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. The financial crises of the 1990s and 2008 through the present challenged many of the orthodoxies relating to development, and in particular to the finance-driven Anglo-American model of development.

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. But 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 have the
right to call on anyone during class. If for some reason you have not been able to do the readings or
do not feel able to respond to being called on in a specific class, please let me know. It is
understandable that on a rare occasion this will be the case. If it becomes a regular event, it will
severely affect your participation grade.

**Syllabus:** The syllabus is large in order to provide students with a semi-annotated bibliography of
key materials and resources 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: (25%) The course depends on active and ongoing participation by all class participants. This will occur in three ways:

   a). Weekly Participation (10%): Participation begins with effective reading and listening. 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 discuss 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.

   In class itself, the key to quality participation is listening. Asking good questions is the second key element. What did you mean by that? How do you/we know? What’s the evidence for that claim? This is not a license for snarkiness, but for reflective, thoughtful, dialogic engagement with the ideas of others in the class. Don’t be shy. Share your thoughts and reactions in ways that promote critical engagement with them. Quality and quantity of participation can be, but are not necessarily closely correlated.

   b). 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.

c). 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 5 substantive contributions of 100 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 class discussions (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.

2. Group Exercise: Debate (15%):
Everyone will participate in one debate over the course of the semester. More details are posted on the Assignments Tab of Blackboard. We will talk more about them in the second class.

3. 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 23/25 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. PLEASE LABEL YOUR ATTACHED FILE “Yournamedevelopmentoped.” Op-eds may be revised and turned in again once for a higher grade. The deadline to resubmit is April 15. The final grade is what counts.
4. **Policy Analysis Exercise** including Two Memos (see the Assignments Page on Blackboard for more details). This counts for 50% of your grade. (20% each memo, and 10% 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 (25%, includes general participation, précis, and weblog) Debates (15%) Op-ed (10%), Policy Analysis Exercise (50%).

**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). [Lacking these, permission of the Instructor is required]. 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*
- Duncan Green, *From Poverty to Power* (Oxfam 2009)

Additional readings will made available either online or in class.
## OVERVIEW OF SEMESTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 1</td>
<td>January 19/21</td>
<td>INTRO: WHY A <em>POLITICS</em> OF DEVELOPMENT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 2</td>
<td>January 26/28</td>
<td>THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 1/3</td>
<td>Statement of Focus Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 3</td>
<td>February 2/4</td>
<td>HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 4</td>
<td>February 9/11</td>
<td>CULTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 5</td>
<td>February 16/18</td>
<td>Catch-up week: Work on op-eds, PAE, and debates*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Interests Map Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 6</td>
<td>February 23/25</td>
<td>MARKETS AND GOVERNANCE ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Op-ed Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 7</td>
<td>March 2/4</td>
<td>STATE BUILDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 8</td>
<td>March 9/11</td>
<td>INDUSTRIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Background Memo Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 15-19</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 9</td>
<td>March 23/25</td>
<td>DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (Debate 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Institutions Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 10</td>
<td>March 30/April1</td>
<td>POLITICS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION (Debate 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 11</td>
<td>April 6/8</td>
<td>GENDER (Debate 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Process Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 12</td>
<td>April 13/15</td>
<td>RB APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT (Debate 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 13</td>
<td>April 20/22</td>
<td>VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION, and SOCIAL SECTOR REFORM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 14</td>
<td>April 27/29</td>
<td>ASSETS, ASSET BUILDING, AND REFORM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May 4/6</td>
<td>Strategy Memo Due (By Noon)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I: INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION: WHY A POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT?
Overview of Major Themes

Tracy Kidder, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*

Ross Coggins, *The Development Set* [Blackboard]
Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to write about Africa,” *Granta* 92: The View from Africa
www.granta.com/extracts/2615

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]

Ivan Illich, “To Hell With Good Intentions” [Blackboard]
Peter Singer, “Singer Solution to World Poverty” [Blackboard]
Dale Jamieson, “Duties to the Distant,” [Blackboard]


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, and/or 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 philosophical 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, Des Gaspar, among others.
WEEK 2: THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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

Duncan Green, *From Poverty to Power, Parts 1 and 2* (pp. 2-105) [no précis]

Ben Friedman, *Moral Consequences of Economic Growth* [Blackboard]*

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Introduction and Chapter 2*

Salbina Alkire *Conceptual Overview of Human Development: Definitions, Critiques, and Related Concepts, Background Paper to HDR 2010* [Blackboard] *


Diana Mitlin, Sam Hickey and Anthony Bebbington, “Reclaiming development? NGOs and the challenge of alternatives,” *Global Poverty Working Group* WPS-043

Gilbert Rist in *Development in Practice* [Blackboard]@

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

For further reading:  
If you want to follow up on the “post-development” perspective, see Wolfgang Sachs, *Development: The Rise and Decline of an Ideal* Wuppertal Institute Paper #108 (August 2000)  

WEEK 3: HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

Tues Section: Jared Diamond, Guns, Germs, and Steel [Blackboard]
Thurs Section: David Landes, The Wealth of Nations [Blackboard]

Paul Collier, The Bottom Billion, Chapter 3 “Natural Resource Trap” and Chapter 4 “Landlocked with Bad Neighbors” and pp. 140-146


Jeffrey Sachs, “Institutions Matter, But Not For Everything” [Blackboard]

For further reading:

WEEK 4: CULTURE

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]

Raymond Fisman and Ted Miguel, “Nature or Nurture: Understanding the Culture of Corruption,” in *Economic Gangsters* [Blackboard]

Ted Miguel Tribe or Nation? [Blackboard]

David Brooks

Tostan [BB]

**For further reading:**

**WEEK 5 Catch Up Week (Op-eds, PAE, Debates)**

**WEEK 6: MARKETS AND GOVERNANCE**

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

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

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


James Robinson, [Blackboard]
Duncan Green, *From Poverty to Power*, Part 3 (pp. 107-196).

*For further reading:*

**WEEK 7: STATE BUILDING (October 15)**


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


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

*For further reading:*
RECALL FROM INSTITUTIONS...

Dani Rodrik, “Good-Bye Washington Consensus, Hello Washington Confusion?”
http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~drodrik/Lessons%20of%20the%201990s%20review%20_JEL_.pdf

Peter Evans, Developmental State for the 21st Century
Optional: For more, see Peter Evans, chapter in Haggard and Kaufman, [Blackboard] and for a 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”)

Gavin Williams et al, Development Policy Review (2009), Politics and Growth [BB]

Ha Joon Chang, Bad Samaritans (TBA)

Duncan Green, From Poverty to Power, Part 5 (pp. 197-290)

For Further Reading:

WEEK 9 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

Fareed Zakaria, Illiberal Democracy, Foreign Affairs November/December 1997
[http://www.fareedzakaria.com/articles/other/democracy.html]

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, Chapter 6


For further reading:


### II. POLITICS OF POVERTY AND POLICY REFORM

**WEEK 10: POLITICS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

*Review* Duncan Green, *From Poverty to Power, Part 1* (pp. 2-105) and Read Annex, How Change Happens (pp. 431-444).

Michael Clemens, *The Biggest Idea in Development That No One Really Tried* [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bB1hRNMGdbQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bB1hRNMGdbQ)


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

Joan Nelson, (TBA)

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapter 4

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

Anuradha Joshi *Rude Accountability* [Blackboard]
For more reading:


WEEK 11: **ENGENDERING DEVELOPMENT: SEX, GENDER, POLITICS, AND DEVELOPMENT** (November 12)

For reference:

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

Regular Reading

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


Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapter 8

Skim: Helena Hofbauer Balmori, BRIDGE, Gender and Budgets, [http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/cep-budgets-report.pdf](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/cep-budgets-report.pdf),
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 12: Rights-Based Approaches to Development


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

Peter Uvin, TBA

Rights-Based Development: Bangladesh Case [BB]
WEEK 13: VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND SOCIAL SECTOR REFORM

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

NEGP Case

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


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


Banerjee et al, Education Reform in India

Haiti Case (Materials TBD)

For further reading:

WEEK 14: ASSET BUILDING AND ASSET REFORM (December 10)

Roy Prosterman, *Land reform* [Blackboard]

Elinor Ostrom, *Commons, Science* [Blackboard]


Bina Agarwal, *Land Reform* [Blackboard]

*For more reading:*

**Final Papers Due – Due 5 PM December 22 to Jessica Holmes (Jessica.holmes@nyu.edu)**