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GOVT/LAST/CEAS 271  
Wesleyan University  
Spring 2025

Office Hours:  
Tues. 2:00-3:30 PM  
or by appointment

Class Meetings:  
Tues. & Thurs., 10:20-11:40 AM  
PAC 107

## **Political Economy of Developing Countries**

Human development has advanced more, faster, and more steadily in some countries than in others. If we knew why, we would have knowledge that could be put to good use. To find out why some countries have developed more successfully than others, we start out by clarifying how human development should be conceptualized and measured. That is the task of the first section of the course.

The second section of the course compares development contexts, policies, and outcomes in East Asia and Latin America. Human development has improved in both regions, but the East Asian societies have achieved faster economic growth and lower income inequality than Latin American societies. We identify policies that contributed to faster economic growth and lower income inequality in East Asia, and explore why similar policies were not implemented in Latin America. We also identify policies and circumstances that help to explain why some societies in Latin America matched the top performers in East Asia at raising life expectancy and reducing infant mortality, despite experiencing slower economic growth and higher income inequality.

The third section of the course uses the capabilities perspective associated with the work of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum to assess how hunger, disease, population growth, lack of education, and biases against women and minority groups reinforce one another, and to identify the advantages and disadvantages of markets, states, and public action in fighting endemic hunger and preventing famine.

The fourth section of the course uses case studies of Chile, Tanzania, and Bangladesh to illuminate some paradoxes of human development. In Chile the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990) suppressed democracy and violated human rights, but enacted maternal and infant nutrition and health care policies that contributed to one of the steepest infant mortality declines ever observed. In Tanzania the government of Julius Nyerere (1962-1985), after outlawing opposition parties, enacted a huge resettlement program to try to improve the well-being of the poor, but failed to achieve this goal. We explore the reasons why this well-intentioned initiative made life worse rather than better for the resettled people. We close by evaluating a market-based initiative aimed explicitly at improving human development. In Bangladesh the Grameen Bank, which makes tiny loans to poor women at market rates of interest, precipitated a global microfinance movement that has reached more than 200 million clients. We'll explore how social scientists evaluate the efficacy of microfinance programs, assess the achievements and shortcomings of these initiatives, and examine some of the reasons behind microfinance's successes and failures.

## Course Requirements

The course requirements are class participation, two examinations, and a research project consisting of a spreadsheet and a research paper.

### Summary of Due Dates and Final Grade Weightings

|                     |                    |     |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----|
| Spreadsheet         | February 14 (Fri.) | 10% |
| First Examination   | March 6 (Thu.)     | 25% |
| Second Examination  | May 6 (Tue.)       | 25% |
| Research Paper      | May 13 (Tue.)      | 25% |
| Class participation |                    | 15% |

### Honor Code

Any instance of cheating or plagiarism will suffice for a grade of "F" for the entire course. I've set the Moodle to allow you to see your "similarity score" (plagiarism detector) after you upload your research paper. If you agree that any passages flagged by turnitin.com were plagiarized, please delete your uploaded paper and submit a new one with no plagiarized passages.

### Examinations

Each exam is closed-book, closed-note. The first exam will be given during the class period on Thursday, March 6. It will cover the material to date. The second exam will be given during the class period on Tuesday, May 6. It will cover the material from March 25 to May 1.

### Research Project: Spreadsheet and Research Paper

The research project evaluates how well a particular developing country did on a particular dimension of development over a particular time period.

You choose a developing country, a development indicator, and a time period. You collect quantitative data on the indicator in your country during your time period, create tables and graphs with the data, pose research questions based on your observations, and find academic sources to explore your topic. You summarize this work initially in a spreadsheet submitted on February 14, 2025, then develop it into a research paper due May 13, 2025.

The spreadsheet allows you to observe, descriptively, what is distinctive -- unusually good, unusually poor, or (less engagingly) close to average -- about your country's performance on an indicator over a time period, in terms of level achieved, overall progress made, or tempo of progress during the time period. You compare your country's performance on the indicator during the time period to that of an appropriate reference group of countries, such as the country's world region (South Asia, Latin America, etc.), or income group (low-income, middle-income, etc.).

G271F25SpreadsheetAssignment.pdf, which is posted on the February 14 section of the course Moodle, is a memo detailing the full spreadsheet assignment. Posted just below that memo on the Moodle are sample spreadsheets for economic output (GDP) per capita (Botswana 1990-2022), infant mortality (Peru 1990-2022), and the male-to-female ratio at age 5 (China 1980-2023).

In the research paper (10-12 pages), you should build on the quantitative analyses you produced for your spreadsheet to propose an explanation for why your country, compared to its reference group, performed well, or poorly, on a particular indicator during a particular span of years. In so doing you should identify government policies, political regime forms (democratic vs. authoritarian, etc.), historical legacies, and social structures that help to explain how well your chosen country during your chosen time period performed on your chosen indicator.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence for the Research Project**

Among the purposes of a college education are to help you improve your writing and to enable you to distinguish good sources from poor sources of information, opinion, and argument. If you rely on artificial intelligence (AI) tools like Chat GPT to help write your research design or term paper, or like Elicit to help find sources, this won't happen. Please conclude your research design and term paper with a statement indicating whether you used AI. If you did use AI, describe how you used it. If you didn't use AI, write "I didn't use AI at any point in this assignment." If you've read this far in the syllabus, send me an email. The first student to do so gets a reward.

Last year students who wrote that they had used AI for "creative insight," to "organize" written work, for "help with citations," etc., often triggered the turnitin.com AI detector, which is invoked when you upload your written work. For some reason the instructor but not the student can see the document's AI score, with problematic passages flagged. I will let you know if this happens.

### **Finding Sources**

For books and chapters in books, search the [online catalog](#). For articles and manuscripts try the [databases](#) on the library web page as well as in [Google Scholar](#). AI-generated research bibliographies are currently not very good, although they may improve in the future. Wesleyan will have access to many of the materials you find in these databases, but some may be available only through [interlibrary loan](#) (articles usually take only a couple of days; books may take a couple of weeks). You can also find sources by following up footnotes and bibliographical references (recent books and articles are best). For an individualized research session with a reference librarian, just fill out this form: <https://www.wesleyan.edu/libr/research/prs-form.html>

Additional sources of cross-national statistical data are linked at <http://jmcguire.faculty.wesleyan.edu/welcome/cross-national-data/>

### **Obtaining Course Readings**

All readings are on the course Moodle site.

Study questions related to each reading will be available on the Moodle the week before each is due (the Tuesday session has the questions for each week's Tuesday and Thursday readings).

### **Accessibility Services**

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodation, a student must have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College 021. You can also contact Accessibility Services by email ([accessibility@wesleyan.edu](mailto:accessibility@wesleyan.edu)) or by phone (860-685-2332).

### **Religious/Spiritual Observance Resources:**

If you anticipate that your religious/spiritual observance may conflict with academic obligations such as attending class, taking examinations, or submitting assignments, start by working directly with your professor to make reasonable arrangements. Should you require additional support or guidance, please contact any of the chaplains in the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at <https://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/index.html>. For a list of a religious holidays celebrated by members of the Wesleyan community, go to Wesleyan's Multifaith calendar which can be found at: <https://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/multifaith-calendar.html>.

### **Title IX Resources**

Please see <https://www.wesleyan.edu/weswell/resources/facultyandstaff.html>

### Summary of Course Schedule

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Th Jan 23 | Overview of the Course   |
| Tu Jan 28 | Functionings, Capabilities, Agency, and Human Development          |
| Th Jan 30 | Measuring Human Development  |
| Tu Feb 4  | Development in East Asia and Latin America: Overview               |
| Th Feb 6  | Import Substitution in Latin America, 1930-1985                    |
| Tu Feb 11 | Free-Market Reform in Latin America, 1985-2000                     |
| Th Feb 13 | State-Centric Reform in Latin America, 2000-2025                   |
| Fr Feb 14 | <b>Spreadsheet Due: please upload to Moodle by 5 PM</b>            |
| Tu Feb 18 | Macroeconomic and Industrial Policies in South Korea and Taiwan    |
| Th Feb 20 | Land Reform and Education in East Asia and Latin America           |
| Tu Feb 25 | Colonialism and Anticommunism in East Asia and Latin America       |
| Th Feb 27 | Social Classes and State Autonomy in East Asia and Latin America   |
| Tu Mar 4  | Natural Resources and Development in East Asia and Latin America   |
| Th Mar 6  | <b>First examination</b>   |
| Tu Mar 25 | Democracy and Development  |
| Th Mar 27 | Endemic Hunger and Famine  |
| Tu Apr 1  | Security vs. Opulence  |
| Th Apr 3  | Gender and Survival I  |
| Tu Apr 8  | Gender and Survival II   |
| Th Apr 10 | Chile: Politics, Policy, and Mortality Decline in the 20th Century |
| Tu Apr 15 | Chile: Development and Mortality Decline under Military Rule       |
| Th Apr 17 | Tanzania in Historical Perspective                                 |
| Tu Apr 22 | Tanzania: Nyerere and Ujamaa                                       |
| Th Apr 24 | The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh: Origin and Operation               |
| Tu Apr 29 | How Would You Know if a Development Program Worked?                |
| Th May 1  | What Microfinance Can and Can't Do                                 |
| Tu May 6  | <b>Second examination</b>  |
| Tu May 13 | <b>Term paper due: please upload to Moodle by 5 PM</b>             |

## TOPICS AND READINGS

Th Jan 23      Overview of the Course

No assigned reading

### I. What is Development?

Tu Jan 28      Functionings, Capabilities, Agency, and Human Development

Sabina Alkire and Séverine Deneulin, "The Human Development and Capability Approach." Chapter 2 in Séverine Deneulin with Lila Shahani, eds., *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency*. London: Earthscan, 2009, 22-48.

Th Jan 30      Measuring Human Development

UNDP [United Nations Development Programme], *Human Development Report 2010: The Real Wealth of Nations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Chs. 2 and 3, pp. 25-64.

### II. Development Divergence in East Asia and Latin America

Tu Feb 4      Development in East Asia and Latin America: Overview

James W. McGuire, "The Politics of Development in Latin America and East Asia." Chapter 27 in Carol Lancaster and Nicholas van de Walle, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Politics of Development*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. Online version June 2016, 1-40.

Th Feb 6      Import Substitution in Latin America, 1930-1985

Peter Kingstone, *The Political Economy of Latin America: Reflections on Neoliberalism and Development After the Commodity Boom*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2018, Chapters 1 and 2, 1-54.

Tu Feb 11      Free-Market Reform in Latin America, 1985-2000

Peter Kingstone, *The Political Economy of Latin America: Reflections on Neoliberalism and Development After the Commodity Boom*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2018, Chapter 3, 55-101.

Th Feb 13      State-Centric Reform in Latin America, 2000-2025

Peter Kingstone, *The Political Economy of Latin America: Reflections on Neoliberalism and Development After the Commodity Boom*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2018, Chapter 4, 102-137.

Fr Feb 14      **Spreadsheet Due: please upload to Moodle by 5 PM**

- Tu Feb 18      Macroeconomic and Industrial Policies in East Asia and Latin America  
F. Gerard Adams and IngerMarie Davis, "The Role of Policy in Economic Development." *Asian-Pacific Economic Literature* 8.1 (May 1994), 8-26.
- Th Feb 20      Land Reform and Education in East Asia and Latin America  
José E. Campos and Hilton Root, "Wealth-Sharing Mechanisms." Chapter 3 of Campos and Root, *The Key to the Asian Miracle*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1996, 50-75.
- Tu Feb 25      Colonialism and Anti-Communism in East Asia and Latin America  
Jawied Nawabi, "The Socioeconomic Origins of South Korea's Developmental State and Its Agro-Industrial Path to Development." Chapter 4 of Nawabi, *Why States Matter in Economic Development: The Socioeconomic Origins of Strong Institutions*. New York: Routledge, 2024, 89-131.
- Th Feb 27      Social Classes and State Autonomy in East Asia and Latin America  
Rhys Jenkins, "The Political Economy of Industrialization: A Comparison of East Asian and Latin American Newly Industrializing Countries." *Development and Change* 22 No. 2 (April 1991), 197-231.
- Tu Mar 4      Natural Resources and Development in East Asia and Latin America  
Ramez Abubakr Badeeb, Hooi Hooi Lean, and Jeremy Clark. "The Evolution of the Natural Resource Curse Thesis: A Critical Literature Survey." *Resources Policy* 51 (March 2017), 123-134.  
  
Christine Ebrahim-zadeh, "Dutch Disease: Too Much Wealth Managed Unwisely." *Finance and Development* 40 No. 1 (March 2003), 50-51.  
  
C. N. Brunnschweiler and E. H. Bulte, "Linking Natural Resources to Slow Growth and More Conflict." *Science* 320 (2 May 2008), 616-617.
- Th Mar 6      **First examination, 10:20 to 11:40 AM**

### III. Development as Freedom

- Tu Mar 25      Democracy and Development  
 Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 36-37, 74-76, Ch. 6 (146-159), Ch. 10 (227-248).
- Th Mar 27      Endemic Hunger and Famine  
 Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989, Chapter 9 (165-178).  
 Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Ch. 7 (160-188).
- Tu Apr 1        Security vs. Opulence  
 Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989, Chapter 10 (179-203) and Chapter 12 (226-253).  
 Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 19-24, 41-53, Ch. 4 (87-110).
- Th Apr 3        Gender and Survival I  
 Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 104-107, Ch. 8 (189-203).
- Tu Apr 8        Gender and Survival II  
 Elizabeth Croll, "Amartya Sen's 100 Million Missing Women." *Oxford Development Studies* 29 No. 3 (October 2001), 225-244.  
 Monica Das Gupta, "Return of the Missing Daughters." *Scientific American* 317 No. 3 (September 2017), 82-85.
- Th Apr 10      Chile: Politics, Policy, and Mortality Decline in the 20th Century  
 James W. McGuire, "Chile: The Pinochet Paradox." Chapter 2 in McGuire, *Wealth, Health, and Democracy in East Asia and Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 94-119.
- Tu Apr 15      Chile: Development and Mortality Decline under Military Rule  
 Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, "The Poor." Chapter 9 in Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile Under Pinochet*. New York: Norton, 1991, 222-246.  
 Alejandro Foxley and Dagmar Raczynski, "Vulnerable Groups in Recessionary Situations: The Case of Children and the Young in Chile." *World Development* 12 No. 3 (March 1984), 223-246.



- Th Apr 17 Tanzania in Historical Perspective  
 John Iliffe. "Tanganyika in 1800." Chapter 2 in Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979, 6-25.  
 Michael F. Lofchie, "Introduction: A Tanzanian Overview." Chapter 1 in Lofchie, *The Political Economy of Tanzania: Decline and Recovery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014, 1-26.
- Tu Apr 22 Tanzania: Nyerere and Ujamaa  
 Julius Nyerere, "Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism," "Socialism and Rural Development." In Knud Svendsen and Merete Teisen, *Self-Reliant Tanzania*. Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing, 1969, 158-166, 246-266.  
 James C. Scott, "Compulsory Villagization in Tanzania." Chapter 7 in Scott, *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, 223-261.
- Th Apr 24 The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh: Origin and Operation  
 Watch "Banking on the Poor," Journeyman TV (1997). 15:44  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrUQKuvsmvw>  
 Watch "India's Microfinance Meltdown," BBC Newsnight (2012). 11:28  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzF6thf5GqA>  
 Asif Dowla and Dipal Barua, "Classical Grameen and Its Impacts." Chapter 2 in Dowla and Barua, *The Poor Always Pay Back: The Grameen II Story*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2006, 15-69.
- Tu Apr 29 How Would You Know if a Development Program Worked?  
 Jonathan Bauchet and Jonathan Morduch, "An Introduction to Impact Evaluations with Randomized Designs." *Financial Access Initiative Research Framing Note*, March 2010, 1-21.  
 Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer, "Use of Randomization in the Evaluation of Development Effectiveness." Chapter 10 in George Keith Pitman, Osvaldo N. Feinstein, and Gregory K. Ingram, eds., *Evaluating Development Effectiveness*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 2005, 205-232.
- Th May 1 What Microfinance Can and Can't Do  
 David Roodman, *Due Diligence: An Impertinent Inquiry into Microfinance*. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2012, Chapter 1 (1-14) and Chapter 9 (268-292).
- Tu May 6 **Second examination, 10:20 to 11:40 AM**
- Tu May 13 **Term paper due: please upload to Moodle by 5 PM**