1 Summer 2020 Digital Course Format

This syllabus reflects the current teaching and learning protocols for Summer 2020, instituted by the University in response to the ongoing Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. These protocols necessitate the transition to a digital course format. In practice, this means:

1. We will not meet in person during the summer term,
2. All class sessions will take place over Zoom,
3. Class sessions will be recorded and made available for asynchronous viewing via Canvas,
4. Written assignments will be submitted digitally through Canvas,
5. Office hours and all one-on-one and group meetings with the instructor will take place over Zoom.

Please check Canvas frequently for announcements, as I may need to clarify certain instructions and policies, or tweak the course format in response to students’ feedback and the incredibly fluid nature of the current public health setting. Naturally, you should all feel free to reach out with questions and concerns.

It is unlikely, but not out of the realm of possibility that either you or I will fall ill during the course of the term. If you do fall ill, please try to keep me appraised of your situation, so that we may arrange for an incomplete or enact other policies as directed by the University and the Department of Political Science. If I fall ill, we will try our best to maintain the continuity of course by assigning an alternate instructor to facilitate class sessions. The health and safety of our students remains a priority. We will carefully monitor the COVID-19 situation, and adapt the course structure and policies as necessary to accommodate any developments and to maintain compliance with all University and departmental guidelines.

You can find the latest information and updates regarding the Novel Coronavirus at the UC San Diego Information Center. This website also contains a section on the CDC’s recommendations to help prevent the spread of viruses, such as SARS-COV-2. If you develop symptoms consistent with the flu, or are concerned that you may have been exposed to COVID-19, please reach out to Student Health Services. Additionally, we understand that many students may be worried about the virus and the general atmosphere of uncertainty, and may experience heightened feelings of anxiety. If you would like access to counseling services, there are resources available through UC San Diego’s Counseling and Psychological Services.
2 Instructional Team

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Zoom Link: [Office Hours]

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3 Course Description

We begin with a couple of data points: Some 10% of the world’s population lives in extreme poverty—on less than $1.90 per day. More than half of these individuals live in Sub-Saharan Africa, and another 45% live in Latin America and Southeast Asia. 53% of the world’s population lives under a non-democratic regime, in which political rights and personal freedoms are curtailed, citizens lack access to basic public goods and social services, and certain populations are systematically excluded from markets, and the political process more generally.

This course explores the lives of the world’s poorest and most marginalized populations, and the political and economic institutions that facilitate their inclusion or exclusion from politics, and which help or hinder their rise from poverty. We will draw on case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Subcontinent to address the following sets of questions:

1. What do we mean by “development,” and why have some countries been more successful in promoting development than others?

2. How do political institutions influence economic development, and how do economic structures influence political development? How do sudden systemic shocks affect the political and economic lives of these marginalized populations?

3. How do individuals and institutions influence policy choices, and why do governments sometimes employ policies that hinder development? What types of macro- and micro-level policies contribute to development, and how can we encourage the adoption of such policies throughout the developing world?

The course is divided into three units. The first unit begins with an introduction to the course and a review of basic theoretical and methodological concepts in comparative politics and development economics. We then discuss various conceptions of development, the outcomes that we use to measure and assess development, and the different theories that scholars and policymakers have put forth to explain the process of development, predict development outcomes, and guide policy in the post-War era.

The second unit focuses on states and other political institutions. We look at the legacies of historical institutions such as colonialism and the slave trade, and explore how variation in these institutions leads to variation in contemporary development outcomes. We then look at systemic shocks, such as political violence, famine,
climate change, and sovereign debt, and evaluate the impact of these shocks on development outcomes. The unit ends with a discussion of political and economic inequality, the relationship between inequality and development outcomes, and the influence of inequality on institutional change and regime transition.

The final unit takes a more micro-level approach. In this unit, we explore various topics of interest to scholars of development, including property rights and land tenure; public health, education, and human capital; labor and migration; credit, savings, and insurance; and corruption and accountability.

4 Assignments & Grades

4.1 Readings

All of the assigned readings are available on Canvas. There are no required textbooks, though we will read quite extensively from Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo's *Poor Economics*. This book costs about $12.00 (paperback, new on Amazon), and may be worth the investment for political science and economics majors.

Because of the condensed summer session timeline, the reading load for this course is relatively intense. Typically, students will need to read between four and six papers and/or book chapters per week. These are not textbook readings, but rather academic works that require close attention and thought. Some of these readings are in fact quite difficult, though students are not expected to understand every reading prior to class. We will spend time during our class sessions identifying and analyzing the authors’ main points. Additionally, *please pay attention to the assigned pages and sections*. Occasionally, only a portion of a paper or book chapter will be assigned; we will try to skip over some of the more technical details of these pieces, and instead focus on the authors’ theories and conclusions.

To help manage the reading load, one of the assignments for this course (described in section 4.2 below) will be a short presentation on one of the readings. This will hopefully allow students to focus on at least one of the readings this term, and provide some cover for students who didn't quite make it through all of the day's readings.

4.2 Assignments

There are two assignments for this course:

1. A five minute reading presentation, and
2. A final paper (≈ five pages).

For the reading presentation, students will need to put together a **five minute** talk (with slides), that summarizes at least one of the assigned readings (i.e., a paper or a single book chapter) in a particular class session. The presentation should also provide thoughtful analysis and commentary, and pose a couple of discussion questions for the class to consider. We will go over this particular assignment in more detail in our first class meeting, and circulate a sign up sheet such that all (or most) of the readings are covered.

For students taking the course asynchronously: Please post either (1) a recording of your five minute presentation, or (2) a .pdf of your presentation slides plus your presentation notes or talking points to the discussion board on Canvas no later than 14:00 (Pacific time) on the date of your presentation.

The primary assignment for this course is a five page final paper. Instructions for the paper are intentionally quite broad; students will have a great deal of leeway on what they write, and how they write it. In general, students will be asked to select one of the issues covered in the course, and discuss this issue in the context of at least one country from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, or Southeast Asia and the Subcontinent.
There are two options for the paper. The first is a policy memo, similar to those written by (or for) NGOs, policy makers, and international aid organizations. These memos have a fairly standard format (see this website), but should generally include the following components:

1. A description of the problem or issue (e.g., locusts in the Horn of Africa, depletion of fish stocks in Vietnam, HIV in Jakarta, etc.) that provides empirical evidence or relevant statistics to underscore the scope or importance of the issue,

2. An explanation of the political and economic factors that contribute to or explain the issue (outcome),

3. A set of proposed recommendations or conclusions,

4. A discussion of the counterarguments to your recommendations and your rebuttals to those counterarguments, and

5. A discussion of implementation issues for any recommendations (political, economic, environmental, technical, etc.) you propose.

The second option, which may be of interest to data science majors, students in the BA–MPP joint program, or those planning to complete a senior honors thesis, is a short research design to evaluate a specific development program or policy (e.g., providing female primary school children bicycles in Zambia to reduce school absenteeism). The research design should include a description of the problem and the planned intervention; a brief literature review; a set of hypotheses; a basic experimental, empirical, or qualitative design; and perhaps some preliminary data analysis if possible (or applicable). If you are interested in this option, please set up a time to chat with either Adam or me during Week 1 or Week 2.

Regardless of which final paper option you select, you will need to submit a series of progress updates throughout the term. The schedule for these “check ins” is given in Table 1. Note that the final draft is due to the Turnitin link on Canvas by Saturday, 5 September at 17:59 Pacific time.

Table 1: Final Paper Check Ins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Time (Pacific)</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic (∼ 1 Paragraph)</td>
<td>23:59</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>14 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline</td>
<td>23:59</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>21 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough Draft</td>
<td>23:59</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>28 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper Due</td>
<td>17:59</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>5 September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Participation

Ideally, this course will be run as a seminar rather than a lower division-style lecture. We will place a great deal of emphasis on discussion and informal debate. This means that students should attend class having completed the readings and ready to talk through the day’s material.

In general, I expect students to actively participate in and contribute to class discussion. However, University guidelines prevent course instructors from assigning attendance-based grades. If you are able to attend class regularly, I encourage you to do so. There is much added value to our time together.

Whether you attend or not, “participation” will be graded. For those that can make it to class, regular contributions will be sufficient to maximize your participation score. For those taking this course asynchronously, or for
those who miss a class session without a legitimate excuse, I will expect a one page summary of the readings for the day's class session, due Friday by noon (via Turnitin link on Canvas) of the week of your missed class session. The reading summary should also include some commentary and analysis (replicating the contributions you would have made in class), and a couple of broad discussion questions based on the readings.

Naturally, some students are more comfortable participating in class discussion than others. While I encourage all students to contribute, I will not penalize those who prefer to observe from the sidelines. If you are concerned about your ability to engage, please reach out to me and we can work something out.

4.4 Grading

Your overall grade for this course is calculated as the weighted average of your reading presentation, participation grade, and final paper + check ins. The weights are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation or Reading Summaries</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper Check Ins</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>70%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5 Course Policies

5.1 Class Sessions

Students are expected (but not technically required) to attend class twice per week. Please try to let me know in advance if you are unable to attend class regularly, or if you need to miss class on a specific day. Class sessions will be conducted through Zoom, and you can find a recurring Zoom meeting link on Canvas.

5.2 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is expected of all students (and faculty) at UCSD. Lying, cheating, and dishonesty will not be tolerated, as these actions undermine learning and inhibit the University's ability to certify students' knowledge and abilities. Thus, any attempt to enhance your grade (or anyone else's) by lying, cheating, or dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office and will result in sanctions. Sanctions may include a failing grade in the class and suspension or dismissal from the University. You can read more about academic integrity [here](#).

5.3 Accessibility & Accommodations

Students with disabilities may request accommodations through the Office for Students with Disabilities. Students must submit their accommodation letters to the instructor and Political Science Department prior to any assignment or exam to receive accommodation. We are unable to accommodate students retroactively.

Students that require academic support should contact the UCSD Teaching + Learning Commons, which offers tutoring and group study, supplemental instruction, and writing support. Non-native English speakers and those with limited academic writing experience are encouraged to reach out to the UCSD Writing Hub, located in Geisel Library.¹

¹Some of these resources may be unavailable during Summer Session due to disruptions caused by the ongoing COVID-19 situation.
5.4 Inclusion & Basic Needs

The University is committed to creating a learning environment that supports diversity of thought, perspective, experience, and identity. Harassment of any form will not be tolerated. Any speech or act that is blatantly or implicitly discriminatory, intimidating, or predatory will be reported to the UCSD Office of Student Conduct and/or the UCSD Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination.

Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to contact the UC San Diego Basic Needs Center or the Triton Food Pantry.

I am cognizant of the fact that the digital format for this course may impose undue burden on some students. If you have difficulty accessing the technology necessary to participate in, or to complete this course, please reach out. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate your particular circumstance.

5.5 Late Assignments & Regrades

Late assignments (i.e., reading presentations, reading summaries, final paper check ins) will not be accepted. Final papers may be accepted late, with a $\frac{1}{3}$ letter grade penalty for each day late. However, grades are due fairly quickly after the end of the term, so it may be necessary to impose a hard deadline for late papers. If you do plan to submit your final paper late, please contact me to work out the details.

Regrade requests must be made to the instructor in writing in a timely manner. Written regrade requests should not exceed two paragraphs, and should outline any errors that you believe occurred in the grading process. Note that regrade requests are intended to correct grading errors, not to negotiate a higher grade. When submitting work for a regrade, the entire work will be evaluated, which may result in a lower grade.

5.6 Digital Course Presence

All course materials, including class session recordings and announcements, are available through Canvas. Additionally, all scheduled class meetings and office hours will utilize Zoom.

6 Schedule of Classes and Reading Assignments

This schedule is tentative, and subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

Unit 1 — Background

Tuesday, 4 August: Introduction

- Banerjee & Duflo, Poor Economics, Foreword and Ch. 1
- Easterly, The Elusive Quest for Growth, Ch. 1
- Acemoglu, Introduction to Modern Economic Growth, Ch. 1

Thursday, 6 August: Theoretical Frameworks

- V-DEM, Democracy Facing Global Challenges
- Sen, Development as Freedom, Preface, Introduction, Ch. 1
Unit 2 — Institutions

Tuesday, 11 August: Institutions

- Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, *The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development*
- Nunn, *The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trade*
- Sanchez de la Sierra, *On the Origins of the State: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo*

Thursday, 13 August: Systemic Shocks

- Collier, *On the Economic Consequences of Civil War*
- Gráda, *Eating People is Wrong*, Ch. 2
- Obradovich, *Climate Change May Speed Democratic Turnover*

Tuesday, 18 August: Inequality & Transitions

- Haggard & Kaufman, *Inequality and Regime Change: Democratic Transitions and the Stability of Democratic Rule*
- Acemoglu, et al., *Economic and Political Inequality in Development: The Case of Cundinamarca, Colombia*

Unit 3 — Micro-Foundations of Development

Thursday, 20 August: Property Rights & Land Tenure

- Field, *Property Rights and Investment in Urban Slums*
- Goldstein & Udry, *The Profits of Power: Land Rights and Agricultural Investment in Ghana*
- Wairimu, “Isiolo County Sees Renewed Growth but Land Grabbers a New Headache,” *The Daily Nation*

Tuesday, 25 August: Health, Education, and Human Capital

- Banerjee & Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Ch. 2–4
- Dionne, *The Role of Executive Time Horizons in State Response to AIDS in Africa*
- Sachs & Malaney, *The Economic and Social Burdens of Malaria*

Thursday, 27 August: Labor & Migration

- Bryan, Chodhury, and Mobarak, *Underinvestment in a Profitable Technology: The Case of Seasonal Migration in Bangladesh*
- Clemens & McKenzie, *Think Again: Brain Drain*

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2 This is a short newspaper article, so no reading presentations necessary for this piece.
Tuesday, 1 September: Savings, Loans, and Insurance
• Banerjee & Duflo, Poor Economics, Ch. 8–9
• Udry, Credit Markets in Northern Nigeria: Credit as Insurance in a Rural Economy

Thursday, 3 September: Corruption & Accountability
• Banerjee & Duflo, Poor Economics, Ch. 10
• Grossman, Platas, and Rodden, Crowdsourcing Accountability: ICT for Service Delivery

Saturday, 5 September: Final Paper Due
• Please submit your final paper to the Turnitin link on Canvas by 17:59 Pacific time.

7 Bibliography


