

# Comparative Political Economy of Development

[Seminar date, time, and location]

Professor: Diana Greenwald  
Office Hours: XXX [link to sign-up]  
Email: XXX

## Course Description

The study of political economy focuses on how political institutions and phenomena affect economic outcomes, and how economic factors influence political institutions and phenomena. Comparative political economy studies these processes in comparative context: whether we are comparing across countries, across regions within the same country, or over time. Development refers to how countries, societies, or economies achieve prosperity and well-being. In this course, we will use a comparative political economy approach to understand some of the most important topics in development. We will examine arguments in the existing literature about the relationships between democracy, inequality and economic development; the role of foreign aid and natural resources in political and economic development; the legacies of colonialism; and economic theories of civil conflict, among other things. Over the course of the semester, we will become acquainted with various methods of causal inference and analysis, including both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

## Assessment

<u>Class attendance and participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
<u>Midterm exam</u>	<u>20%</u>
<u>Pop quizzes</u>	<u>30%</u>
<u>Final research project</u>	<u>40%</u>

1. 5% for topic approval
2. 10% for presentation
3. 25% for final paper

## Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. If you need to miss class for a religious observance that is not during a university holiday or vacation period, please contact me at least two weeks prior to the date. Absences due to illness or family emergency will be excused with appropriate documentation (i.e. doctor's note, flight/train/bus ticket, etc). You are permitted one unexcused absence over the course of the semester. Subsequently, all unexcused absences will result in a deduction from your class attendance and participation grade. Class participation will be defined holistically – it includes speaking in class, but also active participation in small group work and active listening to me and your peers.

Laptops are permitted in class, conditional on them being used exclusively for class purposes. If I observe laptops being used too much for e-mail, social media, or other non-class-related purposes, I will prohibit laptops from being used for the remainder of the semester. Don't be that person! If you find it hard to ignore internet distractions, I highly recommend downloading an app such as [Anti-Social](#), [StayFocusd](#), or [Freedom](#) that you can set to block or limit your access to certain websites – i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. – for certain periods of time. Anti-Social really helped me as a graduate student. Cell phone use is not permitted in class.

## **Readings**

Please consult the schedule below for the weekly assigned readings. I do not require you to purchase any books. I will provide electronic copies of all assigned chapters and journal articles on the course website. I will also place 1-2 copies of each assigned book on reserve at the library. (I will ensure all reserve copies of books are available during the week they are assigned and the week prior. All books will be available during the week prior to the mid-term.)

You are expected to have completed the readings in advance of our meeting. Most, but not all, of our material comes from scholarship in political science and economics. There are no prerequisite courses in math or statistics required; by the end of the course, all students should be adept consumers of social science research that features quantitative analysis. (I will highlight particular readings in advance that contain segments of highly technical analysis which you can skim.)

I have included reading questions below. Each class, I will ask one or two students at random to share their responses to the reading question. You do not need to write anything, but you might find it useful to start jotting down your thoughts after completing your reading. Don't worry if you didn't understand the question or some aspect of the readings – this is a great time to clarify. Mainly, this “cold calling” technique is a good way for us to start a conversation, and for me to check for basic reading comprehension. It is also good practice for those of you who wish to attend law school.

## **Pop Quizzes**

There will be three pop quizzes over the course of the semester. They will each take 10 minutes, will cover the readings assigned for that week only, and will be distributed at the beginning of class. No notes or books will be permitted. If you do not attend class on the day of a pop quiz, you will receive a zero grade on that quiz. (The only exception is for excused absences, for which we can arrange an alternative time for you to take a quiz.)

## **Midterm Exam**

We will have an in-class review session in advance of the midterm exam. The format of the midterm will consist of a combination of short answer (IDs) and longer essays. More details will be provided as the date approaches.

## Final Research Project

The final part of the course will be dedicated to your own research project. Your project will address a research question or puzzle that we have covered in class, or an approved question related to the comparative political economy of development. Your grade on this project will consist of four components: (1) an approved topic, submitted in advance; (2) quality feedback for your group members; (3) your in-class presentation; and (4) your final paper.

1. You must submit a 250-word summary of the topic for approval by me on [DATE] during Week 10.
2. During Week 13, you will be required to workshop your project in small groups of 5-7 students in class. Each member of the group will provide written feedback on the other members' projects. These can be submitted online through our course website.
3. During Weeks 14-15, you will present your research project in front of the full class for feedback. These presentations will be 10 minutes each, so practice summarizing your topic, its importance, what existing literature has shown, and your proposed research method succinctly and clearly. I will provide more details about how your presentation will be evaluated in advance of the date. Note: It is not expected that your papers will be completed at this point.
4. Your final paper is due on [DATE] – the university-scheduled day for our final exam. Papers should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. Expectations for the final paper will also be elaborated early in the semester so that you can get an early start on choosing your topic. In summary, I will expect a clear research question; a demonstrated command of the existing literature on the topic (based primarily on what we have read in the course); and a well-thought out research design for addressing the question. Strong papers will articulate how this study adds to our existing knowledge on the chosen topic. Very strong papers will begin to undertake some original analysis using open-source qualitative or quantitative data. Again, more details to follow.

## Office Hours and E-Mail

My office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus, along with a link to sign up for specific slots. I encourage you to come early and as frequently as needed to my office hours – sometimes questions or issues that arise in class or with the course material are best addressed one-on-one.

I will make every effort to respond to e-mail within 24 hours (or, if over the weekend, the next business day). There are two exceptions:

1. Emails sent less than 48 hours prior to the midterm, final presentation, or final paper due date are not guaranteed a response.
2. Questions sent via email whose answer is clearly stated on this syllabus are not guaranteed a response.

## Grade Grievances

If you believe a grade you have received is unfair or in error, you will need to do the following:

1. Wait 24 hours after received the grade before approaching me.
2. Within one week of receiving the grade, provide an explanation in writing for why the grade you received was unfair or in error and submit it with the quiz/exam. The entire quiz/exam will be re-graded. Note that this may raise or lower your grade.
3. If you believe that my response fails to address your claim of unfairness or error, you may petition the [insert name of office within political science department, e.g.]. You must convey in writing the basis for the complaint, with specific evidence in support of the argument that the grade either was given in error or was unfairly determined. This formal complaint also should summarize the outcome of the initial inquiry to the course instructor, indicating which aspects are in dispute. Within three weeks of the receipt of the petition, the [name of relevant office] will determine whether to convene the Undergraduate Affairs Committee, the student, and the instructor(s) for a formal hearing. Further details on this process are included at [link].

**[Insert Disability Accommodations Statement]**

**[Insert Student Mental Health and Well-Being Statement]**

**[Insert Academic Integrity Statement - Example below from the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA)]**

The LSA undergraduate academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. The College holds all members of its community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the College promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards of the College community cannot be tolerated. The College seeks vigorously to achieve compliance with its community standards of academic integrity. Violations of the standards will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action. Cheating, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct will result in a 0 for that assignment/exam and trigger the university protocol for academic misconduct.

## Reading and Assignment Schedule

### Week 1 – Development

- Michael Todaro and Stephen Smith. Economic Development. Chapters 1-2.
- “Overview” in [The Millenium Development Goals Report 2015](#). Pp. 4-9.
- [Speech](#) by World Bank President Dr. Jim Yong Kim to the Brookings Institution. 2012.
- Amartya Sen. Development as Freedom. Introduction & Chapter 1.
- William Easterly. The Elusive Quest for Growth. Chapters 1 & 2.

**Questions: What is “development”? What is its relationship to economic growth? Is development “political”? If so, how? If not, why not?**

### Week 2 – Poverty

- Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo. 2012. Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty. New York: PublicAffairs. Chapters 1 and 2.
- Amartya Sen. Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation. Chapter 1.
- Laurence Chandy and Geoffrey Gertz. 2011. [Poverty in Numbers: The Changing State of Global Poverty from 2005 to 2015](#). The Brookings Institution.
- Marco Gonzalez-Navarro and Climent Quintana-Domeque. 2016. “Paving Streets for the Poor: Experimental Analysis of Infrastructure Effects.” Review of Economics and Statistics 98(2): 254-267.

**Questions: How is poverty defined? What are some of the challenges with measuring poverty? What are some of the causes of poverty? Why has the share of the world’s population in poverty declined over the last 15 to 20 years?**

### Week 3 – Theories of the Role of the State

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. 2012. Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty. New York: Random House. Chapters 1 & 3.
- Atul Kohli. 2004. State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1, 2 & 3.

**Questions: How do Acemoglu and Robinson define “inclusive” versus “extractive” political and economic institutions? Would you describe South Korea’s political institutions under Park Chung Hee as inclusive or extractive? What about its economic institutions? Explain your answer.**

#### Week 4 – Pre-Colonial and Colonial Legacies

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. New York: Random House. Chapter 4.
- Mahmoud Mamdani. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Chapters 1 & 5.
- Robert H. Bates, John H. Coatsworth, and Jeffrey G. Williamson. 2007. “Lost Decades: Postindependence Performance in Latin America and Africa.” *The Journal of Economic History* 67(4): 917-943.
- Catherine Boone. 2013. *Property and political order: land rights and the structure of conflict in Africa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 & 2.
- James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. 2014 (unpublished). [“Does Contemporary Armed Conflict Have Deep Historical Roots?”](#)

**Questions: How do this week’s authors measure or evaluate the effects of history? What are some of the legacies of the colonial state on development?**

#### Weeks 5 & 6 – Democracy and Distribution

- Dahl, Robert. 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). *On Democracy*. Yale University Press. Chapters 4-5.
- Brian Min. 2015. *Power and the Vote: Elections and Electricity in the Developing World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 & 5.
- Michael Ross. 2006. “Is Democracy Good for the Poor?” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 860-874.
- Sarah Bracking. 2005. “Development Denied: Autocratic Militarism in post-election Zimbabwe.” *Review of African Political Economy* 32(104-5): 341-357.
- Lisa Blaydes and Mark Andreas Kayser. 2011. “Counting Calories: Democracy and Distribution in the Developing World.” *International Studies Quarterly* 55: 887-908.
- Nicolas van de Walle. *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*. Chapter 6.

**Questions: How does each author define democracy? What are the causal claims being evaluated in each of the readings? In your view, do democratic institutions necessarily produce positive economic development outcomes? Why or why not?**

#### Week 7 – REVIEW DAY + MIDTERM EXAM

## Week 8 – Oil and Natural Resources

- Jeffrey D. Sachs and Andrew M. Warner. 2001. “The curse of natural resources.” *European Economic Review* 45(4-6): 827-838.
- Michael Ross. 2012. *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 & 2.
- Stephen Haber and Victor Menaldo. 2011. “Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism? A Reappraisal of the Resource Curse.” *American Political Science Review* 105(1): 1-26.
- Todd C. Frankel. “[The Cobalt Pipeline](#).” *The Washington Post*. September 30 2016. [Read and watch/listen.]

**Questions:** What is the theory of the “resource curse”? What types of resources does it refer to, and what types of outcomes does it explain? For one of the readings (Sachs and Warner, Ross, or Haber and Menaldo), form a critique of their findings based on one of the concepts we have discussed in class (omitted variable bias, selection bias, simultaneity bias, failure to rule out an alternative mechanism, etc).

## Week 9 – Foreign Aid

- William Easterly. 2006. *The White Man’s Burden*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 2 & 8.
- Simeon Djankov, Jose G. Montalvo and Marta Reynal-Querol. 2008. “The curse of aid.” *Journal of Economic Growth* 13(3): 169-194.
- Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo. 2012. *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. New York: PublicAffairs. Chapter 3 & Chapter 7.
- Nicolas van de Walle. *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*. Chapter 5.

**Questions:** Is foreign aid a “curse” for poor countries? What is the purpose of aid conditionality? Can it achieve its desired outcomes? Why or why not?

## Week 10 – Gender, Ethnicity, and Development

- Esther Duflo. 2003. "Grandmothers and Granddaughters: Old-Age Pensions and Intra-household Allocation in South Africa." *World Bank Economic Review* 17(1): 1-25.
- Valentine M. Moghadam. 2005. *Globalizing Women: Transnational Feminist Networks*. Johns Hopkins University Press. Chapters 1, 3 & 8.
- Edward Miguel and Mary Kay Gugerty. 2005. "Ethnic diversity, social sanctions, and public goods in Kenya." *Journal of Public Economics* 89(11-12): 2325-2368.
- Ravi Kanbur, Prem Rajaram, and Ashutosh Varshney. 2011. "Ethnic Diversity and Ethnic Tensions: An Interdisciplinary Perspective" *World Development* 39(2): 147-158.

**Questions: How do conventional understandings of gender roles influence development? Draw on the Duflo and Moghadam readings. What is ethnicity? Why might diversity undermine public goods provision? According to Kanbur, Rajaram and Varshney, what could political scientists gain from approaching the issue of ethnicity using an interdisciplinary perspective?**

**FINAL PROJECT TOPIC DUE IN CLASS ON [DATE]**

## Week 11 – Inequality

- Thomas Piketty. 2014. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Introduction, Chapter 6 & Chapter 12.
- Zucman, Gabriel. 2015. *The Hidden Wealth of Nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Introduction, Chapter 1 & Chapter 2.
- Kimuli Kasara and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2015. "When Do the Rich Vote Less Than the Poor and Why? Explaining Turnout Inequality across the World." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 613-627.

**Questions: Paraphrase Piketty's argument for why inequality has increased since about 1970 in the United States. What does Zucman tell us about inequality between countries? What is his main argument for why this has occurred? What are the implications of Kasara and Suryanarayan's study for inequality's effects on political representation?**

Week 12 – Civil Conflict

NOTE: Some of this week’s readings deal directly with conflict-related violence and trauma. I will provide specific page numbers for those who want to skim over or skip these segments.

- Paul Collier. 2008. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.
- Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler. 2004. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Paper* 56(4): 563-595.
- Jeremy Weinstein. 2006. *Inside Rebellion*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction & Chapter 5.
- Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 & 3.

**Questions – Summarize the “greed” and “grievance” hypotheses about the causes of civil war. Based on this week’s readings, do you think one, or another, has more support? Describe the method of data collection and analysis used in one of this week’s readings. What are some of the method’s strengths and weaknesses in addressing the research question?**

Week 13 – Workshop final paper ideas

**FEEDBACK TO GROUP MEMBERS DUE ON [DATE]**

Weeks 14 - 15 – Final presentations

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON [DATE]**