Instructor Information

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Course Information

- Class Meeting Times: Selected Fridays, 9 am – 1:45 pm
  (February 7, 21; March 6, 27; April 10, 24)
- Class Location: 60 Fifth Avenue, Room 161

Course Description

International development assistance has evolved considerably in the post WWII period. Although some of the early development agencies are still operating and remain influential, the way they function has evolved and important new players have entered the field. This course provides an overview of contemporary debates in international development assistance with a selective review of the major actors—multilateral, bilateral, and nongovernmental. The course explores the political economy of donor-client country relationships, the key accountability challenges that have emerged as aid has evolved, and the link between accountability and aid effectiveness. Particular emphasis is given to recent development assistance approaches and mechanism that have attempted to bridge the accountability-effectiveness divide. The course closes with consideration of the possible future shape of development assistance.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, participants will:

1. Understand the evolution and goals of international development assistance;
2. Be familiar with the main actors—both traditional and more recent--involved in providing development assistance;
3. Have an awareness of the political economy dynamics surrounding development assistance, including donor-client and donor-donor relationships;
4. Possess a working knowledge of key issues, debates and proposals related to improving aid accountability and effectiveness;
5. Be able to think pragmatically and constructively about the future of development assistance.

Prerequisites

In order to take the course, students are generally expected to have previously taken:

1) Microeconomics for Public Management, Planning and Policy Analysis (CORE-GP 1018); and
2) Introduction to Public Policy (CORE-GP 1022) or History and Theory of Urban Planning (URPL-GP 2660) or equivalent

Those without these prerequisites can enroll in the course with the permission of the instructors. It would also be helpful if students have taken Institutions, Governance and International Development (PADM-GP 2201) and a prior course in the politics, sociology, economics, or management of development, but these are not required.

Format

The class will meet six times during the semester. The sessions are long, but there will be a break and a mixture of approaches. The format will blend lecture (with occasional guest speakers), discussion and in-class exercises. In the first classes, we will cover two topics, and in the next three classes only a single topic. Class participation is encouraged and expected.

The last session of the course will involve student presentations on a range of case studies of development assistance and a closing synthetic discussion.

Readings

There is one book we will use for the course (primarily for Part V, class of April 10).


You can access the book at Bobst Library (electronic and hard copy versions), or purchase it online (electronic or paperback version) for under $25.

In addition, there is one useful book we recommend if you do not have a background in development assistance or want a refresher. It is not up to date (2009), but it is the only volume we know of that systematically covers the history of a range of difference development agencies:

This volume is available online in both print and electronic form for $15-$25. We posted an excerpt on NYU Classes for Part I (the class of February 7). If you want to read more, you will have to buy the volume.

*Required readings are provided on the NYU Classes course site or can be downloaded from website links provided in the reading list.* In some cases, the links are to videos or podcasts.

At the end of the syllabus is an extensive supplemental list of optional readings—a mix of older and more recent—provided as a resource for those who wish to consult them. These are organized under headings. These supplementary readings are not posted on NYU Classes.

**Course Requirements**

The course has three requirements:

1) **Class Attendance and Participation** (20%)  

The success of the course depends on regular attendance and active participation by all class members. The participants are expected to do the readings in advance of each class. That means coming prepared to engage the class with questions and/or critiques and/or comments related to the readings.

Please note that the attendance requirement is subject to NYU’s Policy on Religious Holidays ([https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html))

2) **Midterm Exam** (30%)  

The midterm exam (take-home) will assess your basic knowledge and ability to think critically about the material covered in the first part of the course. It will be administered after the third class meeting on March 6th.

The exam will be distributed prior to the March 6th class so that you can ask questions about it in class, and **it will be due on March 13th before spring break.**

3) **Case Study** (50%: 20% small team presentation and 30% individual paper)  

The main assignment for this course requires students working in small teams to prepare a presentation (20 minutes) on a case study that analyzes the history, dynamics, and future possibilities of one of the following:
• The relationship between one development partner (multilateral, bilateral, NGO, etc.) and one recipient country: What is the nature of the relationship? How did it evolve and why? What are its implications for aid effectiveness? Where might it go in the future?

• Development assistance in a particular area (public sector reform or an aspect thereof), a public service sector (education, health, infrastructure, etc.), or some dimension of governance (civil society empowerment, justice, etc.): What is the nature of the assistance and how has it evolved? Which factors allowed change over time? How successful were the efforts and why?

• Efforts to reform a particular development partner—or one of its specific departments or programs: Which actors animated the reform efforts (insiders, outsiders, recipients, a mix)? How successful have they been? How sustainable are they likely to be? What were the political, policy, and/or management dimensions of change?

Teams must prepare a one-page abstract of their topic by March 27th, and the topic must be discussed and finalized with the instructors by April 10th. The presentations will take place in the final class meeting on April 24th.

In addition to the presentation, each team member will prepare an individual final paper of up to ten pages on an aspect of the team topic, or with permission of the instructors, another topic. An individual paper based on a presentation should go beyond/build on what is covered in the presentation. The deadline for submission is May 15th.

More details on each of the assignments will be provided in advance of when it is due.

Assignment Format and Submission:

All assignments should be written on Times New Roman size 12, doubled-spaced lines (not 1.5), with one-inch margins all around. Please submit them as a Word document via the Assignments tab on NYU Classes.

Please remember to include on all of your assignments your Wagner mailbox number (if you do not have one write “No Wagner mailbox”) at the top of the paper and use the following convention to name your submitted files: DAAAE [Last name][Assignment].docx, e.g. DAAAEAlvarezExam.docx

Grading Policy

The course follows the NYU Wagner policy guidelines on academic honesty, grading and incompletes. It is the personal responsibility of course participants to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Please see the NYU Wagner Student Portal for information on the academic code and grading policy, including incompletes (you need to be logged in to access these links).
Late Policy

Please note that extensions on assignment due dates will be granted only in an emergency or if requested in advance for well justified reasons. This policy is adopted out of respect to those who have abided by deadlines, despite having hectic and complex schedules. Assignments handed in late without approved extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per day.

Useful Websites

Some of our readings are drawn from the large universe of development assistance related websites. Many of these regularly update information and provide data, commentary and blogs.

Additional sites that may be of interest to you include the following:

Aid Data: [http://www.aiddata.org](http://www.aiddata.org)
Bank Information Center: [https://bankinformationcenter.org](https://bankinformationcenter.org)
The Brookings Institution: [https://www.brookings.edu/topic/global-development/](https://www.brookings.edu/topic/global-development/)
Center for Global Development: [http://www.cgdev.org/](http://www.cgdev.org/)
Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: [http://effectivecooperation.org](http://effectivecooperation.org)
Government Accountability Project (International): [http://whistleblower.org/international](http://whistleblower.org/international)
International Aid Transparency Initiative: [http://www.aidtransparency.net](http://www.aidtransparency.net)
Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network: [http://www.modernizeaid.net](http://www.modernizeaid.net)
ONE: [https://www.one.org/international/](https://www.one.org/international/)
The Reality of Aid: [http://www.realityofaid.org/](http://www.realityofaid.org/)

This glossary of aid effectiveness terms may also be useful:


Additional links to specific development agencies and other development assistance actors are provided in the supplemental reading list.
PADM-GP 2204: Development Assistance, Accountability and Aid Effectiveness

Course Schedule Spring 2020

PART I (February 7)

- The Evolution of Development Assistance Frameworks, Priorities and Approaches
  - A. Overview of Development Assistance Trends, Mainstream Actors, and Key Modalities
  - B. The Political Economy of Development Assistance: Opportunities and Challenges

PART II (February 21)

- The Changing Landscape of Development Assistance: New Actors and Frameworks

PART III (March 6)

- Responses to the New Landscape: The Paris, Busan, Addis, and 2030 Agendas and Beyond

Midterm Exam Distributed March 4, Due March 13

PART IV (March 27)

- A Closer Look at the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: Evaluations, Results, and Performance

PART V: (April 10)

- Country Experiences in Context: Unpacking the Donor-Recipient Relationship

PART VI (April 24)

- Development Assistance Reform Options and Possibilities
  - A. Participant Presentations
  - B. Synthesis and Looking Forward

Final Papers due May 15
New York University  
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service  

Development Assistance, Accountability and Aid Effectiveness  

PADM-GP 2204  
Spring 2020  
John Gershman &  
Paul Smoke  

Reading List*  

I: The Evolution of Development Assistance Frameworks, Priorities and Approaches (February 7)  

A. Overview of Development Assistance Trends, Mainstream Actors, and Key Modalities  

*Arjan de Haan. How the Aid Industry Works: An Introduction to International Development (Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2009). (This is optional reading for those without much background on development assistance or who wish to review the basics).  


**United Nations. About the Sustainable Development Goals 2018. Browse the site or watch the short video (we will talk more about the SDGs later in the course):  


**Center for Global Development. Commitment to Development Index (CDI). (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2018).  
https://www.cgdev.org/commitment-development-index-2018  

* The readings are marked with an “*” if they are posted on NYU Classes, and “**” if they must be downloaded using the indicated link (to papers, blogs, podcasts or videos).
B. The Political Economy of Development Assistance: Opportunities and Challenges


II: The Changing Landscape of Development Assistance: New Actors and Frameworks (February 21)


**Gerda Asmus, Andreas Fuchs, and Angelika Müller. “BRICS and Foreign Aid.” AidData Working Paper No. 43. (Williamsburg, VA: AidData, Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, College of William and Mary, 2017).**

**Yun Sun, "One year on, the role of the China International Development Cooperation Administration remains cloudy," Brookings Institution April 30, 2019 https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/04/30/one-year-on-the-role-of-the-china-international-development-cooperation-administration-remains-cloudy/**

**III: Responses to the New Landscape: Paris, Busan, Addis, Post-2015 Agendas and Beyond** (March 6)


IV: A Closer Look at the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: Evaluations, Results, and Performance (March 27)


*Lawrence Camp and Amanda Fernandez, *Pay-for-Results in Development: A Primer for Practitioners* (USAID And Palladium, 2017).


*Samantha Custer, Matthew DiLorenzo, Takaaki Masaki, Tanya Sethi, Ani Harutyunyan, *Listening to Leaders 2018: Is Development Cooperation Tuned-In or Tone Deaf?* (AidData May 2018) Read Executive Summary. Full report is posted on NYU Classes for those interested.
V: Country Experiences in Context: Unpacking the Donor-Recipient Relationship (April 10)


*Stephen Klingebiel et. al. “Where Tradition Meets Public Sector Innovation: A Rwandan Case Study for Results-Based Approaches.” *Third World Quarterly.* Published online 2019.

Background on Selected Cases (Information on focal readings will be provided in advance)


**Council for the Development of Cambodia. Aid Management in Cambodia (Skim only).**


VI: Synthesis and Looking Forward: Development Assistance Reform Options and Possibilities (April 24)

A. Participant Presentations

Materials on student presentations will be posted on NYU Classes prior to the class meeting.

B. The Future of Development Assistance

The following readings are not required, but most (except books) are posted on NYU Classes and you may wish to browse some of them prior to the final class meeting or at another time.


*Andrew Rogerson. What if Development Aid were Truly Catalytic? (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2011).

*Heiner Janus, Stephan Klingebiel, and Sebastian Paulo. "Beyond Aid" and Future Development Cooperation. (Bonn: German Development Institute, 2014).
*Ben Ramalingan, Miguel Laric and John Primrose. *From Best Fit to Best Practice: Understanding and Navigating Wicked Problems in International Development.* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2014).


SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS AND RESOURCES

I. General Development Assistance and Aid System Reform Readings


David Stuckler and Sanjay Basu, Six Concerns About Data in the (Dead) Aid Debate (Oxford: Global Economics Governance Program, Center for International Development, Oxford University, 2010)


Helen Tilley and Heidoi Tavakoli. *Better Aid Modalities: Are We Risking Real Results?* (London, Overseas Development Institute, 2012). Focus on pp. 1-6, read more as you like.

**II. Development Assistance Modalities**


*Leni Wild, David Booth and Craig Valters, *Putting Theory into Practice: How DFID is Doing Development Differently*, ([London: Overseas Development Institute, 2017].

**III. Development Assistance Actors**

**A. Multilaterals: International Financial Institutions**

All of the major international finance institutions have websites. The following can be consulted for an overview of each agency:

International Monetary Fund: [http://www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)
Asian Development Bank: [http://www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org)
Caribbean Development Bank: [http://www.caribank.org](http://www.caribank.org)
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development: http://www.ebrd.com/
Inter-American Development Bank: http://www.iadb.org/en/
Islamic Development Bank: https://www.isdb-pilot.org/


**D. Bilateral Development Agencies: DAC and Emerging**

Most bilateral development agencies have websites. A few key agencies include the following:


Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC): [https://www.mcc.gov/](https://www.mcc.gov/)


**E. NGOs, Foundations, and Peer-to-Peer Assistance**

Many nongovernmental actors involved in development assistance have websites, including:

Gates Foundation: [http://www.gatesfoundation.org](http://www.gatesfoundation.org)
Bloomberg Philanthropies: [https://www.bloomberg.org/](https://www.bloomberg.org/)
Ford Foundation: [https://www.fordfoundation.org](https://www.fordfoundation.org)
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria: [http://www.theglobalfund.org](http://www.theglobalfund.org)
Interaction: [http://www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org)
Bond: [http://www.bond.org.uk](http://www.bond.org.uk)
Ashoka Foundation: [http://www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org)


**IV. Political Economy**


Tony Killick, Aid and the Political Economy of Policy Change (London, Overseas Development Institute, 1998).


V. Defining and Measuring Aid Effectiveness


Javier Pereira and Carlos Villota. *Hitting the Target: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Results-Based Approaches to Aid* (Brussels: European Network on Debt and Development, 2012).


