PS 948: The Political Economy of Development  
Department of Political Science  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
Fall 2018

Class time:  Wednesdays, 1:20-3:15pm in Helen C. White Hall 4212  
Professor:  Rikhil R. Bhavnani  
Office hours:  Thursdays, 9:30-11:30am in 312 North Hall. To ensure that I can see everyone, please sign up in advance at https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/DxXsyycz.html.  
Email:  bhavnani@wisc.edu

Course overview:  We examine why some countries are rich, and others are poor. To do so, we start with examining the root cause of development—institutions. We then explore selected topics, including the role of regime type, corruption, the resource curse, ethnic differences and state capacity. We conclude with an examination of institutional persistence and change. We focus on the cutting edge of the empirical literature on the political economy of development, and pay close attention to measurement issues and causal inference.

Learning outcomes:  Successful students will be able to develop theoretically grounded and testable hypotheses about the political economy of development. They will able to formulate and implement clear research designs to evaluate their hypotheses.

Course credits:  This is a three credit class. The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities, which include class meetings of two hours each week, multiple instructor-student meetings over the course of the semester, reading, data collection, analysis, writing, etc.

Assignments and grading:  The class grade will be based on:  
• Active, informed class participation, for 15% of the class grade. Participants are expected to have read assigned works closely, and reflected on them, including possibly by discussing them with their colleagues before class.  
• Two in-class presentations, for 15% of the class grade each. PDFs of the presentations should be uploaded to Canvas before class. A sign-up sheet for presentations will be circulated in the first class.  
• A referee report, for 15% of the class grade. These may be written on one of the starred readings, and should be posted on Canvas by 8pm the day before the reading is discussed. See are.berkeley.edu/courses/ARE251/2004/assignments/RRGuidelines.pdf for advice on how to write a referee report, and http://chrisblattman.com/2012/01/18/how-to-referee-an-academic-paper/ for further leads.  
• A 20-25 page research paper and its presentation, for 40% of the class grade. Students should discuss their topics with me once by week 6, and a second time by week 11. Papers are due on Canvas one week after the last class, on 12/19. The paper will be graded on the
questions posed, theory, hypotheses and research design, and not the statistical significance of preliminary results.

**Rules, Rights & Responsibilities:** See [http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/](http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/)

**Academic integrity:** By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I, will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center (at 1305 Linden Drive and 608.263.2741; see [www.mcburney.wisc.edu](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu)) to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student’s educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

**Diversity and inclusion:** Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

A detailed class plan—subject to revision—follows.

**Class 1 (9/5): Introduction**


**Class 2 (9/12): Institutions rule**


**Class 3 (9/19): How do institutions rule?**


**Class 4 (9/26): Regime type and development**


**Class 5 (10/3): Corruption**


**Class 6 (10/10): Accountability and responsiveness**


Fowler, Anthony, and Andrew B Hall. 2018. “Politics as if Evidence Mattered: A Reply to Achen and Bartels.”


**Class 7 (10/17): The resource curse**

Ahmed, Faisal Z. 2012. "The Perils of Unearned Foreign Income: Aid, Remittances, and

Class 8 (10/24): Ethnic differences

Class 9 (10/31): State capacity

Class 10 (11/7): Women and development


**Class 11 (11/14): Leadership**


**Class 12 (11/28): Institutional persistence and change**


**Class 13 (12/5): Class presentations**

**Class 14 (12/12): Class presentations**

Final papers due on Canvas, 12/19