INTRODUCTION
The study of the politics of development is more than an academic exercise. Following World War II, “development” largely supplanted 19th century ideas of “progress,” at least as far as the poor countries of the “Third World” were concerned. Increasing the “Gross National Product” – the overall output of goods and services as valued by the market – was the standard proxy for progress and increased well-being. This solved a number of problems, both intellectual and practical. Intellectually, it avoided trying to define progress in terms of some kind aggregation of utility or happiness. Practically, by equating accumulation with universal increases in well-being, it ratified the hegemony of the existing structure of economic power. Nonetheless, it was still an uncomfortable syllogism. In the 1980s and 1990s, the “Washington Consensus” was widely viewed as the dominant paradigm, although its hegemony was challenged by a series of major financial crises among its putative “stars” (Mexico in 1994, Asian Crisis in 1997-98, Argentina in early 2000s) as well as sustained rapid growth in China which did not pursue a Washington Consensus development strategy. These developments gave rise to ruminations on a “Post-Washington Consensus” which continue to the present.

Until the terrorist attacks of 9/11, globalization had seemed to be displacing development as an overarching framework at least among powerful policy elites, but at least since 9/11 period the notion of globalization as an inevitable historical force, and the virtues of weakening nation-states, have been dealt a blow. Globalization has been exposed as a political project – as opposed to a technical or “natural” tendency. The parallel development of the Davos Forum and the World Social Forum have created two different poles on the debate over globalization and development in the broader business and activist communities.

Current debates on development suffer from two problems. On one side, there is the TINA problem. Advocates of the position that accumulation of wealth by market rules is the only way to improve assert that “there is no alternative” (TINA). In its more triumphalist form, market-driven development is not just seen as inevitable but celebrated as optimal. For the triumphalists, things couldn’t be better, except in the future when they will undoubtedly be even better. On the other side, many are so disillusioned with the results of development that they reject the possibility of any general strategy of progressive change. For them, development is the antithesis of increased well-being. Protecting local forms of social, cultural, and economic organization from “development” is what is important. While the defense of the right of local cultures and communities to protect their
own collective sense of needs and goals is important, it is not sufficient to ensure that needs, however self-defined, will be fulfilled. Poor communities looking for clean water, decent housing, health care and secure incomes, need capacity as well as autonomy.

In the present context much debate over development has focused on Africa and on the Millenium Development Goals. Too much of the development debate focuses on aid as opposed to the myriad of other issues that influence and shape “development” in countries, whether recipients of aid or not. A number of policies (“free” markets), or programs such as microfinance, new technologies ($100 laptops) or others have been promoted as panaceas (although more by the development industry than by their most informed and reflective practitioners or advocates). These programs all have their place, but none of them are, or can be, the magic solution for development. No such magic key exists.

The current global financial crisis has reinforced the end of the hegemony of the Washington Consensus and indeed other “consensus” on certain aspects of development.

The development debate needs to be enlivened. Alternative propositions must be grounded in analysis of past dynamics of socioeconomic and political change, but they must also reflect the ways in which the current global political economy creates obstacles and opportunities different from those encountered in the past. This course tries to explore possibilities for the kind of redefinition of the politics of development that “anti-development” theorists feel is impossible and neoliberal triumphalists feel is not only unnecessary but hazardous to global well-being.

Outline of Class: Classes will initially involve roughly 60-80 minutes of lecture, followed by 30-40 minutes of discussion. Finally, 10-15 minutes of concluding remarks will pull together some of the key points, highlight ongoing areas of empirical and theoretical debate, and frame the readings for the subsequent class. Lectures will not summarize what is in the readings. Class participation will constitute a significant percentage of the final grade. Over the course of the semester we may alter the proportion of lecture and discussion time. My lectures are typically interactive and I consider myself free to call on anyone during class.

Syllabus: The syllabus is large in order to provide students with a semi-annotated bibliography of key materials in the field. This may be helpful if you are interested in a particular topic and would like to explore it in more depth, as an initial starting point for papers, or simply as a reference for things you should get around to reading in your career.

GRADES

There is no curve in this course. Everyone may receive an A or everyone may receive an F. This course will abide by the Wagner School’s general policy guidelines on incomplete grades, academic honesty, and plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity.

Incomplete Grades: http://www.nyu.edu/wagner/current/pol5.html
Academic Honesty: http://www.nyu.edu/wagner/current/pol3.html
Course Requirements:

1. **Class Participation** (30%) The course depends on active and ongoing participation by all class participants. This will occur in four ways:

   a). **Weekly Participation** (5%): Class participants are expected to read and discuss the readings on a weekly basis. That means coming prepared to engage the class, with questions and/or comments with respect to the reading. You will be expected to have completed all the required readings before class to the point where you can be called on to critique or defend any reading. Before approaching each reading think about what the key questions are for the week and about how the questions from this week relate to what you know from previous weeks. Then skim over the reading to get a sense of the themes it covers, and, before reading further, jot down what questions you hope the reading will be able to answer for you. Next, read the introduction and conclusion. This is normally enough to get a sense of the big picture. Ask yourself: Are the claims in the text surprising? Do you believe them? Can you think of examples of places that do not seem consistent with the logic of the argument? Is the reading answering the questions you hoped it would answer? If not, is it answering more or less interesting questions than you had thought of? Next ask yourself: What types of evidence or arguments would you need to see in order to be convinced of the results? Now read through the whole text, checking as you go through how the arguments used support the claims of the author. It is rare to find a piece of writing that you agree with entirely. So, as you come across issues that you are not convinced by, write them down and bring them along to class for discussion. Also note when you are pleasantly (or unpleasantly) surprised, when the author produced a convincing argument which you had not thought of.

b. **Writing Assignments:**

   1. **Précis/Response Papers** (10%) Each week 4-6 people will take responsibility for preparing response papers to one or more of the readings. This includes writing a 3-5 page précis of the reading that a) lays out the main argument(s), b) indicates what you found provocative and/or mundane, and c) poses 3-4 questions for class discussion. These handouts will be distributed via email to the rest of the class by Tuesday at 5 PM (using the course website). Everyone will prepare one précis over the course of the semester. Everyone who prepares a précis for the week should be prepared to provide a brief (2-3 minute) outline of their reaction to the readings as a contribution to discussion.

   2. **DevPolitics Weblog** (5%) There will be a jointly authored course blog (www.oldmole.typepad.com/devpolitics). All students will be expected to post 500 words over the course of the semester (ie, about 10 substantive contributions of 50 words, or any equivalent arithmetic combination), including responses to other’s posts. Contributions should pertain to broad issues or themes raised by the course, but are not limited to the readings or issues we discuss in class. Postings can include continuations of or expansions of discussions in class (remember all those times time ran out before you could get your comment in the class discussion?), analysis of media coverage of development issues, discussions
of talks, events, policy debates, legislation, etc. on development issues either in the U.S. or abroad.

There are 5 required posts:

- A post reflecting on the personal obligations/ethical issues associated with development. Posted by Week 3
- Your definition of development – due to be posted by Week 5
- Responses to at least two different definitions of development from classmates by Week 7
- Analysis of a media presentation (print or broadcast) of a development-related issue
- One post should discuss an event (talk, webcast, conference, etc) relating to issues relevant to the course by the end of the semester.

This is a public blog, so keep that in mind when framing your posts. One should observe all the customary courtesies while blogging that one observes in class.

c. Group Exercises (10%): There will be three structured debates at various points in the semester. More details to be distributed in class.

2. Op-Ed (10%) One op-ed length (700-750 words) on an important current issue relating to development [for guidance see the resource under “Writing Materials” section of the Blackboard site]. This is due February 12 via email to my assistant Jessica Holmes (Jessica.holmes@nyu.edu). PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME AND MAILBOX # IF YOU HAVE ONE ON THE OP-ED. Op-eds may be revised and turned in again once for a higher grade. The deadline to resubmit is March 31. The final grade is what counts.

3. Policy Analysis Exercise including Two Memos (see attached for details). This counts for 60% of your grade. (20% each memo, and 20% for supporting materials).

Auditors: are welcome as space allows. There is no free lunch, however. All auditors are required to do a précis, participate in class, and participate in the weblog.

Late Policy. Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency. This is out of respect to those who have abided by deadlines, despite equally hectic schedules. Papers handed in late without extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per day.

Grading Breakdown: Class participation (30%, includes general participation, précis, weblog, and debates) Op-ed (10%), Policy Analysis Exercise (60%).

Prerequisites: “Introduction to Public Policy” (P11.1022) or “History and Theory of Urban Planning”(P11.2600) or equivalent, Microeconomics, and “Institutions, Governance, and
Development” (P11.2214). A prior course in the politics/sociology/economics/management of development would be helpful but is not required.

**Required Books (available at the Professional Bookstore):**
Tracy Kidder, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*
Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy* (recommended) (Princeton: Princeton University Press). Additional readings will made available either online or in class.
WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION: WHY A POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT? (January 22)
Overview of Major Themes

Tracy Kidder, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*

Ross Coggins, *The Development Set* [Blackboard]
The Economist, Sins of the Secular Missionaries [Blackboard]
James Petras, “Imperialism and NGOs in Latin America,” *Monthly Review* [Blackboard]
Robert Strauss, Peace Corps: Think Again, Foreign Policy
Michael Edwards, Do NGOs Make a Difference? [Blackboard]

Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to write about Africa,” *Granta* 92: The View from Africa
www.granta.com/extracts/2615
Ivan Illich, “To Hell With Good Intentions” [Blackboard]
Peter Singer, “Singer Solution to World Poverty” [Blackboard]
Samantha Power,

Discussion Questions:

What Do We Mean By Development?

What Ethical Issues Frame the Development Debate?

How do we conceive our roles as development policy analysts, practitioners, citizens?

For further reading:
Some of the issues are grounded in Paolo Freire’s classic *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. For a discussion of one attempt to apply this framework to Northerners, see *Pedagogy for ....*
For more philosopohical discussion see the symposium on World Poverty and Human Rights in *Ethics and International Affairs* 19:1 (2005), and work by Thomas Pogge, Peter Singer *One World*, Peter Unger *Living High and Letting Die*, Iris Marion Young, Matthias Risse, among others.

WEEK 2: THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (January 29)

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 1 [no précis]

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Introduction and Chapter 2
Diana Mitlin, Sam Hickey and Anthony Bebbington, “Reclaiming development? NGOs and the challenge of alternatives,” Global Poverty Working Group WPS-043


Kent Buse, Eva Ludi and Marcella Vigneri, ODI, Sustaining and scaling up Millennium Villages: Beyond rural investments [Blackboard]

James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State, Introduction


Gilbert Rist in Development in Practice [Blackboard]

The greening of the south
http://www.ippr.org/articles/?id=3022

If time, Ecoequity, Christian Aid et al, The Right to Development in a Climate Constrained World http://www.ecoequity.org/docs/TheGDRsFramework.pdf [also on BB] at least exec summary, if possible also 1-33 and 57-65

For further reading:
WEEK 3: HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY (February 5)


Jared Diamond, Guns, Germs, and Steel [Blackboard]

Paul Collier, The Bottom Billion, Chapter 3 “Natural Resource Trap” and Chapter 4 “Landlocked with Bad Neighbors”


Jeffrey Sachs, TBA

For further reading:

WEEK 4: CULTURE (February 12)


Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “The True Clash of Civilizations,” Foreign Policy (March/April 2003) [Blackboard]

Ha Joon Chang, “Lazy Japanese and Thieving Germans” in Bad Samaritans [Blackboard]

James C Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Chapter 3

Tostan [BB]

Case: "A Heritage Worth Saving? The Case Of The Acheen Street Malay Mosque Village" [Blackboard]

*For more reading:*


**WEEK 5: Markets and Governance (February 19)**

Douglas C. North, *Understanding the Process of Economic Change* [Blackboard]

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 4 “Bad Governance in a Small Country”

David Bromley, Making Institutions Work for the Poor, (4 pages manuscript) [Blackboard]

James Robinson, [Blackboard]


*For more reading:*

WEEK 6: STATE BUILDING (February 26)


Jeff Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* [Blackboard]


Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (Chapter 2 “The Conflict Trap” and Chapter 8 “Military Intervention”)


For more reading:

WEEK 7: STATES, INDUSTRIALIZATION, AND DEVELOPMENT: PREDATORY, DEVELOPMENTAL, AND OTHERWISE (March 5)

Recall from Institutions…


Peter Evans, chapter in Haggard and Kaufman, [Reader]
[For a more full treatment see Evans’ *Embedded Autonomy*, chapters. 1-3, pp. 3-73; then skim chpts. 5-7, pp. 99-180.]

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapter 5

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (Chapter 6 “On Missing the Boat” and Chapter 10 “Trade Policy for Reversing Marginalization”)

For more reading:

WEEK 8: DEMOCRACY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND DEVELOPMENT

John Gerring et al, “Democracy and Growth” World Politics (2005) [Blackboard]

Jonathan Fox, Semi-Clientelism [BB]
World Bank, *Learning from a Decade of Reform*
Chapter 10

[http://www.fareedzakaria.com/articles/other/democracy.html]

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapter 6


**For more reading:**


II. POLITICS OF POVERTY AND POLICY REFORM

WEEK 9: POLITICS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION (March 26)


Joan Nelson, (TBA)


Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, Chapter 4

Paul Farmer, Selections from Pathologies of Power, pp. 1-50

Wolfensohn Center, Scaling Up [Blackboard]

For more reading:


WEEK 10: Social Sector Reform and THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL SECTOR REFORM AND SOCIAL PROTECTION (April 2)

Lant Pritchett and Michael Woolcock, “Solutions when the Solution is the Problem: Arraying the Disarray in Development,” *World Development* 2003 [Blackboard]

Mick Moore and Anuradha Joshi in *Best Practices Book* [Blackboard]

Merilee Grindle, *First in the Queue? Mainstreaming the Poor in Service Delivery* [blackboard]


Chapter on Brazilian Health Care Reform in *Development Statecraft* [Blackboard]

Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*, Chapter on Health and Human Rights


Banerjee et al, Education Reform in India

*For more reading:*

WEEK 11: Asset Building and Asset Reform (April 9)

Roy Prosterman, land reform [Blackboard]

Elinor Ostrom, Commons, Science [Blackboard]

Ronald Herring, “Beyond the Political Impossibility Theorem of Agrarian Reform,”
http://www.arts.cornell.edu/poverty/Papers/herring_beyond_polit_impos_theorem.pdf

Caroline Moser, “Asset-based Approaches to Poverty Reduction in a Globalized Context”

Bina Agarwal, Land Reform [Blackboard]

For more reading:

WEEK 12: Engendering Development: Sex, Gender, Politics, and Development (April 16)

For reference:
INSTRUAW, Women in Decision making [no précis]

Women in Parliaments, Inter-parliamentary Union [no précis]
World and regional data: http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm
National data: http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm

Regular Reading

Sylvia Chant, “Feminization of Poverty…” [Blackboard]


Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, Chapter 8

Helena Hofbauer Balmori, BRIDGE, Gender and Budgets, http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/cep-budgets-report.pdf, skim
CASE: Casa Amiga Case [Blackboard]

Recommended:


Also see the Eldis Gender Resource Guide (http://www.eldis.org/gender/index.htm), the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (www.awid.org), IFPRI’s Gender Toolbox (http://www.ifpri.org/themes/gender/gendertools.asp) and BRIDGE (http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/).


**WEEK 13: Power, Accountability, and Rights-Based Approaches (April 23)**

Review Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapter 12


Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (Chapter 7 “Aid to the Rescue” and Chapter 9 “Laws and Charters”, Chapter 11 “An Agenda for Action”)

Patrick Heller *Democratic Decentralization* [Blackboard]


Stepohen Golub, Making Law Work [BB]

Rights-Based Development: Bangladesh Case [BB]

Josh Busby

Recommended:
Ronaldo Munck, Alternatives in Latin America [Blackboard] and Another World Is Possible also

Sen’s writings are voluminous, as a quick look at the book’s notes will confirm. The work of Sen and his collaborators would fill several courses. Particularly interesting for the economically-minded is the debate between him and T.N. Srinavasan – See Srinavasan’s “Reinventing the Wheel” article in the American Economic Review, 1994. For those attracted by Sen’s basic approach, the UNDP’s Human Development Reports are a good sample of the effort to turn it to practical effect. For variations on the “basic needs” tradition, you can see the work by Dudley Seers, Richard Jolly, Paul Streeten and Frances Stewart among others. A useful introduction is Diane Elson, “Economic Paradigms and their Implications for Models of Development: The Case of Human Development,” in Global Governance and Development Fifty Years after Bretton Woods: Essays in Honour of Gerald K. Helleiner (1998). Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl (eds) NGO Accountability.
William Easterly, “Are Aid Agencies Improving?”

Some Questions:

This week explores some new efforts at conceptualizing approaches to development that vary in terms of how they understand the normative content of development (ie, focus on the deliberative democratic process, on expansion of capabilities, or achievement of rights) and the scale at which efforts would be most productive (sub-national, national, regional, and/or international levels).
WEEK 14: Accountability, Participation, Power, and the New (Old?) Politics of Development (April 30)

Attend Reynolds Lecture by Paul Farmer

Readings, TBA

Final Papers Due – Due 5 PM May 7 to Jessica Holmes (Jessica.holmes@nyu.edu)