

Rich and Poor Nations in the International System (INR 4035)
University of Florida – Spring 2020

Class Meetings: T, 11:45am-1:40pm; R, 12:50pm-1:40pm

Classroom: TUR 1101

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Office Hours: T, R 2:00-3:00pm and by appointment– Anderson 321

Course Description

According to the UF course listings, “The purpose of this course is to introduce and explore political, economic, social, and cultural issues in underdeveloped and developing countries. The main focus of this course will be on examining why some underdeveloped and developing countries succeed in escaping poverty while others fail to do so. The topics that will be examined include the historical roots of underdevelopment, contending theoretical perspectives of underdevelopment, contemporary challenges underdeveloped and developing countries face (conflict, resource curse, bad governance, trade, and foreign aid), and what these countries and international community can do to alleviate poverty in those underdeveloped and developing countries.”

This will unfold in five parts: after reviewing some basic theories of International Relations (IR) and guiding concepts, we will then go on to examine what Paul Collier refers to as the various “traps” of poverty which make it difficult for countries with low levels of gross domestic product (GDP) to become wealthier. This portion of the course will examine various “problems” that exacerbate global economic inequality between countries. In the third section of the course, we will question what concepts such as “development”—and indeed “rich” and “poor”—mean to social scientists. In a fourth module, we’ll discuss the various policy prescriptions for addressing global inequality and poverty. In the final part of the course, students will present their final paper projects. During this last section, students will share their empirical findings and interpretations of what we’ve studied this semester. Throughout the course, in addition to studying substantive issues in politics, we will also study *the politics of science*. In my opinion, critical thinking is the most important skill students can gain in political science courses. Students are expected not to merely digest the information presented to them in this course, but also critically evaluate the methods and theoretical assumptions of each written work – and indeed this syllabus and course itself.

Textbooks

Collier, Paul. 2007. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780195311457.

Escobar, Arturo. 2011. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691150451.

Responsibilities and Grading (in five parts):

- 1) **Attendance and participation.** Students are required to be in class for each of our meetings and prepared to discuss the material. Participation – in the form of questions, responses, thoughts – is *very* important if we are to have an interesting and enlightening class experience. Students will be permitted to miss a maximum of **two** class periods without penalty. Each subsequent absence will result in a loss of points from the attendance grade. Please come talk to me if you're having an ongoing problem that prevents you from attending class so we can work together to ensure this does not negatively impact your grade. Finally, please be on time; it is distracting to me and your fellow students when people are walking in at different times.
- 2) **Weekly chapter summaries.** Students will be required to submit three discussion questions regarding the course material for the week ahead. The discussion questions are due to me via email on Sundays at 7pm, though you are welcome to submit your questions earlier. No late submissions will be accepted. I encourage you to outline the chapters/articles as you read, highlighting any confusing areas you would like to have clarified in class. Such outlining encourages active-reading and helps students retain important information. These will also be your study guides for the midterm and will likely help as you develop your final paper. Moreover, the **MOST** important part of writing is organization—and this is done with excellent outlines.
- 3) **5-7 page (double-spaced in Times New Roman) term paper.** Students will select a topic of interest for their term research paper, which they will work on throughout the course. Potential topics include population and migration issues in Italy, a case study regarding the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the politics of fair v. free trade, etc. I am allowing a wide array of topics for the term paper since I would like students to pursue their own interests, but topics must be approved by me first. All term papers should begin by asking a question relevant for the study of international environmental politics. For example, “why do countries fall prey to Dutch Disease?” Then the paper should offer a range of two (or more) potential answers (hypotheses) to answer this question. The paper should also explain what we would expect to see if each competing hypothesis were true. Students should be sure to define key terms involved in evaluating competing hypotheses (for example, what is a “resource curse,” what is “Dutch Disease,” etc.). Students will choose a research model (statistical design, or, more likely for this course, a case study or two). And then after carrying out their research, students will evaluate their findings and see which hypothesis best explains the empirical (observed) data the student has gathered on the case or cases in question. The term paper will be completed in six parts:
 - 1) **One-page description of term paper.** First, students will come up with a general research question as well as a case (or cases) that will be researched to answer the question. This should be one page, double-spaced. Due date: January 23.
 - 2) **Annotated Bibliography.** Second, students will submit an annotated bibliography on February 13 consisting of at least five academic sources (peer-reviewed journal articles, news articles, and library books are acceptable, and you can also use the reader for of your sources if you explain which pages you will use and why). *Note: An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents.*

Each citation is followed by a brief (~150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph (known as the annotation), which explains why this source is important for your research.

- 3) **Outline.** Third, students will submit an outline of their final paper. The outline should follow the format of the weekly chapter outlines, and should include an introduction with the research question, description of your case(s), & potential answers; a section on the competing answers (hypotheses); details of your case(s); an analysis of how they hypotheses are (or are not) reflected in the case(s); and finally a conclusion and evaluation of results. Due February 27.
 - 4) **Rough Draft.** A rough draft of the final paper is due on March 31. It should be 5-7 pages, double-spaced.
 - 5) **Presentation.** Students will give a 5-minute presentation of their research question and findings during the last three weeks of class.
 - 6) **Final paper.** The final paper (again, 5-7 pages, double-spaced) is due on Tuesday, April 28 at 5pm.
- 4) **Midterm(ish) Exam.** The exam will come after the first three modules of the course and cover all the content covered up until March 12, the date of the exam.
- 5) **Group debates.** I can still recall the dread of group projects in college. Having worked in private industry, however, I also know that most of you will spend a significant percentage of your careers working on “group projects.” Thus, since the stakes are probably lower in college than they will be in you your future careers, I want to help you practice collaborating with peers to produce a final product. In this course, students will be divided into groups and assigned to one side of contentious debate regarding environmental politics. The course readings will be sufficient to inform your group’s argument, though each group will have to meet before their in-class debate is scheduled to 1) compile an issue brief (1-2 pages outlining your group’s position/argument) and 2) select a speaker/speakers and prepare the debate talking points. Each group will be allotted 10 minutes to make their arguments before a Q&A time period during which students—as well as the opposing group—make their arguments.

Assignment	Value
Attendance/participation	5%
Weekly Questions	10%
Midterm exam	20%
One-page description of term paper	5%
Outline	5%
Rough Draft, comments to partner	10%
Group Debates	10%
Project Presentation	5%
Final paper	30%

Grading Scale

A	93% to 100%
A-	90% to 92%
B+	87% to 89.9%
B	80% to 86.9%
C+	77% to 79.9%
C	70% to 76.9%
D+	67% to 69.9%
D	60% to 66.9%
F	0% to 59.9%

Due Dates

The dates for assignments and exams are final, unless modified by the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty

Any evidence of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, and an academic dishonesty case report will be filed with the University of Florida administration. All work will be checked online for evidence of plagiarism, so be sure to cite your sources. When in doubt, CITE. Unintentional or intentional plagiarism is still plagiarism. For further information, refer to the UF student honor code and code of conduct: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

Students with Disabilities (Americans with Disabilities Act ADA)

In compliance with the University of Florida policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Request for academic accommodations need to be made during the first week of the semester (except for unusual circumstances) so arrangements can be made. You must be registered with the Disabilities Resource Center is (DRC) disability verification and determination of reasonable academic accommodations. More info here: <https://disability.ufl.edu>.

Counseling

College can be a very difficult time of transition, and difficulties can arise at any time in life. Help is available. The [Counseling and Wellness Center \(CWC\)](#) offers group, individual, and immediate emergency crisis counseling for UF students in need of help. Psychiatric services can be arranged through the CWC and [Student Health Center](#), as well. If you need immediate help, please call the CWC (24hours/day): 352-392-1575 or the Alachua Crisis Services (24 hours/day): 352-264-6789.

Course Schedule

This is a tentative course schedule. We may fall behind at points—or get further ahead at others—so dates for readings are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. Also, additional readings may occasionally be assigned, but students will be notified by the instructor via email ahead of time. Readings are listed under the date that they will be discussed in class and should be done before class meetings. All assignments should be completed before the class meeting.

PART 1: INTRO

WEEK 1 (Jan 7, 9): INTRO & GUIDING CONCEPTS FOR COURSE

- Tuesday, Jan 7: Introduction to the Course
- Thursday, Jan 9: Intro/recap of IR theories, what social science is

WEEK 2 (Jan 14, 16): ORIGINS OF INEQUALITY

- Tuesday, Jan 14:
 - Ch 2: Schwartz, Herman. 2010. “States, Markets, and the Origins of International Equality” in *States versus Markets: The Emergence of a Global Economy*. 3rd ed. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Thursday, Jan 16
 - Collier – preface, ch 1

PART 2: THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GLOBAL INEQUALITY

WEEK 3 (Jan 21, 23): WAR AND POVERTY; NATURAL RESOURCES

- Tuesday, Jan 21:
 - Collier – ch 2 – “The Conflict Trap”
- Thursday, Jan 23: Guiding Concepts
 - **One-page description of research paper due**
 - Collier – ch 3 – “The Natural Resource Trap”

WEEK 4 (Jan 28, 30): THE ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND POVERTY

- Tuesday, Jan 28:
 - Smith, Benjamin. 2017. “Resource Wealth as Rent Leverage: Rethinking the Oil-Stability Nexus.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 34(6), 597–617.
 - Dehghan, Saeed Kamali. 2019, Dec 30. “Are Mexican Avocados the World’s New Conflict Commodity?” *The Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/dec/30/are-mexican-avocados-the-worlds-new-conflict-commodity>.
- Thursday, Jan 30:
 - DEBATE 1: Is there a resource curse?

WEEK 5 (Feb 4, 6): THE ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND POVERTY II + HOW TO USE THE LIBRARY’S RESEARCH TOOLS

- Tuesday, Feb 4:
 - Collier – ch 4 – “Landlocked with Bad Neighbors”
 - Ahmed, Maram. 2019, Jun 20. “How Climate Change Exacerbates the Refugee Crisis – and what can be done about it.” *World Economic Forum*: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/06/how-climate-change-exacerbates-the-refugee-crisis-and-what-can-be-done-about-it/>
- Thursday, Feb 6:
 - Dr. David Schweider, UF Political Science Librarian, will give a tutorial on how to use the library for research

WEEK 6 (Feb 11, 13): ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND POVERTY

- Tuesday, Feb 11:
 - Collier – ch 6 – “On Missing the Boat: The Marginalization of the Bottom Billion in the World Economy”
- Thursday, Feb 13:
 - **Annotated bibliography due**
 - Read pgs 83 (“British first mover advantage...” to pg 93 (stopping at the section on Germany) in Schwartz, Herman. 2010. *States versus Markets: The Emergence of a Global Economy*. 3rd ed. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

WEEK 7 (Feb 18, 20): MEASURING CONCEPTS: INDICES

- Tuesday, Feb 18:
 - Debate 2: Can developing and least-developed countries “catch up”/achieve similar development as their wealthy counterparts?
 - Kelley, Judith and Beth Simmons. 2015. “Politics by Number: Indicators as Social Pressure in International Relations.” *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (1): 55-70.
 - Look up an index of your choosing (it could be on anything that is compared among states– happiness, economic development, corruption, gender equality, etc). Come prepared with a one-page brief on the index which addresses the following questions: who created the index? Where did they get the grant money from? How does your index rank countries? What measures are included? How are terms defined? Are there other indices which publish information on similar topics? If so, do the rankings of countries look similar across indices or do they differ widely? If they differ, why? We will discuss this in groups in class.
- Thursday, Feb 20:
 - Espeland, Wendy Nelson and Michael Sauder. 2007. “Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Recreate Social Worlds.” *American Journal of Sociology* 11 (1): 1-40.

PART 3 – DECONSTRUCTING THE PROBLEMS: What is “poverty?” “Wealth? Development?”

WEEK 8 (Feb 25, 27): MEASURING CONCEPTS: INDICES

- Tuesday, Feb 25:
 - Ch 1 and 2 of Towns, Ann. 2010. *Women and States: Norms and Hierarchies in International Society*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
 - Epstein, Charlotte, 2012b. “Stop Telling us to How to Behave: Socialization or Infantilization?” *International Studies Perspectives* 13: 135-145.
- Thursday, Feb 27:
 - **Outline due**
 - Debate 3: Is our increasing reliance on indices beneficial for academic research and/or policymaking?

***** SPRING BREAK *****

WEEK 9 (March 10, 12): WHAT IS “DEVELOPMENT?”

- Tuesday, March 10:
 - Escobar – read preface, ch 1 – “Introduction: Development and the Anthropology of Modernity”
 - Escobar – ch 2 – “The Problematization of Poverty: The Tale of Three Worlds and Development”
- Thursday, March 12:
 - **Midterm Exam**

PART 4 – SOLUTIONS AND POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS

WEEK 10 (March 17, 19): AID

- Tuesday, March 17
 - Collier – ch 7 – “Aid to the Rescue?”
 - Benabdallah, Lina. 2019, January 23. “Spite Won’t Beat China in Africa.” *Foreign Policy*: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/23/spite-wont-beat-china-in-africa/>.
 - SDGs: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>
- Thursday, March 19
 - *Debate 4: Is a top-down or bottom-up approach to aid more effective?*

WEEK 11 (March 24, 26): TRADE

- Tuesday, March 26
 - Collier – ch 10 – “Trade Policy for Reversing Marginalization”
 - The World Bank. “The Role of Trade in Ending Poverty.” <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/the-role-of-trade-in-ending-poverty>
- Thursday, March 26
 - Subramanian, Samanth. 2019, July 23. “Is Fair Trade Finished?” *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jul/23/fairtrade-ethical-certification-supermarkets-sainsburys>

PART 5 – WRAP UP & PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 12 (March 31, April 2):

- Tuesday, March 31: – Rough draft exchange
 - *Debate 5: Is free trade making the world more “flat?”*
 - **Rough draft of final paper due**
- Thursday, April 2 – Final paper presentations

WEEK 13 (April 7, 9): FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- Tuesday, April 7 – Final paper presentations
- Thursday, April 9 – Final paper presentations

WEEK 14 (April 14, 16): FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- Tuesday, April 14 – final paper presentations
- Thursday, April 16 – final paper presentations

WEEK 15 (April 21): FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- Tuesday, April 21 – final paper presentations
- *April 23: reading day (no class)*

Final Paper Due April 28 at 5pm.