

University of Florida
Fall 2023

Development Theory and Practice in Latin America and Africa
AFS 6305 Section 1C82
LAS 6943 Section 01BB

“It’s complicated...and context-specific”

Tuesday 8:00-9:00: Global Classroom Virtual Lecture
Tuesdays 9:35-12:35: Class Session
Grinter Hall 376

Instructor Name: Leandra Merz
Email Address: leandra6@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 9-12 in Grinter 490 or by appointment
Preferred Course Communications: UF email

Prerequisites: *NONE*

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

Course Overview

This course provides a critical introduction to development; it serves as the foundation course for the Master’s in Sustainable Development Practice (SDP) (<http://web.africa.ufl.edu/mdp/index.html>), and is a required course for the Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Development Practice (<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/mdp/academicprograms/sdpcertificate.html>). Both conceptual and practical issues are addressed in relation to each course topic with a multi-disciplinary approach that focuses on the inter-relationship among approaches, comparing Latin American and African contexts. Participants learn to describe and analyze complex development issues, paying particular attention to cross-sector linkages and regional comparisons.

Course Objectives and/or Goals

Students who engage actively in this course will, throughout the semester, develop the capacity to:

- Understand, critique and apply basic concepts and technical skills required to solve professional problems in the field of sustainable development.
- Analyze cross-cultural, multi-disciplinary, international dialogues and dynamics in development.
- Compare development issues and approaches across countries and regions.
- Review literature from a range of sources and critically apply findings to the diagnosis and solution of specific development problems.
- Collaborate both inside and outside the classroom with students from diverse backgrounds and distant regions, using diverse forms of communication and social networking tools.
- Identify, create, and critically analyze integrated and appropriate interventions that may lead to poverty alleviation and sustainable development in particular countries in Latin America and Africa.

Instructional Methods

This course is based largely on student preparation outside of class, via reading and engagement with the online Discussion board, participation in the Global Classroom, interactive discussions, and group activities. Synchronous activities will include some lectures, or instructor lead review of key messages from the reading, but will be focused on application of concepts that are explained and problematized in the out-of-class assignments. Major deliverables for the course include both individual- and group-based tasks.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT
Topical Outline/Course Schedule

Wk.	Date		Topic(s)	Assignments
1	8/29	INTRO	Introduction	
2	9/5		Agency and Praxis, Ethics <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Individual meetings
3	9/12	ECONOMIC WELLBEING	History of globalization and inequality <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Select a geographic location
4	9/19		Sustainability: MDGs/SDGs <i>GCS – TBD</i>	
5	9/26		Markets, private sector, informal sector <i>GCS – TBD</i>	DAP Problem statement + bibliography
6	10/3		Social Entrepreneurship <i>GCS – TBD</i>	
7	10/10	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	Climate Change <i>GCS – TBD</i>	
8	10/17		Water & Conflict <i>GCS – TBD</i>	
9	10/24		Conservation and Development <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Share First Draft of DAP with peers
10	10/31		Agriculture, nutrition, and food security <i>GCS – TBD</i>	DAP Peer review 1 returned
11	11/7		Governance <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Second Draft DAP Due Mid-term evaluation
12	11/14	SOCIAL INCLUSION	Gender and development <i>GCS – TBD</i>	DAP Peer review 2 returned
13	11/21		Values, rights, social inclusion, Buen Vivir <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Group presentation
14	11/28		Health <i>GCS – TBD</i>	Group presentation
15	12/5	Future of Sustainable Development	Beyond SDGs <i>GCS – TBD</i>	

Course Materials and Resources

Required and recommended readings for each class can be found in Canvas on the weekly module page. The modules will be available a minimum of 1 week prior to class. Additional optional readings are available on the Global Classroom website.

Textbooks (required)

- Andy Sumner and Michael Tribe. 2010. *International Development Studies: Theories and Methods in Research and Practice*. London: Sage. *Available online
- Jeffrey D. Sachs. 2015. *The Age of Sustainable Development*. New York: Columbia University Press. *Digital copy available on course reserve

Other required course material and websites

Students will be required to read approximately 75-100 pages per week. The assigned readings will provide diverse perspectives on contemporary issues and challenges, from a variety of sources.

Students will be required to participate in the *Global Classroom*, hosted by Lehigh University and attended by MDP programs around the world from 8:00-9:15 each Tuesday. The Global Classroom will provide a series of live guest speakers, whose contributions will shape discussion and thought throughout the semester.

Students will be provided the Zoom link to call in directly from their home computers. Please plan to call in by 7:55 so that UF student attendance can be taken prior to the speaker's presentation.

Canvas Website

This course will use [E-Learning](#) or "Canvas" to communicate assignments and readings

For technical support related to Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Office Hours

I will hold office hours on Thursdays from 9-12 in Grinter 490. This time period is specifically blocked out for students, you do not need an appointment to meet with me during this time. If I need to cancel or change office hours for any reason you will be notified in Canvas. Office hours are a great time to: ask questions about the course, ask general questions, express concerns related to the course or otherwise, brainstorm ideas, discuss sustainable development or conservation more broadly, discuss practicum options, request advice/input. If you cannot make it to office hours you can request a virtual or in-person appointment by email. Note it may take up to 1 business day for me to respond to appointment requests. You are also welcome to drop by my office outside of office hours to see if I am available, but this is not guaranteed.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

After summing all points earned, the student's final grade is derived according to the following table:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Points	94-100	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

Information on UF policy for assigning grade points can be found in the Registrar's Grade Policy at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Course Grading (See the details for each component below)

Requirement	Due date	Maximum points
Individual meeting	9/12	2 points
DAP Problem Statement and Bibliography	9/26	2 points
First Draft DAP Submitted to Peers	10/24	3 points
DAP Peer Reviews 1 returned to 2 colleagues	10/31	4 points
Second Draft DAP to instructor and peers	11/7	10 points
DAP Peer Reviews 2 returned to 2 colleagues	11/14	4 points
Group presentation	11/21 or 11/28	15 points
DAP Final Draft	12/5	20 points
Attendance and participation	n/a	12 points
Group Peer Assessment	12/5	5 points
Development lectures	12/5 or earlier	8 points
Lead online discussion	Varied	5 points
Reflections (10)	Midnight Sunday	10 points
	TOTAL	100 points

Assignments

Multiple opportunities to submit assignments and to receive feedback from instructors allow students to improve the analytical quality, writing, and organization of their work. We provide brief written feedback on aspects of assignments that can be improved. Students who wish to earn good grades in the course will keep up with assignments and take advantage of the feedback received. Specifics of each required assignment are outlined below and detailed on Canvas.

1. Individual Meeting (2 points)

Students will schedule an individual meeting with the instructor to discuss background, interests, and preparedness for the course. This is an opportunity for students to express any concerns and to receive individually tailored suggestions on resources for their benefit.

2. Attendance and Participation (12 points)

Students are expected to attend regularly and to be actively present in Global Classroom lecture, class discussions, and in required asynchronous on-line participation. Students should let the instructors know if they are unable to attend class. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with [university policies](#).

3. Development Lectures (8 points)

During the semester each student should attend 4 or more seminars within a series offered through UF and related to sustainable development practice. Eligible seminar series include the Gender and Development Working Group, TropiLunch, Natural Resource Management, SASA (Students in African Studies Association), Health in African Working Group, and Barazas. Others may exist, so please ask. You should attend at least 2 from within the same series to meet the requirement. Once you have met the requirement, please submit a brief paragraph describing the date, time, and subject matter of the four seminars you attended.

4. Lead Online Discussion (5 points)

Student discussion leaders are expected to summarize insights from the assigned readings, pose questions, and facilitate discussion among students focused on theoretical issues, key concepts, critiques, and practical applications related to the weekly topic. Leaders should divide readings and each post on the readings on which they focused. Student leaders may summarize key concepts, but must also develop and post key questions in advance (no later than Friday at 8:00 pm) in order to engage students and provoke discussion on the weekly topic, and then lead a brief discussion (15-20 minutes) summarizing the content of the readings, as well as the online discussion, to provide a foundational discussion of the topic.

5. Weekly reflections (10 points)

Each student is expected to compose at least **10 weekly** reflections that flow from the assigned readings and questions posed by student leaders (see section 4, above), and other class materials. These reflections are to be shared with classmates by posting on the Canvas "Discussion" folder by midnight Sunday so to serve as a basis for Tuesday classroom discussion.

In advance of each Tuesday class, *all* students are expected to complete assigned readings, review posts and discussion online, and come prepared to discuss the development topic of the week, independent of whether they have made posted reflections that week. In class discussions on Tuesdays students should actively engage and debate the discussion viewed online, the Global Classroom lectures (when relevant) and assigned readings, including giving thoughtful responses to comments by classmates.

Required criteria for written reflections:

- Be no more than 500 words in length
- Respond to assignments and topic for the week
- Raise a question for discussion

Written reflections may also include:

- Reactions to other postings
- Reference to personal experiences
- Links to relevant materials, videos, websites

6. Development Analysis Paper and peer reviews (DAP) (43 pts, total)

The primary written assignment for the course is an analytical paper that identifies a development challenge in a selected geographic context and draws on relevant literatures to analyze possible approaches to this challenge and propose appropriate strategies for the chosen geographic context. Students are encouraged to use the DAP to develop background analyses for possible field applications and MDP practicum proposals.

Papers should draw on course concepts and materials, and complement these with resources discovered outside of class. Length should be between 4000 and 5000 words (15 to 20 pages double spaced, 12 font, excluding references). All resources and quotes should be properly cited, and full references listed in APA format.

Final DAP papers - which are due November 30 - will be graded according to the following criteria (20 points possible):

Criteria	A successful Development Analysis Paper will:	Maximum points
Name Challenge	Clearly identify the development challenge to be addressed	2
Country Context	Describe relevant history, geography, and cultural background	3

Key Data	Present data on key aspects of the economy, environment, health, education, agriculture/food production and urbanization/ industrialization	3
Analysis 1	Review appropriate literature, assessing previous efforts to address similar challenges	3
Analysis 2	Identify pros and cons of alternative ways to address the challenge	3
Analysis 3	Propose one approach, describe in detail and justify	3
Writing And Organization	Show correct punctuation and grammar, subject-pronoun coordination, full attribution of quotes and paraphrases, complete reference list	3

The DAP assignment consists of several steps, with the following due dates. You should consult a variety of sources, not only international reports and websites, but also academic publications in journals and books, as well as databases such as the World Bank Development Indicators. Developed in stages throughout the semester the final product will be a unique diagnosis of the multidimensional factors affecting the issues at hand for a particular development problem and location. Note due dates in Canvas.

- (September 12) With input from course instructor, **select a country/context** of focus.
- (September 26) **DAP Problem statement of the key development challenge(s)** to be addressed in your chosen geographic context, along with a preliminary bibliography of the available relevant literature on this development challenge and this geographic location. This will become the introduction after revisions. (2 points)
- (October 24) Each student will share his/her **First Draft DAP for peer review by two students**. This draft should i) discuss the relevant history and cultural background of the geographic site, and ii) present basic development data on key aspects of the economy, environment, health, education, agriculture/food production and urbanization/industrialization, as appropriate; iii) include a review of the literature on this development challenge, describing ways in which similar challenges have been tackled or addressed in this or other contexts, and iv) provide an analysis of the pros and cons of alternative ways to address the challenge. The draft *may include* the final section, within which you present your proposed approach, with supporting arguments, however these elements may be less developed than they will be in the final DAP. Students who do not submit a draft for review to two peers will receive a zero for the First Draft DAP assignment (3 points).
- (October 31) Each student will submit a written **DAP Peer Review 1** for two other students. The peer reviews should assess the draft in light of each criterion in the rubric, provide a comprehensive and constructive 1-2 page appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses, and suggest specific ways in which it could be improved. Reviewers may also wish to make comments directly on the text to share with the author (2 points per review = 4 points).
- (November 7) **Second Draft DAP:** The draft will be sent to both instructor AND two peer reviewers. The same criteria will be evaluated as were in the First Draft DAP (see above), however the final section where your proposed approach is presented with supporting arguments, should now be included. The more complete and polished this draft, the more useful the comments will be from the instructors and two peers. (10 points)
- (November 14) **DAP Peer Review 2.** The peer reviews should assess the draft in light of each criterion in the rubric, provide a comprehensive and constructive 1-2 page appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses, and suggest specific ways in which it could be improved. Reviewers may also wish to make comments directly on the text to share with the author (2 points per review = 4 points).
- (December 5) **Final DAP,** fully revised to take into account inputs by instructors and peers. You are expected to incorporate changes that respond to feedback and suggestions from instructors and/or peers. It is important that you analyze thoroughly the relevant literature to provide a strong background and informed analysis of your development problem and location. (20 points)

Please note: You must submit your work on time to receive the necessary feedback. Your grade will not be harmed by a group member's failure to submit his/her assignment.

7. Group Peer Assessment and Presentation (20 points):

This course gives students the opportunity to learn from comparisons of different development realities worldwide, especially across Africa and Latin America. Students in groups will work together to compare their selected countries, discussing differences and similarities with a focus on selected development themes most relevant to the countries being compared. These presentations should not focus solely on the development projects that are the focus of the group members' DAP papers; the group project should include new comparative analyses. Groups will work together throughout the semester to prepare presentations to be given on **November 22 and, possibly, November 29**. All student groups must upload their presentations by midnight November 15, no matter which day their group presentation is reviewed. (15 points)

With participation by all group members, each 20-30 minute group presentation will analyze and compare how the selected locations fare with respect to certain development challenges and priorities. Each presentation is expected to:

- Give an introduction to the main issues and challenges for development, and explain how the selected locations differ;
- Provide a comparative analysis of their respective problems/locations, focusing on selected topics and using data and graphs from a variety of sources;
- Consider policy implications from the analysis, in particular highlighting how different problems/contexts may require distinct development policy recommendations that are locally appropriate.

Group projects will be graded by instructors according to the following criteria, for a maximum total of 15 points:

Criteria	A successful group presentation will:	Maximum points
organization	Proportion well the components within 15-20 minutes allotted	2
clarity	Clearly state key points and supporting evidence	2
sources	Present relevant data from reliable and diverse sources	3
comparison	Effectively compare countries/contexts and draw relevant conclusions	3
analysis	Analyze results of comparative analysis and development implications	3
policy	Suggest appropriate policy recommendations	2

Each student will also receive a Group Peer Assessment score (1-10 points). At the end of term, each student will evaluate his/herself, as well as his/her group members, based on contributions to the group assignments over the course of the semester (online group activities, break out sessions, group presentation, DAP collaborations, etc.). **Each student will submit a peer score for each of their group members, including themselves.** Individual scores will be averaged for a summary grade of 1-10 points.

Policy Related to Make up Exams or Other Work

Make-up work that falls outside of that described in the University policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) will be allowed only at the discretion of the instructor. Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Policy Related to Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend regularly, and to be actively present throughout the course in class discussions. Students should let the instructors know if they are unable to attend a class. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the Graduate Catalog (<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#attendance>) and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

This course will be taught through on-campus face-to-face instructional sessions in order to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. Students are expected to be present and engaged in weekly class meetings. Students are expected to interact with mutual respect for each other, faculty, staff, and guests at all time.

Netiquette: Communication Courtesy

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Academic Integrity

The University of Florida requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. Cheating, plagiarism, claiming credit for work you did not create, and other acts diminish the process of learning. When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. Your instructor fully expects you to adhere to the academic honesty guidelines you signed when you were admitted to UF. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: *"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."*

Furthermore, on work submitted for credit by UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."* It is to be assumed all work will be completed independently and without AI assistance unless the assignment is defined as a group project, in writing by the professor. This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows: A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- A. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- B. Submitting a document or assignment, which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>
<http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

Important Tips: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came, and the date it was accessed. Do not copy text verbatim from any source (including your own previous work) unless you show the text as a quote with complete attribution.

University policy suggests that instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Study work may be tested for its originality against databases operated by anti-plagiarism guardian sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites constitute proof of plagiarism.

Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected and strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. In-class evaluation surveys will be conducted by the instructors at the mid-point and end of the semester. Official UF evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>. The instructor also will conduct a collective verbal evaluation during the last week of class.

SUPPORT SERVICES Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, it is strongly recommended you register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) within the first week of class or as soon as you believe you might be eligible for accommodations. They will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you must then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please do this as soon as possible after you receive the letter. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- The Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>. On line and in person assistance is available.
- You Matter We Care website: <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/>. If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:
Alachua County Crisis Center:
(352) 264-6789 <http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

Inclusive Learning Environment

Global development is based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches

the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act." If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs website: www.multicultural.ufl.edu

*Syllabus is subject to change- please see most recent updates in Canvas