

ANTHROPOLOGY 3501.10
Anthropology of Development
Summer I 2010
The George Washington University

Mon/Wed 6h10-8h20pm
(2110 G St (HAH)-Room 202)

Instructor:

Professor Stephen Lubkemann
Office hours: by appointment
Tel. 202 994-4191 or 443 822-4341
E-mail SL02@GWU.EDU

Course Description and Objectives:

Since World War II international aid has come to play a growing and increasingly visible role in global interactions, in particular between industrialized societies and those designated variously as undeveloped, underdeveloped, and/or in development. Drawing on anthropological approaches this course will examine development as a historically constituted discourse, as a social practice motivated and constrained by political-economic imperatives at various levels, and as a socially and culturally mediated experience. It will critically examine some of the fundamental assumptions that have informed the emergence of development as an idea and of the "aid industry". The course will explore how different paradigms of development have influenced how states and other social actors act in the present in order to conceptualize the future and implement change. The course will also examine how development discourse powerfully shapes the understandings that different societies have of each other and their interactions in our globalizing context.

The course addresses three major themes: 1-Development as a Political Practice, 2-Development as a Socio-Cultural Practice and Social Experience; and 3-Key Current Issues and Approaches in Development.

Theme 1 of the course will review the history of development as a practice that has been intimately linked to and informed by the political project of the nation-state, the nation-state's emergence as the globally predominant form of political form, and rooted in a long history of global social and economic relations that extends back to the colonial era. We will also explore the power of "development" as an ideological and cultural construct that plays a powerful role in recalibrating the aspirations and expectations of social groups in a highly unequal world. Finally this section will also begin to examine how "development problems" have been constituted to emphasize certain realities while de-emphasizing or ignoring others--and will explore some of the political reasons for, and effects of, such conceptualizations.

Theme 2 of the course will focus on how development assistance is actually practiced "on the ground" as a form of social interaction and how it is reacted to by different actors as a form of social experience. It will explore the factors that influence both development practitioners and those who experience development including: the changing political-economy of international and state/society relations; "industry-wide", organization-specific, and individual interests; local socio-cultural dynamics; and differences in social power.

Theme/Section 3 of the course will take up several key and cutting edge issues in contemporary development practice. Among the issues that will be explored will be: the increasingly important relationship between development and political conflict worldwide; the growing role of diasporas in homeland development; the effects of the neo-liberal emphasis on "privatization" that increasingly guides development policy; the emergence of "rule of law" and other forms of overtly "political development"; and human-rights based as well as other "post-development" critiques and approaches.

The purpose of this course is not to learn the technical aspects of implementing development projects nor a set of vocational development skills. Rather, it examines what development is as a major force that shapes global affairs and local lives; how it has emerged and functioned as a dominant ideology; and why it has so often failed to achieve so many of its stated objectives, while nevertheless having profound and far-reaching social, political and economic effects.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

As a result of completing this course students will be able to:

1. Discuss the effects of development on several key processes of global importance (including conflict, corruption, political governance, displacement and migration).
2. Discuss the factors that inform how development actors and organizations frame and approach development problems
3. Discuss how culture shapes interactions between development organizations and affects development outcomes
4. Discuss the broad history of development inclusive of major paradigmatic changes in approach and conceptualization
5. Demonstrate an ability to critically relate arguments and data from different sources to each other, in order to analyze an overarching question to which all of these sources are relevant.
6. Review and synthesize an argument from a major fieldwork-base study and --in collaboration with peers--present that argument in public based on a distillation and critical review of its essential points;
7. Use key anthropological concepts (such as "culture") and analytical approaches to critically explore a particular aspect of development based on a review of articles or other studies that report data from anthropological fieldwork.

Requirements:

Pre-requisites: at least one prior course in Socio-Cultural Anthropology or prior approval by the instructor.

Reading: Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the readings in class if they are called upon by the instructor. Plan carefully for time to complete reading and their assignments so that you do not fall behind. Students who regularly miss class will quickly find themselves unable to do the assignments.

Assignments

Short Reading Reflection and Synthesis Papers (2): Two times during the semester, students will be required to submit a short paper (approximately 1000-1500 words) that shows careful consideration of how assigned readings relate to each other. The topic for each paper will be provided by the instructor. Each paper is worth 25% of your grade.

In class participation: Criteria for evaluation to be discussed in class (15% of grade)

*Annotated Bibliography and Review Essay-*Each student will prepare a final project for the class that will focus on a development topic or question of interest to them (e.g. "How does the practice of development affect human rights?", "Who should speak for 'local communities' in development projects?", "How do HIV/AIDS mitigation programs account for gender and culture?"; "To what extent do justice reform programs account for local realities and cultural beliefs? etc...). Each student will create an annotated bibliography of at least 10 different articles, at least 8 of which must be by anthropologists or in anthropology journals or publications that are relevant to their topic and write a short accompanying essay (2000 word minimum) that addresses a question they pose. This assignment will be worth 35% of your grade.

Grading: 2 Critical Reading Reflection and Synthesis papers -----50% (25 each%)
 Class participation-----15%
 Annotated Bibliography and short essay-----35%

Grading Scale Scale: 90-100 (A); 80-89 (B); 70-79 (C); 65-69 (D); 64> (F)

Class Policies:

On Attendance: Students are expected to regularly attend classes. Absence for religious holidays is allowed, providing you notify the instructor by e-mail (request return confirmation) of intended absences during the first week of classes.

On Submitting Assignments:

1. All papers are due at the start of class on the day they are due in HARDCOPY format. Papers will NOT be accepted by e-mail. The only exception to this is the Final Assignment which must be sent by e-mail AND in hard copy format.
2. Late papers will not be accepted. If you have a conflict that prevents you from being in class on the day a paper is due it is your responsibility to make sure the paper reaches the instructor in hard copy format by the beginning of class. Late papers will receive a failing grade.

Required Texts:

Scott, James 1998. Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes To Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Mercer, Claire, Ben Page and Martin Evans. 2008. Development and the African Diaspora. London: Zed Books

Uvin, Peter 1998. Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

Ferguson, James 1994. The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, De-Politicization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Rist, Gilbert.2008. The History of Development (3rd Edition).London: Zed Books

Mosse, David. 2004. Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice. London: Pluto Press.

Rahman, Aminur 1999. Women and Microcredit in Rural Bangladesh:N Anthropological Study of Grameen Bank Lending. Westview Press.

Course Schedule:

WEEK 1	5/16	<i>Introduction to Development and scope of course/organizational issues</i>
	5/18	<i>The Historical Arc of Development Theory</i> Pages 1-170 in Rist, Gilbert. 2002. <u>The History of Development</u> .London: Zed Books
WEEK 2	5/23	<i>The "Development Optic"</i> Chapters 1-4, 7,9 in Scott 1998. <u>Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes To Improve the Human Condition Have Failed</u> . New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
	5/25	<i>Culture as a factor in Development</i> (Chapters 1, 4-5 in Ferguson, James 1994. <u>The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, De-Politicization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho</u> . Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
WEEK 3	5/30	<i>Memorial Day-no class</i>
	6/1	<i>Organizational and Political Imperatives of Practice</i> (Chapters 2,3,6,7,9 in Ferguson, James 1994. <u>The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, De-Politicization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho</u> .
WEEK 4	6/6	<i>Failures in the Extreme: Development and Conflict</i> Chapters 1, 4-7 in Uvin, P. 1998. <u>Aiding Violence:The Development Enterprise in Rwanda</u> . (6/6) READING SYNTHESIS PAPER 1 due
	6/8	<i>Successes Re-examined: Gender and Microcredit</i> Chapters 1,4-7 in A. Rahman. 1999. <u>Women and Microcredit in Rural Bangladesh</u> .

WEEK 5 6/13 *Development's Futures*
Pages 171-265 in Rist, Gilbert, 2002. The History of Development. London: Zed Books

6/15 *Another Theoretical Synthesis of Practice: Development as a socio-technical assemblage*
Mosse, Cultivating Development

WEEK 6 6/20 *Future Trends and Themes: Development and Diaspora*
Chapters 3-10 in C. Mercer et al. Development and the African Diaspora
(6/20) READING SYNTHESIS PAPER 2 DUE in CLASS

6/22 *Human Rights and the Rule of Law*
Readings TBA

6/28 **FINAL ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ESSAY DUE (by noon to Lubkemann e-mail)**