

Vesalius College

Course description

Course title: International Politics of Development

Course code: POL 341 / POL 341E

Teacher responsible: Huysseune, Michel

Course description:

Development and politics of development are controversial issues. Modern politics of development originated in the Cold War and became hence part of the ideological confrontation between the two blocks but also between developed and developing countries. The post-Cold War 'Washington consensus' of the early 1990s, which prescribed economic liberalism as the only road towards progress, has proved to be fragile and insufficient. Political and scientific debates on the politics of development are once again raging.

This course proposes to put contemporary debates on politics of development in a broader theoretical and historical perspective. It both draws attention to the concrete problems of cases in Latin America, Africa and Asia, to the intervention of the developed countries (US, EU) and the major development institutions (UN System, IMF, World Bank) and to the theoretical background of policy prescriptions. It retraces these issues to the opposed models of modernization theory and dependency theory. It highlights the strong and weak points of these theories, and it relates these theories to the multiplicity of contemporary viewpoints on development.

Course objectives:

- Acquire knowledge on the historical and geopolitical context of politics of development
- Acquire knowledge on the most past and contemporary important theoretical approaches in the study of politics of development
- Getting acquainted with the working of the key actors and institutions of politics of development (US, EU, UNDP, IMF, World bank)
- Acquire knowledge to link development factors and policy agenda (MDGs, etc)
- Being able to draft a 5,000 words paper that includes a critical analysis of theories of development and of a specific case

Grade weighting scheme:

- Presence and participation in classes: 10 %
- In-class presentation: 10%
- Midterm Exam: 20 %
- Term Paper: 35 %
- Final Exam: 25 %

Used course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:

Reader with texts on development theory and on global governance.