

Why is the World Polarized?

Theories of Development & Globalization since 1950

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Class Objectives

This is not an applied course that is intended to teach you how to "do development." Instead, this is a course that aims to explore the human, economic, philosophical, and cultural dilemmas that result when top-down capitalist development occurs in Third World regions. You will not leave this course feeling like you know all the answers about how to do "development mechanics," but you should become more competent at questioning the hidden agendas and political myths that permeate all development approaches.

Every theory of global development proselytizes a vision of the best world civilization and promulgates its own political agenda to construct that civilizational project. This is an interdisciplinary survey of several of those competing theoretical explanations. No theoretical approach will be treated as sacred or perfect; rather we will seek to unmask the biases and the weaknesses inherent in all of them. Western theories of development will be analyzed and critiqued. However, we will also examine several alternative development scenarios that seek to incorporate peoples and factors that have traditionally been excluded from Western development planning.

This class will undertake a critical exploration of two broad areas:

- Major theories of development and globalization (readings, class discussions, and exams)
- Contemporary controversies and debates about development and globalization (student team presentations)

Class Format

- Work on Communication Skills and Professional Presentation of Self:** Unlike most graduate seminars, we will work directly upon the development of strong professional communication skills. Part of your grade will reflect the degree to which you participate actively in this process and the degree to which you show improvement. Every student will be expected to participate in discussion several times every class, and a discussion grade will be recorded for every student every class. Students will also be assigned at least one presentation during the semester.
- Writing Skills:** You will write two take-home essay exams over assigned readings and class discussions.
- Extra Credit:** You will have the option of completing two extra credit assignments (one before break and one by end of the semester). I will announce international lectures and other campus activities throughout the semester, or you can select a documentary to review.

Course Grading Requirements

40%	Participation in structured graded class discussions
25%	Take-home Essay Midterm Exam
25%	Take-home Essay Final Exam
10%	Team Class Presentation

Course Webpage: The detailed syllabus of readings and assignments is online at:

<http://courseware.vt.edu/users/wdunaway/gia5524/index.htm>

NOTE: When prompted, type in your PID and password.

Course Readings

- Theoretical Reader Available Online.** Wilma A. Dunaway. 2001. *Why Is the World Polarized? Theories of Development since 1950.* Book Chapters Online
- Articles Online** Diverse selection of articles and graphics

Policies about Missed Discussions:

- I expect you to be in every class and to be adequately prepared. A discussion grade will be recorded for every student for every class. An absence will be recorded as an F. To allow for an emergency, I will drop one discussion grade at end of semester.

Why so much emphasis upon communication skills?

1. Employers criticize U.S. college graduates for their weak verbal skills and their cultural ethnocentrism.
2. U.S. college graduates rank themselves weaker in verbal communication and public presentations than any other skills.
3. Americans are weaker at *listening* than persons from many other cultures. We treat communication like another form of competition in which someone must dominate "to win." This is not effective communication, especially in the workplace.
4. The 21st century workplace will require the ability to speak extemporaneously in group situations and, in those situations:
 - to be able to brainstorm with people whose ideas are very different from your own,
 - to construct an argument clearly,
 - to be able to speak clearly without anger or emotion,
 - to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of opposing viewpoints,
 - and to know how to integrate timid or quiet persons into the communication process.
5. The majority of your college classes will teach you to be good at objective test-taking and writing. Very few college classes focus on building verbal skills.

How will class discussion be graded?

- Every student is expected to participate in class discussions, and your participation will be graded. Most of the time, I will call on students directly for responses to questions.
- In this class, silence is worse than a partially wrong answer! If you expect to earn better than a "D" for class discussion, you must be prepared to respond to questions about the reading assignments.
- An "adequate" response is one that reflects that you have done the assigned reading. Your response does not have to be perfectly correct, but you must demonstrate that you are grappling with the ideas discussed in readings.
- You will be graded down for expressing ethnocentrism and for exhibiting an unwillingness to explore ideas that disagree with your own.
- Your own personal opinions will not be adequate; you must demonstrate that you have knowledge of the information and viewpoints reflected in the assignments.

Schedule of Weekly Topics

Week	Theoretical Paradigm	Assignments Due
2	American Developmentalism and Modernization	
3	Neo-Institutionalism	
4	What is Keynesianism, and how does it differ from contemporary world economic policy?	
5	Dissident Latin American Voices: Two Contrasting Theories	
6	Orthodox Marxism	
7	Neo-Marxist Theories of Third World Dependency	
8	Pro-Capitalist Dependent Development & Dismantling the Developmental State	
9	New-Marxist Economic Theories of Uneven World Development	
10	World-Systems Analysis, Part I	
11	World-Systems Analysis, Part II	
12	Bringing Environment into Development Theory	
13	Bringing Gender into Development Theory	
14	Bringing Race/Ethnicity into Development Theory	
15	Team Class Presentations about Contemporary Development Debates	