COURSE OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION

Welcome to Sociology 7591, an advanced graduate seminar on Comparative International Development. I attempted to design a course that introduces students to several major theoretical, substantive, and methodological issues relevant to the study of global development. The field is broad and multi-faceted, so students should not think of this course as comprehensive.

I designed the course to have three sections. The first section covers important development theories, including those based on modernization, dependency and world systems perspectives. The second section focuses on the salient substantive issue of global poverty and its correlates. The third section of this course introduces leading ideas surrounding the phenomena of globalization and its impact on development and development thinking. Many readings assigned for the course will touch upon several of these themes.

Each week, I plan to start with a brief synopsis of some of the issues raised in the readings. The remaining time will be spent on lively discussion and critical reflection, requiring all students to come prepared to discuss their thoughts and contribute to the classroom conversations.

I attempted to select a series of readings to reflect a diversity of opinions and approaches to the course topics. I have tried to include readings that discuss different parts of the world, often from very different perspectives. It is highly unlikely that you will agree with the arguments advanced in every assigned reading. That is okay. I think we are better off trying to understand arguments we oppose as well as those with which we agree.

REQUIREMENTS

No tests or quizzes. Each student’s grade will be based on written assignments and class participation.

More specifically,

1. Class participation represents 20% of final grade. I encourage all students to participate in class discussions. Your comments should clearly demonstrate knowledge of the assigned readings. To assist, I ask (e.g., require) students to write a 1 page single-space reflection paper on the assigned readings and to bring that reflection paper with you each
class period. I will collect the reflection papers each week and comment on your reflections. The basic form is to divide the page into 5ths and use the top 5th for a summary statement of all assigned readings and the bottom 4/5ths to reflect on several more specific parts of the assigned readings.

2. I offer an option with respect to written assignments:

Option 1 (three short papers):

Students choosing this option will be required to write three shorter papers (5-7 pages each) mainly on the material covered in class, readings, and discussions. The first paper is worth 20% of final grade, the final two papers are each worth 30% of the final grade. Unless you are currently working on a development-related project or have a very well-defined project in mind, I suggest you complete this first option. Students will have the opportunity to revise the first two papers, based on my specific written comments on each paper and on the more general comments I make in class.

Option 2 (One long term paper):

This option is designed to assist students currently working on theses or other research projects related to development and/or globalization issues. Specifically, it requires students to turn in only one major paper at the end of the semester. This would comprise 80% of the final grade. Students wishing to pursue Option 2 must discuss the project with me by the end of the third week of classes. Students choosing this option must meet a two intermediate deadlines (deciding on the paper’s focus and completing a comprehensive outline of the paper) that are designed to assist your efforts to complete the major paper by the end of this semester. These will generally be due on the same days as the first two “short papers” are due under Option 1. Again, this option is designed to help students make progress on well-defined projects.

3. Please turn in all assignments on time. I am generally reasonable and friendly, but I am much happier when students turn in assignments on time. I don’t like incompletes and prefer not to ever give them except under extreme circumstances (e.g., hell freezing over).

4. Students and other LSU members interested in “sitting in” on one or more weekly sessions are welcome to do so. I hope anyone choosing to sit in would also be willing to read the material assigned for that day, and to contribute to class discussions.

Required Books:


---In addition, I will post more readings on Moodle.
CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

(note: I reserve right to make reasonable changes to schedule and syllabus)

Part 1: Development Theory and Issues

1. 1/17/11 No Class: Classes start Tuesday 1/18

2. 1/24/11 Introduction to the study of comparative international development:
   Read for next class:
   Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, The River Between, entire book
   Roberts and Hite: Part I (Chapters 1 – 4)
   McMichael: Chapter 1

3. 1/31/11 Discussion: Transition to Modern Society, Modernization Theory, and the Development project
   Read for next class:
   Roberts and Hite: Part II (Chapters 5 – 8)
   McMichael: Chapters 2 and 3

4. 2/7/11 Discussion: Dependency and World Systems perspectives and the international dimensions of the development project:
   Read for next class: (Posted on Moodle)
   Joel Migdal, Strong Societies and Weak States, pp. 3-39
   Pierre Englebert, State Legitimacy and Development in Africa, pp. 71-122

5. 2/14/11 Discussion: Theorizing the Role of the State in Development Literature
   Read for next class:
   Paul Collier: The Bottom Billion
   First Paper Assigned. Due March 4 in my office

Part II: Global Poverty and Inequality

6. 2/21/11 Discussion: Global Poverty: Implications and Potential Solutions
   Read for next class:
   McMichael, Chapters 4 and 5 and More Poverty Readings: Posted on Moodle
7. 2/28/11  Discussion:  Global Poverty:  Part II

Read for next class:
Roberts and Hite, Part III (Chapters 10-12)
McMichael, Chapter 6

8. 3/7/11  **Mardi Gras Holiday, No Class**

**Part III:  Globalization**

9. 3/14/11  Discussion:  Globalization

Read for Next Class:
Roberts and Hite, Part III (Chapters 13-15) and Part IV (Chapters 16 and 17)

10. 3/21/11  Discussion: Implications of Globalization for Development and Global Inequality

Read for Next Class:
McMichael, Chapter 7
Roberts and Hite, Part IV (Chapters 18-21)

Second Paper Assigned.  Due April 1 in my office

11. 3/28/11  Discussion:  Positions on Globalization

Read for next class:
Ha Joon Chang.  *Bad Samaritans*.  Entire Book

12. 4/4/11  Discussion:  Bad Samaritans, Global Capitalism.

Read for Next Class:
Roberts and Hite, Chapters 22-27
McMichael, Chapter 8

13. 4/11/11  Discussion:  Globalization’s Countermovements

Read for Next Class:
McMichael, Chapter 9
Other Readings TBA

14. 4/18/11  Spring Break
15. 4/25/11  Discussion:  Environment, Development Practice

Read for Next Class:  TBA

Third Paper Assigned:  Due May 9 in my office

16. 5/2/11  Student Presentations/Concluding Remarks

17. 5/9/11  Final papers due for all students.