

Introduction to Global Development

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: INTA

Course number: 2050

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
24320

Instructor First Name: Alexious

Instructor Last Name: Butler

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

Introduction to Global Development provides students with a foundational understanding of the political, economic, and social forces that shape development outcomes across the world. The course introduces classic theories of development, contemporary critiques, and the real-world constraints practitioners face.

Drawing on global cases, data, practitioner insights, and current debates, students will learn to analyze why some countries prosper while others struggle, what actors influence development, and how today's geopolitical landscape, climate pressures, and fragility shape the future of global development.

The course culminates in an applied Budget Allocation Simulation for Haiti, where students assume the role of development decision-makers managing a \$150 million portfolio.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define "development" and situate it within key theories and debates.
2. Compare competing explanations for poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment.
3. Analyze how institutions, conflict, gender, governance, markets, and external actors shape development outcomes.
4. Evaluate the role of donors, NGOs, multilateral organizations, and private actors.
5. Use evidence and data to assess the state of global development today.
6. Apply analytic skills in an applied simulation, written essays, and presentations.

7. Communicate development concepts clearly in writing and orally.

Required course materials:

- Doha Declaration article (Al Jazeera / UN News)
- *Center for Global Development Annual Meeting video: "Development Cooperation Amid Upheaval"*
- Tooze, "The End of Development"
- Banerjee & Duflo, "The Economic Lives of the Poor"
- Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (selected chapters)
- Sen, "More Than 100 Million Women Are Missing"
- Stasavage, "Democracy and Education Spending in Africa"
- Center for Global Development Commitment to Development Index (CDI)
- Center for Global Development Annual Meeting video: "Evaluating AI: What's New and Why the Development Sector Should Care"
- Banerjee & Duflo, "The Economic Lives of the Poor"
- Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (selected chapters)
- Sen, "More Than 100 Million Women Are Missing"
- Incoom, Examining the Impact of International Aid Dependency on Governance and Corruption in African Nations: A Critical Analysis of United Nations Donations
- Center for Global Development Commitment to Development Index (CDI)
- Center for Global Development Annual Meeting video: "Evaluating AI: What's New and Why the Development Sector Should Care"

Grading policy:

Case Worksheets (6) 30%

Current Issues Presentation 15%

Participation (in-class) 20%

Final Individual Essay (4–5 pages) 20%

Final Group Presentation 15%

Participation is based entirely on in-person engagement, including discussion, small-group work, simulations, and presentations.

Attendance policy:

Attendance is required for all classes. Students are allowed 1 (one) unexcused absence without penalty. In the event of an unexcused absence, you will not be given any opportunity to make up work for in-class exercises. You will also still be responsible for any material, assignments, or announcements covered in class that you miss as a result of an unexcused absence. Course participants will treat each other with respect. Constructive

questioning and criticism are welcome, even encouraged to ensure a robust discussion on the topics at hand.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.