

Political Economy of Development
POLS 494 // Fall 2024

Instructors: Prof. Renard Sexton (renard.sexton@emory.edu)

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Meeting Time: Tuesdays 2:30 – 5:15pm in PAIS 494

Office Hours: Prof. Sexton (Mondays 10am to 12pm sign up via <https://calendly.com/renard-sexton/office-hours> - Tarbuton 334)

Bradley (Wednesdays 3:30pm to 5pm and by appointment – Tarbuton 116)

1. Course Description

This course covers cutting edge, interesting research on the political economy of development.

What is political economy? ‘Political economy’ as used here functions in a few ways: (1) intersection of political science and economics disciplinary approaches, (2) generally ‘positivist’ approach that seeks to generate testable hypotheses (3) often, but not always, trying to carefully tease out cause and effect (as opposed to descriptive or predictive work).

What is development? Development is in some respects a grab bag of topics related to political change over time, economic growth, state formation, conflict, etc. There is a range of theoretical streams of work that we’ll examine, and much of it boils down to ‘political structures matter a lot for social and economic outcomes.’ These institutions are both driven and moderated by contextual factors, making for complex research.

We will cover a number of relevant topics in the course, including protests, racial inequality, and democratic backsliding.

2. Class Goals

In this class, students will:

- Become familiar with cutting-edge political economy work
- Explore case studies from around the world
- Practice constructive criticism of leading social science scholarship
- Conceptualize, design, and write a detailed research design/paper

3. Class Structure

Our weekly sessions begin September 3rd. The primary focus of our time together will be discussion, analysis, critique, evaluation, etc. of the readings, and thinking through how these works help us understand sociopolitical phenomenon in the world around us. This means that, each week, you should come to class prepared to discuss and engage with the week’s readings.

Each week, we will examine a mix of academic articles (usually 2 per week) and popular works (e.g., an article from *The New York Times*, or a recent publication in *The Economist*). An assigned student will create a presentation for each week. We will have open discussion and debate, informed by the presentations and thought papers we have all reviewed ahead of time. Details on each of the products are listed in the next section.

4. Class Requirements and Grading

Reading

Each class session has an associated set of readings. Preparation means that you have read the assignments before class and that you are ready to discuss. In the event that you do not understand all that you have read, you need to be prepared to ask questions. If you miss readings for a class, it's worth going back and reviewing the material even after lecture or when completing assignments.

Attendance and Participation (25%)

For this course, attendance and participation includes engagement during class discussion. It is important to attend class, and that you are ready to engage in our discussions.

Presentations (10%)

In addition to normal participation, each student will present the week's readings once during the semester. We will assign weeks for the entire semester during our first class session. Practically, each presentation will include a 10-15 minute discussion/overview that you will use to lead discussion in class. You should create a PowerPoint slide deck to do this. Use this as an opportunity to engage the material and consider how it connects to the world around us—feel free to include your own critiques and hot takes. The goal is for this presentation to serve as a brief introduction/overview of each of the readings and a forum for sparking discussion. You should **post your presentation to Canvas by 5pm on the Sunday before our Tuesday class.**

Thought Papers (25%)

Each student will write 4 thought papers that are *no longer than one single-spaced page*. They should be **uploaded to Canvas by 5pm on the Sunday before our Tuesday class**. You will draft one of each of the following four types of thought papers over the course of the semester:

- A critique of one (or several) of the week's readings—your discussion should focus on the strengths/contributions and weaknesses of the piece
- A discussion of how you might extend this work to answer important social science questions

- A summary/review of the readings—you should focus on synthesizing the key take-aways from each reading, and discussing how these works complement/conflict with one another
- A blog-style post that applies the findings from our readings to a current sociopolitical event (see, for example, blogs such as The Washington Post’s Monkey Cage or Political Violence @ a Glance)

You are free to choose the four different weeks for which you would like to provide a thought paper, but each thought paper should take a different format (from the four formats outlined above).

Research Product (40%)

A final written research product will be due at the end of the class. Start thinking about your paper ideas right away. The paper has required steps along the way.

1. Submit a two-paragraph sketch of your idea to Canvas by Wednesday September 25th at 5pm.
 - a. After you submit your two paragraphs, you will be assigned to either Bradley or Prof. Sexton, and they will work with you to guide your project as you focus on drafting a final product.
 - b. You are not beholden to your two paragraph idea. Research ideas change all the time. Some of the class readings later on in the semester may inform your own research questions. But it’s beneficial to start thinking about ideas early.
2. After submitting your two paragraphs, please come by office hours to discuss your research idea by October 11th.
3. Students assigned to Bradley for their final research product will present their paper idea for 10 – 15 minutes during class on October 22nd. This will be an opportunity for you to receive feedback from other classmates as well as Prof. Sexton and Bradley.
4. Students assigned to Prof. Sexton for their final research product will present their paper idea for 10 -15 minutes during the class on October 29th.
5. A draft of your research paper is due November 15th at 5pm.
 - a. This will give Bradley or Prof. Sexton an opportunity to provide you with explicit feedback on your paper as well as serve as a forcing mechanism to get words on paper earlier in the semester.
6. December 13th final paper due.

The product should be a well-developed research manuscript. It should (at least) include:

- A compelling introduction that frames the piece
- Clear positioning within the relevant literature
- A thoughtful and logically consistent theory
- Well-motivated research design (including how one should validate the design)
- What data or information would be needed to complete the project

Missed or Late Assignments:

It is important that assignments, especially presentations and thought papers, are turned in on time. If you expect to be late with an assignment, please be in touch as soon as possible so that we can adjust. Reasonable accommodations will be made throughout the semester.

That said, late or missing submissions will be docked points if there is not timely engagement with the instructors to resolve the situation. If you are concerned about grading or your class performance at any point, please contact either Prof. Sexton or Bradley ASAP so that we can work together on a plan that will allow you to succeed in the course.

5. Course Website

The course will have a Canvas site where you will find the readings and submit assignments. Please access this at <https://canvas.emory.edu/>. You are responsible for checking email updates from Canvas in a timely fashion.

6. Policies

Our goal is to create an inclusive learning environment in the course. The Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. It is your responsibility to request accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must register with the DAS at <http://accessibility.emory.edu/students/>. Accommodations cannot be retroactively applied so you need to contact DAS as early as possible and contact me as early as possible in the semester to discuss the plan for implementation of your accommodations. For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or accessibility@emory.edu.

The Office of Undergraduate Education has resources and forms for nearly every academic concern you might have. Usually this is the place to start if you need help with an issue: [OUE Resources A to Z](#).

Please also have a look at Emory's Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.emory.edu> Their staff of undergraduate tutors and graduate fellows is available remotely this fall to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment in any field.

The Honor Code applies to all work submitted for courses in Emory College. Students who violate the Honor Code may be subject to a written mark on their record, failure of the course, suspension, permanent exclusion, or a combination of these and other sanctions. The Honor Code may be reviewed online at: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policiesregulations/honor-code.html>. Basically, don't cheat. You don't gain much but there's a lot to lose.

No incomplete grades will be given unless there is an agreement between the instructor and the student prior to the end of the course. The instructor retains the right to determine legitimate reasons for an incomplete grade.

Most University employees are required to report any knowledge of an incident of sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Unlike a health provider or counselor, I am a mandatory reporter, which means that even if a student says something 'in confidence,' I am legally obliged to report allegations of harassment or misconduct to the Title IX office. The Equity and Inclusions office has more information, including [this summary document](#). For confidential counseling services related to any issue, I encourage you to get in touch with Emory's terrific [CAPS clinical services](#).

7. Weekly Schedule

Ahead of our first class on September 3rd please review the syllabus and look over the readings listed for the first class.

What is Political Economy anyways? (September 3rd)

In our first class, we will review the logistics for the course. Then we will discuss two papers that speak to both contemporary and classic political economy of development scholarship.

Logistics and Q&A

- **Contemporary**
 - Wasow, O. (2020). "Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting" *American Political Science Review* 114(3), 638-659
- **'Classic'**
 - Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development" *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 567-576.
 - Explaining the Economics of Islamic State with Mancur Olson ([Forbes](#))

State Formation (September 10th)

- Allen, R. C., Bertazzini, M. C., & Heldring, L. (2023). The economic origins of government. *American Economic Review*, 113(10), 2507-2545.
- Blaydes, L., & Paik, C. (2016). The impact of Holy Land Crusades on state formation: war mobilization, trade integration, and political development in medieval Europe. *International Organization*, 70(3), 551-586.
- The ISIS Files: When Terrorists Run City Hall (New York Times)

Long Run Impacts of Institutions (September 17th)

- Nunn, Nathan and Leonard Wantchekon. 2011. "The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa," *American Economic Review*, 101 (7): 3221-3252.
- Rozenas, A., Schutte, S., & Zhukov, Y. (2017). The political legacy of violence: The long-term impact of Stalin's repression in Ukraine. *The Journal of Politics*, 79(4), 1147-1161.
- Understanding the long-run effects of Africa's slave trades ([Vox](#))

Women and development (September 25th)

- Dube, O., & Harish, S. P. (2020). Queens. *Journal of Political Economy*.
- Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra and Esther Duflo (2004) "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India," *Econometrica*, 72, No. 5 1409-1443.
- The Ghost Statistic that Haunts Women's Empowerment ([The New Yorker](#))

***Submit your two-paragraph project idea on Canvas before our class meeting on September 25th at 5pm.

Ethnic relations (October 1st)

- Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (1996). "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation." *American Political Science Review*, 90(4), 715-735.
- Scacco, A., & Warren, S. S. (2018). "Can Social Contact Reduce Prejudice and Discrimination? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria." *American Political Science Review*, 112(3), 654-677.
- Inside Europe: Bosnia's Segregated Schools ([Deutsche Welle](#))

Interventions into Local Institutions (October 8th)

- Pande, Rohini, "Can Mandated Political Representation Provide Disadvantaged Minorities Policy Influence? Theory and Evidence from India," *American Economic Review*, September 2003, 93(4): pp. 1132-1151.
- Tsai, Lily L. 2007. "Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China." *American Political Science Review*, 101 (2). 2007
- A/B Testing Foreign Aid ([The Atlantic](#))

**Come to office hours before October 11th to discuss your research idea.

Fall Break (October 15th)

Student Research Presentations (October 22nd)

- Students assigned to Bradley for their research papers will present.

Student Research Presentations (October 29th)

- Students assigned to Prof. Sexton for their research papers will present.

Democratic Backsliding (November 5th)

- Graham, M. H., & Svolik, M. W. (2020). Democracy in America? Partisanship, polarization, and the robustness of support for democracy in the United States. *American Political Science Review*, 114(2), 392-409.
- Little, A. T., & Meng, A. (2024). What We Do and Do Not Know about Democratic Backsliding. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 1-6.
- <https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/08/13/the-dissolution-of-thailands-move-forward-party-is-a-dead-end-but-it-is-not-clear-for-whom/>

Violence (November 12th)

- Condra, L. N., Long, J. D., Shaver, A. C., & Wright, A. L. (2017). “The Logic of Insurgent Electoral Violence.” *American Economic Review*.
- Sexton, R., Wellhausen, R. L., & Findley, M. G. (2019). “How Government Reactions to Violence Worsen Social Welfare: Evidence from Peru.” *American Journal of Political Science*, 63(2), 353-367.
- Brazil’s Spending on Public Safety Soared. So Did Violence. ([New York Times](#))

Clientelism and corruption (November 19th)

- Wantchekon, L., 2003. “Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin.” *World Politics*, 55(3), pp.399-422.
- Hicken, A., Leider, S., Ravanilla, N., & Yang, D. (2018). Temptation in vote-selling: Evidence from a field experiment in the Philippines. *Journal of Development Economics*, 131, 1-14.
- Tanzania Was East Africa’s Strongest Democracy, then Came ‘The Bulldozer’ ([The Atlantic](#))

Policing (November 26th)

- Davenport, C., Soule, S., and Armstrong II, D. 2011. “Protesting While Black?: The Differential Policing of American Activism, 1960 to 1990.” *American Sociological Review* 76: 152.
- Jefferson, H., Neuner, F. G., & Pasek, J. (2021). Seeing blue in black and white: Race and perceptions of officer-involved shootings. *Perspectives on Politics*, 19(4), 1165-1183.
- The Missing Element for Police Accountability: Political Will (The Nation)
- Other resources: <http://jenniferdoleac.com/flash-webinars-on-policing-research/>

Protest (December 3rd)

- Enos, R., Kaufman, A., and Sands, M. 2019. “Can Violent Protest Change Local Policy Support? Evidence from the Aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles Riot.” *American Political Science Review*, 113:4.
- King, G., Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2013). How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression. *American Political Science Review*, 107(2), 326-343.
- What the protesters want and why they might not get it (Vox)

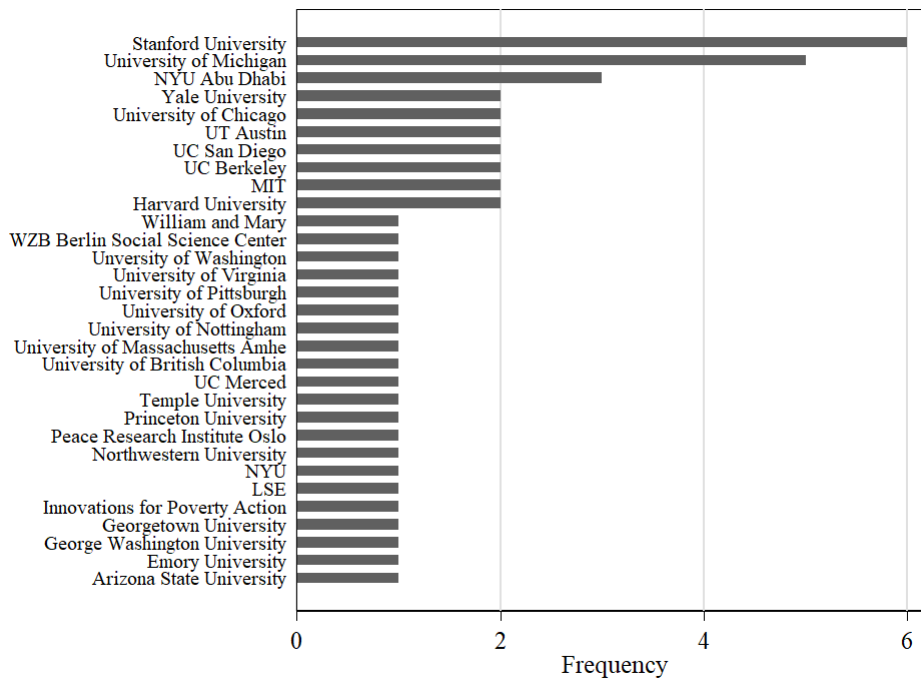
Crime (December 10th)

- Introduction and Chapter 1 of Gambetta, Diego. 1996. “The Sicilian Mafia: the business of private protection.” Harvard University Press.
- Dube, A., Dube, O., & García-Ponce, O. 2013. “Cross-Border Spillover: US Gun Laws and Violence in Mexico.” *American Political Science Review*, 107(3), 397-417.
- The boss on board: mafia infiltrations, firm performance, and local economic growth (Vox)

Who are we reading:

- 24 required academic readings with a total of 52 unique authors.
 - 13 authors are female (25%)
 - 39 authors are male (75%)
 - 16 authors are authors of color (31%) defined as someone who does not have a predominantly European background [imprecise, given a lack of self-identification information, but hopefully better than no data].
- <https://duckofminerva.com/2015/08/new-evidence-on-gender-bias-in-ir-syllabi.html>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/08/19/theres-gender-gap-politicalscience-our-series-examines-problem-looks-some-solutions/>

Where the authors teach:



Where the authors went to school:

