

# Politics of the Developing Nations

Prof. He Li  
Political Science Department  
Merrimack College  
Fall 1997

## Course Description

This course is a survey of politics of the developing countries. It is an exercise in comparative politics and political economy. We will examine the historical and institutional settings of political development in the developing countries, and explain political dynamics of recent development in these countries. The course aims at equipping students with some analytic perspectives for understanding contemporary Third World politics.

Rather than taking one country after another examining its politics, the course focuses upon certain issues in order to contribute to a better understanding of contemporary Third World development and North-South relations. It is divided into three principal components: A) a discussion on the historical background of developing world, B) an overview of alternative paradigms that apply to Third World politics (such as modernization, theory, dependency theory, and Marxism), C) the application of the theory to critical contemporary dimensions of Third World politics, including, democratization, human rights, women, population, hunger, poverty, environment etc.

### Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is crucial. Students accumulating **FOUR** absences will lose one whole letter grade. I will circulate a signature sheet each class. If you come in after the sheet has circulated, you may attend the class, but please do not ask to sign the sheet late.

### Make-Up Policy:

The only reason for which make-ups will be allowed is severe illness (documented by a physician). You can expect make-up exams to be much more difficult. Make-up will be held at professor's convenience. There will be no make-up of a missed make-up exam.

### Evaluation:

There will be two tests. In each of these tests, the students will be responsible for all the materials contained in the lectures and in the assigned readings. The examination will be in essay form, although there may be some short answer questions as well. I want this class to be based as much on discussion as lectures. To that end, there will be a participation grade assigned at the end of the semester, based on your own performance.

### Assignment:

Research proposal 10/3  
Mid-term exam 30% 10/8  
Term paper 30% 12/5  
Class participation 10% ongoing  
Final examination 30% 12/11

### Guideline for Research Paper:

The choice of subject for the paper rests with students, as long as it deals with ONE issue that the developing world is facing today. If you have any doubt about appropriateness of your topic, check with me! The term paper will be due on December 5, 1997 in class and should be no less than 10 double-spaced pages, no longer than 15, not counting endnotes.

1. The quality of paper (organization and clarity of argument) counts more than its length!!!! The papers should contain a thesis statement, reasoned analysis, conclusion, and bibliography.
2. All papers must be typewritten, handwritten paper will be returned without review. Papers should show

your familiarity with standard style in citation and bibliography.

3. I expect you footnote all the ideas and quotations that are not your own. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Late papers will be down-graded one full letter grade (e.g., from B to C) for each day they are late.

4. The paper should have a separate cover page which gives the class name, your name, the topic of the research, and the date you completed the assignment. Staple your paper together in the upper left-hand corner. Each page should contain a page number as well.

5. An "A" paper is one that gets to the heart of the question; answers it directly, completely, and clearly with no wasted words, uses appropriate citations from the readings; uses proper indentation, and is free of spelling and grammatical errors.

6. It is your responsibility, not mine, to ensure that you have backup copies of your files, that your printer is working, that you have sufficient paper and a working ribbon, etc. To my mind, "My computer/printer crushed" is the equivalent of, "My dog ate my homework."

### Course Reading

John Isbister, **Promises Not Kept: The Betrayal of Social Change in the Third World**, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 3rd edition, 1995.

Jeff Haynes, **Third World Politics: A Concise Introduction**, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.

### Course Schedule

#### I. The Making of the Third World

- W 9/3 Overview of the Course: Haynes, Chapter 1
- F 9/5 The Creation of the Third World: Haynes, 20-25
- M 9/8 State and Society in the Third World: Haynes, 25-39 & Video: Where Land is Life"
- W 9/10 Theories of Revolution: Isbister, Chapter 5
- F 9/12 Nationalism & Independence in Asia: Isbister, 105-121
- M 9/15 Nationalism & Independence in Middle East: Isbister, 122-130
- W 9/17 Nationalism & Independence in Africa: Isbister, 122-125 & 131-134
- F 9/19 Nationalism & Independence in Latin America: Isbister, 134-149

#### II. Contending Theories

- M 9/22 Modernization Approach: Isbister, 33-44
- W 9/24 Dependency Theory: Isbister, 45-53
- F 9/26 Marxism: Isbister, 54-61
- M 9/29 Imperialism: Isbister, Chapter 4
- W 10/1 The Statist Approach: Isbister, 160-170
- F 10/3 Neoclassical Approach: Isbister, 184-190 & **Proposal due in class**
- M 10/6 Review and Discussion
- W 10/8 **Mid-term**
- F 10/10 Poverty: Isbister, Chapter 2 & Video: "The Business of Hunger"

#### III. Problems of Development

- M 10/13 Columbus Day (no class)
- W 10/15 Dictatorship and Democracy: Haynes, Chapter 3
- F 10/17 Democracy in the Third World: Regional Analysis: Haynes, Chapter 3
- M 10/20 The Democratization of the Third World: Samuel P. Huntington, "A New Era in Democracy: Democracy's Third Wave," **Current**, September 1991, 27-39,
- W 10/22 Economic Strategy: Haynes, 64-72
- F 10/24 Debt Crisis: Haynes, 72-84 & Video: "Banking on Life and Debt"
- M 10/27 Structural Adjustment: Social Costs of Reform: Haynes, 85-90

- W 10/29 Population: Isbister, 155-160
- F 10/31 Women in the Third World: Haynes, Chapter 7 Video: "From Sunup"
- M 11/3 Politics of Natural Environment: Haynes, Chapter 8
- W 11/5 US Policy Toward the Third World: Isbister, Chapter 7
- F 11/7 Politics of Foreign Aid: Isbister, 170-178
- M 11/10 Military Intervention in Politics: Isbister, Chapter 7
- W 11/12 Clash of Civilizations: Samuel P. Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations?" **Foreign Affairs**, Summer 1993.
- F 11/14 Video: "Valentina's Nightmare" (Rwanda Refugee Crisis)
- M 11/17 Religion, Ethnicity and Identity: Haynes, Chapter 5
- W 11/19 Human Rights: Haynes, Chapter 6
- F 11/21 Human Rights: Regional Analysis: Haynes, Chapter 6

#### **IV. Possibilities and Prospects**

- M 11/24 Impact of Globalization: Benjamin Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld," **The Atlantic Monthly**, March 1992
- 11/26-28 Thanksgiving Holiday
- M12/1 Oral presentation
- W 12/3 Oral presentation (continue)
- F 12/5 Oral presentation (continue)  
**Term paper due in class** (can be downgraded if late).
- M12/8 Review and Discussion

FINAL EXAMINATION  
**8:30 a.m. December 11**

In addition to the textbook, I have included a few jumping off points for research on the Internet on political science related topics.