5 and 24.

Week 11: Political regimes

- Sen, Amartya. 1999. “Democracy as a Universal Value.” *Journal of Democracy* 10 (3): 3–17.
- Cheeseman, Nic. 2020. “The Conflict in Ethiopia Calls into Question Authoritarian Aid.” Brussels: Carnegie Europe. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2020/12/22/conflict-in-ethiopia-calls-into-question-authoritarian-aid-pub-83515>

Week 12: Part III review

PART IV: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Week 13: Development assistance

- Easterly, William. 2007. “The Ideology of Development.” *Foreign Policy* July/August: 31-35. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/13/the-ideology-of-development/>.
- Duflo, Esther. 2010. “Experiments to Fight Poverty.” Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zvrGiPkVcs/>.
- Piper, Kelsey. 2019. “The Nobel Went to Economists Who Changed How We Help the Poor. But Some Critics Oppose Their Big Idea.” *Vox*, December 11. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/12/11/20938915/nobel-prize-economics-banerjee-duflo-kremer-rcts/>.
- Matthews, Dylan. 2019. “A Charity Dropped a Massive Stimulus Package on Rural Kenya—and Transformed the Economy.” *Vox*, November 25. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/11/25/20973151/givedirectly-basic-income-kenya-study-stimulus/>.
- Mwenda, Andrew. “Africa and the Curse of Foreign Aid.” Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEI7PDvVc9M>.

Week 14: Trade and migration

- Li, Tanya Murray. 2014. “Introduction.” In *Land’s End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 1–16.
- Wade, Robert. 2003. “What Strategies are Viable for LDCs Today?” *Review of International Political Economy*. 621–33.

- Subramanian, Samanth. 2019. “Is Fair Trade Finished?” *The Guardian*, July 23. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jul/23/fairtrade-ethical-certification-supermarkets-sainsburys/>.
- Milanović, Branko. 2015. “Global Inequality of Opportunity: How Much of Our Income Is Determined by Where We Live?” *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 97 (2), 452–460.
- Clemens, Michael A. 2011. “Economics and Emigration: Trillion-dollar Bills on the Sidewalk?” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 25 (3): 83–106.
- Pritchett, Lant. 2017. “Why Are Geniuses Destroying Jobs in Uganda?” Washington, D.C.: Center For Global Development.
<https://www.cgdev.org/blog/why-are-geniuses-destroying-jobs-uganda/>.

Week 15: Review