Instructor Information

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Course Information

- Class Meeting Times: Selected Fridays, 9 am – 1:00 pm
  (January 26; February 9, 23; March 8; April 5, 19)
- Class Location: 7 E. 12th Street, Room 127

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 and the modalities they use 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 development partners. The course explores the political economy of donor-client country relationships, the key accountability challenges that have emerged as development assistance 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. We also consider how major global crises, such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, have affected demands on development assistance and how they operate. The course closes with a discussion of the possible future directions and approaches of development assistance.
Course Objectives

By the end of the course, participants will:

1. Understand the goals and evolution 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 development assistance.

Prerequisites

There are no specific prerequisites, but it would be useful to have taken the core Wager economics and policy courses: Microeconomics (CORE-GP 1018); and Introduction to Public Policy (CORE-GP 1022) or History and Theory of Urban Planning (URPL-GP 2660). It would also be helpful to have taken Institutions, Governance, and International Development (PADM-GP 2201) and a prior course in the politics, economics, or management of development.

Format

The class will meet six times on Friday mornings 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 class, we will cover two topics, and in the next four 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 (for Part V, class of April 5).


You can access the book at Bobst Library (electronic and hard copy versions) or purchase it online. The publisher sells the eBook version for $17.99 and the paperback version for $26.95. The paperback version (new) has been on sale at Amazon recently for as little as $10.25.

In addition, there is a useful book we recommend if you do not have a development assistance background or want a refresher. We know of no other volume (it is the second edition of the 2009 original) that systematically covers the history of a range of development agencies as well:

The first two chapters are posted under the Syllabus tab in Brightspace. The full volume is available electronically at Bobst Library (you can download individual chapters), and you can order it online from the publisher for $28.50 (eBook or paperback). At the moment only the 2009 edition seems to be available on Amazon.

*Primary readings are posted on the Brightspace course site or can be downloaded from website links provided in the reading list.* In some cases, the links are to blogposts, videos, or podcasts. **The number of readings for some weeks may seem excessive, but please keep in mind a few things.** First in this intensive format, each class meeting is covering the equivalent of approximately two and a third weekly sessions of a normal Wagner course. Second, some readings listed are long reports and you are only expected to read the executive summary or certain sections. Third, not all of the readings need to be read with the same level of care—some only need to be skimmed to get a sense of the main messages—we will provide guidance on priority readings in advance of each class session.

An extensive supplemental list of optional readings is provided in a separate file. It includes a mix of older and more recent materials (organized under headings) provided as a resource for those who wish to consult them. The supplementary readings are not posted on Brightspace.

**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

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

The midterm exam (take-home) will assess basic knowledge and ability to think critically about the material covered through the third-class session (February 23rd). The exam will be distributed prior to the February 23rd class so that you can ask questions about it in class, and it will be due before spring break on March 15th.

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

The main assignment for this course requires students (working in small teams—usually two or three—or individually by permission) to prepare a class 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 for a particular area (public sector reform or an aspect thereof), a service sector (education, health, infrastructure, etc.), or some dimension of governance (justice, civil society, 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?

You are expected to prepare a one-page abstract of your topic by March 29th, and the topic must be discussed and finalized with the instructors by April 5th. The presentations will take place in the final class meeting on April 19th.

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 10th.

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 Brightspace and use the following convention to name your submitted files: DAAAE Surname Assignment.docx, e.g. DAAAE Surname Midterm Exam.docx

Grading Policy

The course follows the NYU Wagner policy guidelines on academic honesty, grading and incompletes. It is the 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).

Academic Code: https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code
Grading: https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/grading
Incompletes: https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/incompletes

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. All of the main development assistance organizations—multilateral agencies (e.g., the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Commission, and the regional development banks); bilateral agencies (e.g. the US Agency for International Development and other individual country development agencies), and a range of major nongovernmental organizations and foundations—have good websites that provide useful data, commentary, blogs, and publications. These are updated regularly.

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

- Aid Data: http://www.aiddata.org
- Bank Information Center: https://bankinformationcenter.org
- Bretton Woods Project: http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/
- The Brookings Institution: https://www.brookings.edu/topic/global-development/
- Center for Global Development: http://www.cgdev.org/
- DeveX: https://www.deveX.com/en/
- Focus 2030: https://focus2030.org/en
- Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: https://www.effectivecooperation.org/
- Government Accountability Project (International): http://whistleblower.org/international
- International Aid Transparency Initiative: https://iatistandard.org/en/
- International Initiative for Impact Evaluation: http://www.3ieimpact.org/
- Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network: http://www.modernizeaid.net/
- OECD Development Cooperation Directorate: http://www.oecd.org/dac/
- ONE: https://www.one.org/international/
- Overseas Development Institute: http://www.odi.org/
- Publish What You Fund: http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/
- The Reality of Aid: http://www.realityofaid.org/
- Thinking and Working Politically Community of Practice: https://twpcommunity.org

This glossary of aid effectiveness terms on the OECD Development Assistance Committee website may also be useful:

http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/aideffectivenessglossary.htm

Additional links to specific development agencies and other development assistance actors are provided in various readings in the syllabus and the supplemental reading list, both of which are posted on the Brightspace course site.
PADM-GP 2204: Development Assistance, Accountability and Aid Effectiveness

Course Schedule Spring 2024

PART I (January 26)

- 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 9)

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

PART III (February 23)

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

Midterm Exam: Distributed February 23rd and Due March 15th

PART IV (March 8)

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

PART V: (April 5)

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

PART VI (April 19)

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

Final Papers due May 10th
New York University
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

PADM-GP 2204: Development Assistance, Accountability and Aid Effectiveness

PADM-GP 2204                        John Gersham &
Spring 2024                           Paul Smoke

Reading List*

I: The Evolution of Development Assistance Frameworks, Priorities and Approaches (January 26)

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


**United Nations. The Sustainable Development Goals. (Browse the site as desired or watch the short video—we will talk more about the SDGs later in the course). New York: UN website.


**Center for Global Development. Commitment to Development Index (CDI). (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2023). (Skim material as desired).


* Readings marked with an “*” are posted on Brightspace, and “**” if they must be downloaded or accessed using the embedded link (to papers, blogs, podcasts, or videos). In some cases, the materials are available in both formats.
B. The Political Economy of Development Assistance: Opportunities and Challenges


**Sarah Rose, *Optimism and Advice for Advancing USAID’s Vision for Locally-led Development: A Conversation with Randy Tift,* Washington, DC: Center for Global Development November 2021

II: The Changing Landscape of Development Assistance: New Actors and Frameworks (February 9)


*Peace Direct. *Time to Decolonize Aid.* London and Washington DC, 2020) (Read Executive Summary and in order of priority Chapters 3, 5, 6, and 7 and full report if desired)


**Center for Global Development, *Development Futures: Reforming the Multilateral Development Banks*, October 23, 2023

** Overseas Development Institute, *Trends and Disruptors in Multilateral Finance: Looking Ahead with the AIIB.* London: ODI, November 4, 2022
Rethinking Humanitarianism Podcast, Solange Baptiste and Jonathan Glennie, “Can Global Public Investment Replace Aid Financing as We Know It?” November 2, 2022; For more details read Expert Working Group on Public Investment, Building a Better System: Making Global Public Investment a Reality (July 2022).

*Samantha Custer et al. Corridors of Power: How Beijing Uses Economic, Social, and Network Ties to Exert Influence along the Silk Road. Williamsburg, VA: AidData, December 2021. (Focus on chapters 1-2, 5, and 6).


**Lihuan Zou and Ziyi Ma, After a Decade of Fossil Fuel Investing, Can China Fulfill Its Promise of a "Green" Belt and Road Initiative? Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, October 2023.

III: Responses to the New Landscape: Paris, Busan, Addis, Post-2015 Agendas and Beyond (February 23)


**OECD DAC. The High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness: A History. Briefly skim Rome, Paris, Accra, and Busan declarations to get a sense of their content and linkages).


IV: A Closer Look at the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: Evaluations, Results, and Performance (March 8)

**OECD. Evaluation Systems in Development Co-operation. (Paris: OECD, 2016). (Read Chapter 2 and skim as desired.)


*Christina Kükenshöner and Sarah Thomas, “Results-based Financing Peer Analysis,” Bonn: KfW Development Bank, 2023. (Read Executive Summary and Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 in that order of priority).


**Ian Mitchell, et. al., The Quality of Official Development Assistance, (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2021. Full interactive QuODA results are at QuODA.CGDev.org


**Dirk Jan-Koch, Foreign Aid and Its Unintended Consequences London: London School of Economics. (Watch first 43 minutes, and discussion and Q&A if you so desire).

V: Country Experiences in Context: Unpacking the Donor-Recipient Relationship (April 5)


*Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments. Towards the Localization of the SDGs. (Barcelona: United Cities and Local Governments, 2021). (Read pp. 8-17 and skim as desired).

Background on Selected Cases (Information on any focal readings will be provided in advance if we use these cases in class, which will depend on potential visiting speakers)


VI: Synthesis and Looking Forward: Development Assistance Reform Options and Possibilities (April 19)

A. Participant Presentations

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

B. The Future of Development Assistance

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


*Jonathan Glennie, Global Public Investment: Five Paradigm Shifts for a New Era of Aid. (Amsterdam: Joep Lange Institute, 2019).


*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).


*David Booth and Sue Unsworth, Politically Smart, Locally Led Development (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2014).


