

University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service
7313 Dynamics of Social Change.

Course Description.

The Clinton School is committed to ensuring that its graduates can and will play a significant role in achieving society's best interests. In an interdependent world, influenced by cosmopolitan loyalties, concerns about what interests are deemed to have high priority, tend to overlap local, national and global contexts. This core course therefore, focuses on providing a strategic understanding of a select range of global human development issues concerned with enhancing well-being and human security. Understanding of these issues and the responses that they may require will help to illustrate various elements of social, economic and political change. The successful resolution of some of these issues will however continue to call for skilled and reflective practitioners who can sensitively design and implement programs dealing with transformation and change.

It is however important to emphasize that the call for a practitioner's approach, must recognize that the demands of 'doing' social and economic change, often tend to inhibit reflection on what we have learnt from research and analysis about national and international development, poverty reduction and sustainability efforts. International evaluations have noted that the demands of results- driven program delivery environments, do not often encourage the examination of the assumptions on which expected results are based or resources allocated. The future practitioner therefore needs firstly, to develop a framework or approach for contextualizing change efforts. This will call for linking people, places ,theory and practice in a systematic manner. She then must learn to use the framework to design and implement transformational programs. Finally she must learn to evolve methods for assessing the program outcomes which claim to have led to progress or change. Any of these approaches that may characterize such a framework needs to reflect a basic literacy in key concepts surrounding global and international challenges.

This is an introductory course, which will survey change efforts in the developing world and in the USA. It can only begin to introduce students to the exciting complexity of development efforts, nationally and internationally. Their initiatives are what will carry the day; and this course will seek to fully support their efforts.

Course objectives.

The principal objective of this course is the enhancement of strategic thinking about global challenges and the operational change actions that will contribute to their amelioration. Therefore, this course offers students the opportunities

1. to build for themselves a framework that helps in contextualizing change efforts in global and international settings
2. to enhance analytical and practical abilities and skills that aid problem identification and problem-solving; and
3. to promote systematic reflection on the particularities of the national social, economic and political challenges that will obtain in the countries visited during their international studies practicum, including the United States.

The course will therefore examine a series of inter- related national and global challenges on an in-depth basis and encourage students to explore the multiple perspectives that inform the persistence of these issues.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course students will

- Possess an useful vocabulary of key ideas in the fields of social and economic change
- Be enabled to apply contemporary concepts in managing various aspects of social/economic change.
- Practice framing critical questions
- Be able to write analytically about development issues.

Course design

The course will have 3 components.

- One, it will provide “traditional” overall learning about development through readings, lectures, discussions, visits and workshops by faculty and visiting professionals.
- Two, learning about specified global challenges; will be achieved through the exploring of assigned topics by groups of students, who will be required to develop and make informed seminar presentations to their peers and select faculty.
- Three, students will learn about the challenges faced by the countries that they will visit during their international studies program by preparing an analytic country brief, using national and international data and research. The brief will be comprehensive but not exhaustive, specifying areas where priority changes are vital to achieve development goals benefiting its people. The focus will be on the country’s concerns, rather than on the priorities of the organizations with whom they will be working. The contents and format for appropriate briefs for students who will continue their work in the United States will also be developed.

Grading

- **Participation** will account for **30%** of the final course grade. Attendance supported by informed preparation will greatly aid the adding of value through participation
- Both oral and written performance will count in the assessment of participation. Feedback on participation will be provided midway through the course on the quality and quantity of participation. Students are urged to contribute issues to be discussed, and explore them through careful questioning and analysis.
- The **country brief** will count for **30%** of the final course grade. Students will be assisted, through opportunities for individual consultations, on the finalization of their briefs.
- The group **presentation on selected global challenges** will account for **40%** of the final course grade.

Course writing assignments and presentation projects.

The **2 important course writing assignments** are

- i) the country brief [on an individual or paired basis]; and
- ii) the global challenge presentation developed and presented by groups.

The Country Brief. Assignment.

It is recognized that the second year field work could well have more than one or two students working in each country. It is also recognized that some students will be working in the United States. Final decisions on pairings, specific topics and assignments will be made on or by the first day of class [January 16th]

- Describe the national economic, social and human rights context of the developing country that you will work in. An analysis of governance and democratic practices is also important. Include a brief history since independence. Specify the details of the economy and identify key challenges. Provide an analysis of the social [health, education and welfare] conditions, disaggregated by gender.
- Present a summary view of the country’s ability to meet the UN Millennium development goals . This will require the evaluation of existing efforts and the specification of future action plans and strategies. **Your paper should specify what you consider to be the 3 most urgent goals that the country should focus on, in the next decade, to attain any traction in the MDG process.** Please note to cite your sources, at all times.
- Identify the “problem area” that you will be working on. Specify broadly the information that you now have on the issue. Identify what further information you will need to gather on arrival to further illuminate approaches to tackle or solve the problem .
- Preface the brief with a one or two page Executive Summary identifying key strengths, constraints, opportunities and problems. Specify strategic responses to constraints and problems; and describe the logic of your response..
- The written brief is not expected to exceed 15 pages, exclusive of annexes of supporting materials, maps and tables..
- The final brief is due February 27th, 2008. Be prepared to present your brief, if requested.

- Individual consultations, as the writing and research proceeds will be arranged..

The global challenges assignment.

- Approximately six student groups will be constituted.
- Each group will research, write, produce and present an analysis of a selected global challenge. The global challenges will be shared and discussed on the first day of class. The presentations of your analysis and conclusions will be made in class, in the month of April 2007. Exact dates and timings for each presentation will be determined later. Each presentation and discussion will take about 1 1/2 hours in total, thus allowing for at least , 2 presentations and discussions per class period.
- The research and presentation will encompass a clear statement of the nature and extent of the challenge; specification as to why it is considered a global or international challenge; specification and an assessment of cooperative efforts in responding to the challenge; detailing of an agreed or potential action plan; examples of successful country responses and a clear summary of the lessons learned and a listing of available best practices.
- To the extent possible, the research should highlight the significance of the challenge to marginalized groups, to women and children and the vulnerable. The role of collaborative efforts to resolve aspects of the issues on a cross border, regional or international basis should be highlighted. The emphasis should be on what works and what can be done
- The use of Power Point and other visual aids for presentation will be encouraged.

Overview of Class Sessions.

- The classes will be held every Wednesday afternoon [excluding university holidays] from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, commencing January 16 2008. A total of 16 classes are anticipated.
- Broadly, the **first** third of the classes [January 16 to February 20th] will focus on exploring concepts, theories, practices and tool kits relevant to the undertaking of global and national social and economic change in a variety of settings.
- The **second** third of the sessions will commence with presentations of selected and volunteered country briefs [February 28th MARCH 5TH]. Every effort will be made to have international visitors attend the presentations. The balance two classes in March will involve presentations by visiting lecturers to complement class lectures on aspects of global challenges...
- April classes [5 in all] will be largely devoted to seminar presentations and discussions of global challenges by the various groups. These classes will be supplemented by a special 2 class topic session on international capacity development and its challenges .In these sessions, students will be provided with practical tools for use during their international study program.
- The final class on May 6 2008. will be devoted to a comprehensive reprise of the entire class and will generate a set of lessons learned for future planning and development.

Class Calendar

- Session 1:** Course processes & introduction; Changing paradigms of development; Evolving ideas in measuring change, globally; Understanding problem definition & global challenges
Skills/Learning: Planning assignments; Vocabulary and ideas about development; Problem definition; Familiarity with global indicators; Contemporary perspectives on human development and theories
- Session 2:** Globalization & its dimensions
Skills/Learning: Contextualizing change processes in a global setting
- Session 3:** Implementing change in a multi cultural setting
Skills/Learning: Learning to accommodate cultural concepts that differ from the norm; Using a case study to illuminate decision making in these contexts.
- Session 4:** Workshop on multi cultural settings; follow-up to fall seminar
Skills/Learning: Tools for cooperation in multicultural settings. Revisiting earlier learning.
- Session 5:** Changing views of Poverty
Skills/Learning: Defining and measuring poverty and inequality
- Session 6:** Universalizing human rights
Skills/Learning: Understanding complexities of setting universal norms.

- Session 7:** Country brief presentations
Skills/Learning: Presentational and analytical skills
- Session 8:** Public health as a resource for change
Skills/Learning: Learning about a global challenge
- Session 9:** Rights based approaches
- Session 10:** Beijing and beyond
Skills/Learning; nderstanding gender issues globally
- Session 11:** Global challenges seminar
Skills/Learning: Analytic and strategy presentation
- Session 12:** Global challenges seminar
Skills/Learning: Analytic and strategy presentation
- Session 13:** Global challenges seminar
Skills/learning: Analytic and strategy presentation
- Session 14:** Capacity development
Skills/Learning: Operational skills
- Session 15:** Capacity development
Skills/Learning: Operational skills
- Session 16:** Reprise and evaluation
Skills/Learning: Lesson learning and assessment

Academic Integrity

All work you present to us should be your own. It is fine to study or prepare for class with others, but papers, presentations and assignments should be individual efforts. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) adopting or appropriating for one's own use and/or incorporating in one's own work, without acknowledgement, passages, parts of passages, tables, photographs, models, figures, and illustrations from the writings or works of others; thus presenting such as a product of one's own mind. Any student who plagiarizes may be subject to **any or all** of the following sanctions: receiving a zero on the written work, receiving a reduced grade for the course in which the plagiarism occurred, being suspended from registering for one or more semester(s), being required to enroll in a short course on graduate level writing, being required to comply with any other appropriate remedy as proposed by the Associate Dean, and/or being dismissed from UACS.

You should keep digital copies of all written work for this class. I reserve the right to request a digital copy of your work.

Plagiarism on any assignment in this class will at minimum result in an "F" for the assignment. I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action if appropriate. I strongly recommend students maintain a record of the preparation of their assignments.

Student Accommodation

It is the policy of UACS to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform instructors at the beginning of the course.