York University  
DVST 5121: 3.0  
Tools and Policy Analysis for Development  
Development Studies  
Winter 2012

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This graduate course offers a comprehensive yet critical overview of the ways in which  
development is delivered by official aid agencies, government organizations, and NGOs.  
It emphasizes a close link between development theory and practice, and thus aims to  
provide a deeper understanding of the processes by which development plans are  
formulated, projects are designed, and programs are implemented. Its main purpose is to  
demonstrate how the changing language of development requires appropriate tools and  
methods to more effectively plan and manage development at different levels—local,  
national, and international.

The course makes an effort to provide a balanced analysis of the effectiveness of  
commonly used tools that are designed to either achieve the Millennium Development  
Goals (MDGs) or to improve the human conditions in different parts of the world. It  
focuses on such key issues/topics as participation, gender, environment, democratic  
development, and autonomous development. Drawing on the analysis presented by  
scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners, it explores relevant case studies to identify the  
ways in which pro-people policies/projects/programs are both designed and implemented.  
It creates an opportunity for class-members to break new intellectual ground in the  
delivery of development in the new millennium.

Structure of the Course

This course will be organized around a 3-hour weekly seminar. Every Tuesday morning  
the whole class will meet to discuss the topic at hand introduced by both class-members  
and the course director. The main purpose of these class meetings is to provide a context  
for gaining a critical understanding of development cooperation programs in general, and  
their impact on human conditions, in particular. The weekly meetings will offer a  
comprehensive and systematic analysis of how development agencies plan, monitor and  
evaluate development intervention programs and/or policies. Our in-class discussions will  
also aim at offering a thorough assessment of the resulting mix of success and failures of  
both development planning and assessment practices.
Course Requirements

Final evaluation will be based on the knowledge of materials covered in this course as well as the assignments listed below:

**In-class seminar (15% + 15%) 30%**

Each class-member will be required to make at least one oral presentation (15%) to the class based on the weekly topics. The presenter(s) should lead the discussion by providing a thorough and cogent analysis of the chosen weekly topic. This presentation will serve as the basis for understanding not only the process by which development cooperation initiatives are designed and implemented, but also the actual outcomes of development programs/policies sponsored and/or introduced by official aid agencies and civil society groups. The presenter(s) must avoid introducing the summary of the topic at hand. Instead, he/she is expected to raise critical questions and issues about the chosen topic. In other words, the presenter(s) will make an effort to weave together empirical evidence drawn from specific cases and current debates/analyses simply to help us comprehend the complex challenges of development in the 21st century.

The presenter(s) will be encouraged to use overheads, videos, and other audio-visual aids in order to make the presentation both stimulating and interesting. He/she will also be required to submit a short essay, no more than 6 pages in length (double-spaced) on the seminar presentation topic. The essay will account for 15% of the final grade.

The presenter(s) will be strongly encouraged to distribute a short handout in advance, preferably via the Internet, among all the class-members to stimulate debates and fruitful follow-up questions on the topic of the presentation.

A presentation/seminar schedule will be finalized at the first class-meeting. Depending upon the size of the class, in-class seminars can be either a (small) group or an individual project.

**Journal Entry 20%**

Each class-member will write one critical review (6 to 7 pages, double-spaced) of a book chapter/article listed in the course outline. The requirements are that, in addition to synthesizing the major points of the chosen piece, it should provide a critical assessment of the analysis presented in that book/article/toolkit. Although short in length, this assignment will require you to carry out a thorough research on the topic to produce your review that explores the weaknesses of the tool/framework and presents alternative models/choices.
You can choose any week to pick up an article/book chapter for the journal entry based on your own interests and preferences. The assignment is due the day of the seminar when the readings will be discussed. No extensions will be granted for the short paper. Late entries will be marked down 5% per day.

Please note that the seminar presentation and the journal entry cannot be on the readings of the same week.

Final Exam 25%

The class-members will be required to write a final exam in the last week of the class meeting (March 29, 2011). The purpose of the exam will be to determine your familiarity with the key concepts/issues that are associated with the topics covered in this course. In consultation with the class members, the details of the structure of the exam will be finalized in mid-February.

Participation 25%

The success of a graduate course of this nature would depend on the extent to which the class-members are using the source materials to provide a new lens for understanding and evaluating development assistance programs. Thus, the class will require that everyone is making a serious effort to come to the class-meetings fully prepared. In other words, the class-members will be required to participate in and contribute to both class discussions and presentations. Participation grades will be based on your actual contributions to class discussions and attendance records. More than four absences in the entire term will result in a failure in the participation mark.

Please note that all of the assignments will be graded on the following criteria: quality of research, nature of scholarship, strength of written analysis, presentation/writing style.

Evaluation Weights

- In-class seminars (15% + 15%) 30%
- Journal entry 20%
- Final Exam 25%
- Participation 25%

Required Texts

The class will use a course kit comprised of selected articles, book chapters and assessment tools published by key development agencies, noted practitioners and scholars.
Week 1 (January 4): Assessing Aid


Recommended:


Week 2 (January 11): Measuring and Assessing Poverty


You can also try the following URL:

http://go.worldbank.org/ZN6TPFA041

**Recommended:**


**Week 3 (January 18): Understanding ‘participation’ via community development practices**


You can also try the following URL: [http://go.worldbank.org/AAWTXQJGU0](http://go.worldbank.org/AAWTXQJGU0)

**Strongly Recommended:**


**Recommended:**


Week 4 (January 25): Social Capital: myths and realities

Bebbington, A et. al eds. (2006), The Search for Empowerment: social capital as idea and practice at the World Bank, Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press; chapter 2: 31-62 (this book is on reserve).


Strongly recommended:


Recommended:


Dekker, Paul () Social Capital and Participation in Everyday Life, London: Routledge

**Week 5 (February 1): Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Impact Assessment in Development Agencies**


Strongly recommended:


Recommended:


Week 6 (February 8): Gender Responsive Budgeting


Recommended:
Action for Development (2005), Gender Budget Training Manual, Available online at http://www.gender-budgets.org/content/view/167/155/

Sharp, R (2007) Gender Responsive Budgets (GRB’s) Have a Place in Financing Gender Quality and Women’s Empowerment, Available online at http://www.gender-budgets.org/content/view/474/153/

Week 7 (February 15): Sustainable Livelihoods


Strongly Recommended:

Recommended:
Department for International Development (1999), Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets, London, Department for International Development.


**Week 8 (February 22): Reading Week—no class meeting.**

**Week 9 (March 1): Governance and Development**


**Strongly Recommended:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 10 (March 8): Strategic Environmental Assessment**


**Strongly Recommended:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 11 (March 15): Evidenced-based Policy Making I: Results Based Management**

Lavergne, R (2002), Results-Based Management and Accountability for Enhanced Aid Effectiveness, Mimeo, CIDA. Available online at www.sti.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Pdfs/swap/swap052e.pdf


**Strongly Recommended:**

CIDA (2009), Results-based Management in CIDA: an introductory guide to the concepts and principles, Gatineau, Quebec. Available online at http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/EMA-218132656-PPK#3 (Read section 2)


**Recommended:**


**Week 12 (March 22): Evidenced-based Policy Making II: Monitoring and Evaluation**


**Strongly Recommended:**

UNFPA, The Program Manager’s Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit (please read the sections on Defining Evaluation (available online at http://www.unfpa.org/monitoring/toolkit/defining.pdf) and Planning and Managing Evaluation (available online at http://www.unfpa.org/monitoring/toolkit/5planning.pdf)


CIDA (2009), Results-based Management in CIDA: an introductory guide to the concepts and principles, Gatineau, Quebec. Available online at http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/EMA-218132656-PPK#3 (Read sections 5 and 6)

**Recommended:**


**Week 13 (March 29): Over view of the course and Final Exam**