



Department of  
Community Sustainability

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

College of Agriculture  
and Natural Resources

**CSUS 215**  
**International Development and Sustainability**

Spring 2018  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:40 – 4:00 PM  
019 Natural Resources Building

Instructor name: Andrew Gerard, M.P.P.  
Office: 328 Natural Resources Building  
Email: gerarda1@msu.edu  
Office hours: By appointment

**Catalog Course Description:** Theories, concepts and themes in international development and sustainability.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Differentiate between economic growth, and development
- Apply critical thinking, analysis and research skills to evaluate the credibility of policy positions and scientific arguments.
- Develop skills to work in developing countries.
- Appreciate the importance of being open minded when thinking about international development.
- Think in a complex way about international development.

These course outcomes support the Department of Community Sustainability undergraduate program competencies of critical thinking, systems thinking, and ethics. Students can learn more about the Department of Community Sustainability undergraduate program competencies at [http://www.csus.msu.edu/undergraduate/sustainability\\_core](http://www.csus.msu.edu/undergraduate/sustainability_core). In addition, this course supports Michigan State University's Undergraduate Learning Goals of analytical thinking and integrated reasoning. More information about MSU's Undergraduate Learning Goals is available at <http://learninggoals.undergrad.msu.edu/>.

**Course description**

This course will provide an overview of issues developing countries face in trying to balance development and sustainability. The emphasis of the course is on understanding the main challenges and problems developing countries face, and the possible solutions to these problems.

The course will be divided into two parts. In the first half of the semester we will explore the concepts of “development” and “sustainability” to understand how sustainability goals can shape international development. We will begin the course by studying the origins of the idea of development, and how it was conceptualized in its origins as a problem of economic growth and modernization, then went on to become a concept that includes economic and social justice,

empowerment and human rights, and the environment. Then we will look at the multidimensional aspects of poverty, and different ways to measure it. We will then discuss the concept of sustainable development.

During the second half of the semester, we will cover major issues related to development and sustainability: gender and development, climate change, energy, agriculture, urbanization, and managements of commons, among others. Exploring these issues will improve our understanding of how societies work (and don't work), and will also be a crucial foundation for practical solutions.

For each of subject we cover, we will try to understand why these issues are problematic and for whom they are problematic, and we will explore possible 'solutions' under the rubric of sustainable development. To explore these issues in some depth, we will use case studies from Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and South Asia. These variations will allow us to comprehend international development in all its complexity.

In addition, throughout the course, students are expected to follow current affairs in news sources. This means that they need to make it a habit to read the news daily and search for stories related to the topics we discuss in class. I recommend sources like the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, and the Economist, which have better writing and reporting than many other sources.

### **Required Text**

There is no text required. But there are readings from different sources for each class. All readings will be posted in D2L.

### **Grading:**

Grading Scale: Grade Percentage and points

4.0	925 - 1000
3.5	865 - 924
3.0	795- 864
2.5	765-794
2.0	695-764
1.5	665- 694
1.0	595-664
0.0	under 594

### **Course Requirements**

You must come prepared for each class, which means having completed all readings. Please note that some readings are subject to change. I will let you know when that happens.

**For all written assignments, make sure you include a bibliography with all the sources you are citing.**

Assignment	Points	Due date
Mini- essay 1	80	February 7
Mini- essay 2	90	March 14
Mini- essay 3	90	April 11
First Exam	200	February 28
Second Exam	200	April 18
Reading and documentary responses	40	Weekly
Participation	50	Weekly
Group Project (presentation and policy position paper)	200	Presentations: April 23 & 25; Paper: May 2
Attendance	50	Weekly
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1000</b>	

Each student will choose a **focus country** from the developing world, which will be the focus of the mini-essays. Selection of the country will be on a first-come, first-served basis, and no two students can have the same country. Each month you will submit an 800-1000 word mini-essay on development issues based on specific questions presented by the instructor for each submission and related to topics that we are covering in class. Writing is a critical skill that you must master to be successful in this class and in whatever profession you choose to pursue; therefore, it is a primary focus of this course.

**Before January 21**, submit the country you want to focus on via D2L. The instructor must authorize your choice before you can go ahead with that country. For all mini-essays, the questions asked are part of the bigger theme that I want you to address in that mini-essay. **The assignment is not just to answer the questions I ask** (though you do need to answer those questions). Instead use my questions as a guide for how to structure your assignment. Each assignment should have 800-1000 words, not counting the bibliography. Be creative: you can include tables, maps, figures, etc., as long as you include sources. These will not count toward the word count.

**February 7, Focus country mini essay 1:** Why did you choose this country? Where is the country located? Find the GDP (what are the most important sectors in that GDP?), the Gini coefficient, Human Development Index, and the Multidimensional Poverty Index of your focus country, and compare those with the ones of neighboring countries. Are there any other indices discussed in class that are important for your country? How have these indicators changed over time? What do the indicators for your country tell you about your country's development?

**March 14, Focus country mini essay 2:** Look at reports describing how your focus country did with respect to the different indicators measured in the Millennium Development Goals. What are their goals for the Sustainable Development Goals? What are the biggest challenges that lie ahead for your country? You do not need to report on each of the indicators, but to report (1) where the biggest advances happened, (2) why they happened (based on available information), and (3) what are the biggest challenges going forward, and why?

**April 11, Focus country mini essay 3:** In this mini-essay you should focus *on one of the topics from the second part of the course related to your country*. Are there gender issues that are important for that country right now? What is happening with food security? What about energy strategies?

Urbanization problems? Or are there any positive experiences you can describe about resource management in that country? Essentially, this essay can cover any positive or negative trends that you feel are important in any of the topics discussed during the second part of the semester.

**First exam:** The midterm will be on February 28. This exam will cover all material (including readings, class presentations and documentaries) covered up until the class previous to the exam (February 21). The exam will be a mix of short-answer questions, true and false questions and multiple-choice questions. I will provide last year's exam as an example of the type of questions that you can expect, and we will go over that exam on February 26.

**Second exam:** The second exam will be on April 18. This will cover all material (including readings, class presentations and documentaries) covered since March 12 until the class previous to the exam (April 11). The exam will be a mixture of short-answer questions, true and false questions and multiple-choice questions. I will provide last year's exam as an example of the type of questions that you can expect and we will go over that exam on April 16.

### **Group Project**

**Students will organize in groups of 3** to investigate a development issue relevant for a region or a country (e.g., food security in East Africa, megacities in China, the impact of HIV/AIDS in a region, etc.). This assignment implies doing research about the topic and working in groups. Keep in mind that it is necessary to this project to explore how different actors (i.e., political actors or different stakeholder groups) may perceive or are affected by that issue. In general, different actors will have different views of problems or development initiatives/projects.

For this group project, you must do 3 things. First, students are required to create their groups and suggest a topic by March 18 on D2L. Each group will then meet with me to discuss their proposed project. Second, the group will do a presentation about that topic. Presentations are due on the last week of classes. Each group will have 15 minutes to do their presentation. Finally, each group will submit a policy position paper. A policy paper is a persuasive document that outlines your views on a policy or issue you have studied (and is of interest to you). The policy paper is a way to apply what you have learned in a format that communicates ideas or recommendations, or persuades people to consider your views. The audience for the paper may be other students, members of a public commission, elected representatives, or anyone else with a stake in the issue. There will be a resource to help you with writing a policy position paper in the Assignments Folder on D2L. The paper is worth 100 points and the presentation 100 points. The policy paper is due on May 2.

Reading and documentary responses: For some readings, activities and documentaries students will be expected to answer a question in 2-3 sentences, or with other type of questions. Sometimes I will use the reading responses at the beginning of the class based on the readings for that day, or at the end of the class based on the presentation and the readings. I will indicate when you must write responses to readings and documentaries.

In addition, you must watch three documentaries and answer questions

Documentary: Guns, Germs and Steel - we will watch in class

Documentary: The End of Poverty? – watch on your own

Documentary: Life and Debt - we will watch in class

**Participation:** Active participation in class is expected (including prior assigned readings and in-class activities). If you are texting/on social media, you are not participating in class. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts and share your ideas with fellow classmates in a constructive and respectful manner. You may be called on to present your comments on the readings throughout the term.

**Attendance:** The number of unexcused absences during the semester impacts your grade. If you attend all classes, your attendance grade will be 50. For each unexcused absence, 2 points will be deducted (i.e., 1 unexcused absence will be an attendance grade of 48, 2 unexcused absences 46, etc.). If you are absent more than 6 times (i.e., 25% of class), your attendance grade will automatically become zero. Excused absences include required fieldtrips for other classes with a note, participation in university athletics with a note, and illnesses for which you have a doctor's note.

**Extra Credit** (up to 50 points): There are many on-campus events that relate to the themes of our class that you are encouraged to seek out and attend (e.g., sign up for the Environmental Science and Policy Program email list and look at the International Studies & Programs website <http://www.isp.msu.edu>). When you find an event, **email me to confirm relevance for extra credit**. After attending, you have one week to write a 1-page double-spaced response for which you can earn 5 points toward your final grade (up to a maximum of 50 extra points for the semester). Responses should summarize key presentation points (i.e., what were the key themes? Who was presenting?). Make ties between the presentation and our class (i.e., how did the presentation relate to course content?). What was your reaction? Why is it interesting or important?

**Late Policy:** Assignments will be turned in electronically via D2L and are due at 11:59 PM on the due date unless otherwise noted. If you will not be able to submit an assignment on time, I advise that you seek permission for a late submission at least 24 hours prior to the due date/time. I will then determine if I will accept your late submission with/without a penalty. Unexcused late submissions are penalized 10% for every late day.

**Communication Policy:** Email is the best method for sharing information with me. I will do my best to respond within 48 hours of your email. Please include "CSUS 215" in all email subject lines. See "E- Learning Policies" below for additional information.

**Cellphones:** You are allowed to maintain cellular devices in a silent mode during this course, in order to receive emergency SMS text, phone, or email messages distributed by the university. You must not text or email during class. As we will discuss in class, this is a "collective action problem." Calls, texts and emails only "benefit" you (and then only in the short term), but cause discomfort to others. Just don't do it.

**Academic Integrity:** [Article 2.III.B.2](#) of the Academic Freedom Report states: "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Department of Community Sustainability adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, [Protection of Scholarship and Grades](#); the all-University Policy on [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#); and [Ordinance 17.00](#), Examinations.

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, tests and exams, without assistance. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit coursework you completed for another course to

satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the [www.allmsu.com](http://www.allmsu.com) site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU regulations on Protection of Scholarship and Grades will receive a failing grade in the course or on the assignment. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html>). **There will be no warnings – the maximum sanction allowed under University policy will occur on the first offense.** Turnitin.com will be used for all written assignments.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to an instructor during the second week of class and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

**Bereavement:** Michigan State University is committed to ensuring that the bereavement process of a student who loses a family member during a semester does not put the student at an academic disadvantage in their classes. If you require a grief absence, you should complete the "Grief Absence Request" web form (found at <https://www.reg.msu.edu/sitemap.aspx?Group=7>) no later than one week after knowledge of the circumstance. I will work with you to make appropriate accommodations so that you are not penalized due to a verified grief absence.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Article 2.III.B.4 of the Academic Freedom Report (AFR) for students at MSU states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.III.B.10 of the AFR states that "The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted. Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Faculty Judiciary process.

**Campus Emergencies:** In the event of an emergency arising within the class, the Instructor will notify you of what actions may be required to ensure your safety. It is the responsibility of each student to understand the evacuation, "shelter-in-place," and "secure-in-place" guidelines posted in each facility and to act in a safe manner. You are allowed to maintain cellular devices in a silent mode during this course, in order to receive emergency SMS text, phone or email messages distributed by the university. When anyone receives such a notification or observes an emergency situation, they should immediately bring it to the attention of the Professor in a way that causes the least disruption. If an evacuation is ordered, please ensure that you do it in a safe manner and facilitate those around you that may not otherwise be able to safely leave. When these orders are given, you do have the right as a member of this community to follow that order. Also, if a shelter-in-place or secure-in-place is ordered, please seek areas of refuge that are safe depending on the emergency encountered and provide assistance if it is advisable to do so.

**E-Learning Policies:** Information technologies such as D2L and email are widely used in this class. As a result, there are some additional policies that need to be understood:

- Students should visit the course’s D2L site on a regular basis.
- Students should check their email frequently (all class email is sent to the student’s official MSU email account).
- All assignments submitted electronically, either on disk or via email, should be free of any viruses and/or worms. Any infected file or media that is submitted will receive a zero (0) for that assignment.
- This course recognizes the students’ right to privacy and adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Students need to review the university policy “Acceptable Use of Computing Systems, Software, and the University Digital Network” at <http://lct.msu.edu/guidelinespolicies/aup/>.
- Email communication policies:
  - Mr. Gerard will answer email about:
    - Questions arising from difficulties in understanding course content
    - Requests for feedback about graded assignments
    - Private issues appropriate for discussion within the teacher-student relationship
  - Mr. Gerard will NOT answer emails which:
    - Poses questions answered in the course information sections of the course D2L site
    - Poses questions answered in the course syllabus.
    - Lacks a subject line stating the purpose of the email and course number (CSUS 215).
  - Mr. Gerard will make every effort to answer email received within 24 hrs and no later than the end of the following business day, unless otherwise specified in class.
  - You are responsible for the operation of any personally owned computers you use on or off campus. A malfunctioning computer system is NOT a valid excuse for submitting late work.

**Title IX:** "Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website at [www.titleix.msu.edu](http://www.titleix.msu.edu)."

**Limits to Confidentiality:** Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University’s student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

### Schedule of topics

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Videos /guest speakers
Week 1	Jan. 8	Intro to course		
	Jan.10	Key definitions		
Week 2	Jan.15	Development and its origins	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 1.1 and 1.2 (5-15)	Video: Guns, Germs and Steel, pt. 3
	Jan. 17	Development and its origins	Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University. Press. Chapter 2 (28-42)	
Week 3	Jan. 22	Development and economic growth	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 1.5 and 1.6 (25-33)	
	Jan. 24	How to cite/ write a bibliography	No reading – meet at Bessey Hall Room 300	
Week 4	Jan. 29	Development and ethics	Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University. Press. Chapter 1 (3-24; <b>focus on 15-24</b> )	
	Jan. 31	Poverty and ways to measure it	Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University. Press. Chapter 1 (3-24; <b>focus on 3-15</b> )  Not always with us. The Economist. June 1, 2013.	
Week 5	Feb. 5	Poverty and ways to measure it	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 1.12 and 1.13 (56-67)  Sabina Alkire and Maria Emma Santos, July 2010 Multidimensional Poverty Index. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.	
	Feb. 7	Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development goals	Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University Press. Chapter 13.  Sachs, Jeffrey D. "From millennium development goals to sustainable development goals." <i>The Lancet</i> 379.9832 (2012): 2206-2211.	
Week 6	Feb. 12	Sustainable development	Kates, Robert W., Thomas M. Parris, and Anthony A. Leiserowitz. "What is sustainable development? Goals, indicators, values, and practice." <i>Environment (Washington DC)</i> 47.3 (2005): pg. 8-21.  Elliot, J. (2006) Introduction to Sustainable Development. Chap. 1 (8-31)	
	Feb. 14	Sustainable development	<a href="https://www.footprintnetwork.org/resources/footprint-calculator/">https://www.footprintnetwork.org/resources/footprint-calculator/</a>  Please watch documentary: The End of Poverty?	<a href="https://www.kateraworth.com/videos/">https://www.kateraworth.com/videos/</a>
Week 7	Feb. 19	International Aid and its critics	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 10.1 and 10.3 (539-542 and 547 -551)	Video: Life and Debt
	Feb.21	Synthesis: first part of course	Green, D. From poverty to power: How active citizens and effective states can change the world. Oxfam, 2012. Intro. (3-14)	
Week 8	Feb.26	Prep for Exam 1		
	Feb. 28	Exam 1		

**Spring Break**

Week 9	March 12	Gender and Development	The worldwide war on baby girls. The Economist. March 4, 2010 Gendercide. The Economist. September 21, 2013 Brygo, Julien “Filipino maids for export ” Le Monde Diplomatique . October 2011. Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University. Press. Chapter 5	
	March 14	Climate change and development	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5 (341-355)	
Week 10	March 19	Food production, consumption, and waste	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 4.5, 4.6, and 4.9 (249-258; 270-273)	
	March 21	Energy and Development: the case of dams	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 6.8 and 6.9 (365-374)	Guest speaker: Laura Castro Diaz
Week 11	March 26	Agriculture and development: Coffee case study		
	March 28	Famines and Food Access	The companion to development studies. Second edition. V. Desai and R. B. Potter. London, Hodder Education chapters 4.3 and 4.4 (235-248)	
Week 12	April 2	Urbanization	Haslam, P. A., J. Schafer, et al., Eds. (2012). Introduction to international development: Approaches actors and issues. Second edition. Don Mills Ontario, Oxford University. Press. Chapter 19 (355-372)	
	April 4	The commons	Sustaining the commons. John M Anderies and Marco Janssen. Published by Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity. Arizona State University. Section 1 (3-11), section 2 (13-23)	
Week 13	April 9	Management of the commons	Sustaining the commons. John M Anderies and Marco Janssen. Published by Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity. AZU. Section 4 (39-47) and Section 5 (51-62)	
	April 11	Poverty in industrialized countries		Guest Speaker: Kyle Metta
Week 14	April 16	Prep for Exam 2		
	April 18	Exam 2		
Week 15	April 23	Group presentations		
	April 25	Group presentations		
Final	May 2	No class		