

## Geography 408 - Fall Semester 2017

# *Geography of Development*

**Section 15569**

**Time: 2:35 – 3:55 Tuesday & Thursday**

**Room: Burnside Hall Room 306**

Professor: Dr. Jon Unruh, Department of Geography

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Office hours: By appointment

**TA:** to be announced,

**Email:** to be announced

**Office hours:** to be announced

Please note that the Student Contact TA is your first point of contact for all questions regarding the course outline, mid-terms, on-line quizzes and final exam.

### **Course Description**

This course will examine the geography of development by looking at a selection of some of the more acute development problems and their attempted solutions, with examples drawn primarily from Africa and the Middle East.

The course begins with an overview of how international development works at the level of donors and science, along with the role of host governments and local communities--in pursuing agendas for development. Next we consider the broad issue of land rights, focusing on how land rights work in some areas of the developing world and how they are fundamental to development and to resolving a range of issues. We then examine the problem of armed conflict--the types, how they function, how they impact development, and the role of the 'peace process' in moving away from conflict and toward development. As an example of the latter we will look at the recovery of land rights systems after war.

We then move on to an examination of a series of selected topics important to development. These may include: 1) food security; 2) land degradation and desertification; 3) climate change; and 4) poverty.

### **Course Material**

The course will encompass lectures, readings, documentary videos and in-class exercises. Both PowerPoint lectures (a reduced version) and reading material will be available electronically on MyCourses, with some readings available on the Internet. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with MyCourses. Note that the PowerPoint lectures post-

ed on MyCourses serve as an outline only, the in-class lecture and exercises, along with readings are what will be tested on. Lecture and readings correspond in topic only but are otherwise independent--meaning lectures and readings do not cover the same material.

## **Course Evaluation**

Course evaluation will include:

1. Two in-class midterm exams.
  - a. Not comprehensive
  - b. Worth 30 percent of the final grade each
2. In-class exercises.
  - a. 'Pop solutions' and role playing
  - b. Worth 10 percent of final grade
3. Final exam
  - a. Comprehensive
  - b. Worth 30 percent of the final grade

## **In-Class Exercises**

There will be two types of in-class exercises; 1) scheduled role playing scenarios; and 2) 'Pop solutions' exercises. Pop solutions will take place similar to a pop quiz--the date these will take place and total number of pop solutions are not known to students beforehand. In this exercise: a) students are presented with a development dilemma in the course of daily lectures, b) they assemble into their pre-determined groups to discuss the problem and derive one or more solutions, and c) the solutions are then written in bullet and paragraph form to be handed in during class with the names of all participating students. The way to do best on the pop solutions is to attend class regularly.

## **Class Policies**

Class policies follow McGill guidelines. In particular please note that:

1. Attendance: students are expected to attend class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain lecture notes from fellow students if classes are missed.
2. Accommodation for religious observances are dealt with according to McGill policy.
3. Tests must be taken at the scheduled time in class. If a test is missed due to medical or other urgently important reasons, then with proper documentation, the value of that test is added to the subsequent test.
4. If you wish to discuss a piece of graded assessment once it has been returned to you, this should be taken to the Teaching Assistant in the first instance. The first office hours after a midterm is handed back, will be at least 7 days AFTER the hand-back – i.e. there will be no immediate office hours that same week. This is to give you time to carefully reflect on your results before deciding whether to see the Teaching Assistant for further feedback. You then have 2 weeks (10 business days) to speak to the TA specifically about the relevant midterm.

5. For information on university and department policies for student assessment, please go to <http://www.mcgill.ca/geography/studentassessment>
6. Supplemental work to improve grades is NOT allowed.
7. The instructor reserves the right to apply a curve to exam grades.
8. "McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).(approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)"

"L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).

8. "In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)"

"Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue)."

## **Important Dates**

**Oct 19:** In-Class Midterm Exam I

**Nov 23:** In-class Midterm Exam II

**Final Exam:** See University Schedule

**Other dates:** Will be announced in class

## **Tentative Schedule**

Note that the schedule is approximate and is subject to change, with changes announced in class. Students are responsible for being aware of changes in the schedule and for keeping abreast of the material covered in class, so as to understand what material will be covered on the exams--this is best done by attending class regularly. If you miss classes your first point of contact to determine what was covered will be your fellow students, not the TA or the professor. Readings are available on MyCourses

## **Introduction**

### **I. Course overview and the 'Development Machine'**

- a. Course Introduction and Overview.
- b. International Development and How it Works – The Development Machine
- c. How the International Science Machine Influences Development;

d. The Scientific Method and Development Policy

**PART I. PRIMARY PROBLEMS:**

**Land rights & Armed conflict**

**II. Land Rights and Development**

a. Fundamentals of land tenure

i. Readings:

*Land tenure, economic growth and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.*

Read entire document

b. The land tenure 'disconnect'

i. Readings: Go to: <http://focusonland.com/> and read the following lessons. Note that you must download the document to see all of it.

Ethiopia: *Country overview; Large scale acquisitions of land in Ethiopia; and The gendered implications of joint titling in Ethiopia.*

Kenya: *Country overview; Group ranches; History of land conflicts.*

Mozambique: *Country overview; Community – investor partnerships; Mozambique's land law.*

Other country cases that may interest you.

**III. Armed Conflict**

a. Fundamentals of armed conflict, conflict types

i. Reading:

*Environmental degradation and violent conflict: hypotheses, research agendas, and theory building, pp. 76-112*

**IV. The Peace Process**

a. Operational aspects

i. Readings:

1. *From Conflict to Peace-building: The role of natural resources and the environment. UNEP. Read entire document.*

2. *Letter dated 27 October 2009 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) addressed to the President of the Security Council. UN Security Council. Read entire document.*

b. Land tenure in a conflict context

i. Reading:

1. *Land, conflict and livelihoods in the Great Lakes Region: Testing Policies to the Limit. Read entire document*

c. Land tenure case studies, drawn from: Liberia, Angola, Afghanistan, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Darfur, Mozambique, Uganda, Colombia

i. Readings:

1. *Darfur - Environmental degradation as a cause of conflict in Darfur. Read pages: 23-32, and 58-66*

2. *Afghanistan – Land rights in crisis, restoring tenure security in Afghanistan. Read pages 17-37*

3. *Rwanda - Land reform, land scarcity and post conflict reconstruction: A case study of Rwanda. Read entire document*
4. *Liberia and Sierra Leone – To fight or to farm: agrarian dimensions of the Mano River Conflicts (Liberia and Sierra Leone). Read entire paper.*

**In Class exercise: ‘Return to the Land’**

**PART II. TOPICS IN DEVELOPMENT:**

**Climate, Food, AIDS, Deforestation, Desertification, Poverty**

(Topics covered as time permits)

**V. Climate Change, Environment and Development**

a. Fundamentals of climate change and development

i. Readings:

1. *Climate Change, Resources, Migration: Securing Africa in an Uncertain Climate. Read entire document*
2. *In search of shelter: mapping the effects of climate change on human migration and displacement. Read entire document*

b. Madagascar case study

i. Reading:

*Environmental change and adaptation in degraded agro-ecosystems: the case of highland Madagascar. Read entire paper.*

**VI. Food Security and Development**

a. Fundamentals of food security

i. Readings:

1. *Food Security and the environment: concepts and connections. pp. 6-26*
2. Reading: *Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)*  
<http://www.fews.net/> Become familiar with the web page

b. Ethiopia case study: Genetic erosion and food security

**VII. AIDS and Land Tenure**

a. Local society adjustments

**VIII. Deforestation and land rights**

a. Reception of rights and perception of rights

i. Readings:

1. *Migrant land rights reception and ‘clearing to claim’ in sub-Saharan Africa: A deforestation example from southern Zambia. Read entire paper.*

**IX. Desertification**

a. Old and new perspectives

i. Readings:

1. *Eroded consensus: donors and the dilemmas of degradation in Kodoa, Central Tanzania*, pp. 243-267

**X. Poverty and Development**

a. The UN perspective