

## Sociology 218: International Political Economy

Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Monday and Wednesday 12:10-2:00PM

**Instructor:** Dr. Ryan Alaniz

**Phone:** 756-6261

**Email:** [ralaniz@calpoly.edu](mailto:ralaniz@calpoly.edu)

**Office Hours:** MW 10am-12pm  
And by appointment

**Office Location:** 47-012D



**Course Description:** This course is an overview of the changing political economy and development landscape across nations. Using McMichael's framework as a guide, we will follow chronologically various nations as their economies were shaped by global forces since World War II. In addition, we will read Kidder's *Mountains Beyond Mountains* for a better understanding of the social disconnect of the global north and global south. Combined, the two will provide us with the foundation to do our own investigation of a single nation over time and bridge the incalculable wealth of "Wall Street" with the desperate poverty along the dirt roads of much of the world. We will close our class with a look at the present and future projections about changing interactions between powerful economic actors and their hungry neighbors to the south.

### Required Texts:

#### 1. Books

Philip McMichael. 2011. *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Tracy Kidder. 2003. *Mountains Beyond Mountains*. Random House.

#### 2. Articles

Readings listed as "Polylearn" can be found on the course polylearn site.

*Instructions for accessing the site are as follows:*

First, log on to: [www.mycalpoly.edu](http://www.mycalpoly.edu)

Search for our course by name and number. You will not be able to log on unless you are formally registered for the course.

### Course Goals

I have three main goals. The first is to use sociological tools to examine local and international issues/problems and illuminate the social forces that have shaped the current global political economy. Second, I want to promote a "critical consciousness" toward international development. Finally, through the course requirements I hope you will become a resident expert on one country and its ups and downs based on international changes in the marketplace.

The objectives for this course are for every student to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive introductory understanding of key sociological concepts, terminology, theories, approaches, and perspectives as they relate to political economy, globalization, and development.
2. Apply sociological analysis to historical and current issues of the changing relationship of nations.
3. Improve your ability to think critically and to articulate their ideas in written and verbal formats.
4. Gain a broader understanding of the world, connecting macro-level processes to micro-level effects.

## Class Procedure

This class will be pedagogically “mixed method.” Recognizing the various ways in which people learn, my goal is to meet you the student half way in this learning process. Below are my commitments to you and expectations of you as a student.

First, my main teaching style is lecture mixed with class discussion and activities. Lecture will be concise, relevant, and is central to the way this class is designed. Therefore, you are expected to be at every class (unless you have an emergency) having read the designated material. A large percentage of your grade is based on participation and the reading. Second, student presentations and discussions allow you to work together with other students to grapple with the material on a deeper level. Finally, the exams will give you the opportunity to show how brilliant you are. I expect that you not only understand concepts but that you can also apply them to real life. My commitment is to judge your knowledge and effort as well as give you insightful feedback on your work.

## Course Requirements

## Percentage of the Final Grade:

Discussion Leader	10
In-Class Participation and Quick Writes	15
Country Assignments (3 x 5% each)	15
Midterm	30
Final	30

### In-Class Discussion Leader

Each student will pick a class during the quarter where they will present the readings to the class. The presentation should be about ten minutes. It should: showcase your country in the Global South, highlight important concepts as they relate to the country, and include multimedia. It should not review but rather expand upon the reading as it has affected a particular nation. Try to think of what makes a class interesting and then do that as a sociological/historical review. A rubric is provided on the polylearn site. This activity is worth 10 points.

### Attendance, Participation, and Reading

As noted above, attendance is a necessary part of this class. Therefore, I will use quick-writes and group work to check your attendance periodically.

**Everyone will be expected to participate equally and often.** I have three goals in having students participate: to learn from one another, to be able to articulate clearly to others sociological theory via their experience, and to build confidence in speaking their opinion publicly. Effort is more important than right answers.

**Readings—do them.** I have chosen to go for depth rather than breadth so time should not be an issue. I recommend doing the reading and making notes in the margin, then going back later that day or the next day and reviewing the reading. This will help you “set” the information in your memory. These notes may also be useful as a reference for later classes or work. Also, **please bring the appropriate readings to class** as they will be referenced in lecture and group discussion.

### Quick Writes/Homework

Quick writes are in-class writing exercises that will be used for various purposes. Sometimes they will be used as checks to make sure you are doing the reading and that you are prepared to discuss the reading in class. I will also use them as a simple exercise to get your mind warmed up for a discussion. They must be legible if you are to receive credit. I also may on occasion ask you to do a take home assignment. This work, along with your quick writes, will be worth 15% of your grade.

### Country Assignments

Throughout the course you will be asked to learn about your country and make a connection about what we are learning to the political and economic development of that nation. These assignments will help you become resident experts on a nation and apply concepts to real events. An example may be to learn about and then

present any military interventions in your country using a PowerPoint slide (only pictures). Nations will be chosen by the first meeting of week two.

### Midterms and Final Exam

The midterms and final exam will consist of true-false, multiple choice, and short-answer questions. The true-false and multiple choice questions will gauge your knowledge of key sociological terms, concepts, and theories while the short-answer questions will have you connect these ideas to real life situations.

### **Other Issues**

*Cheating:* I abhor efforts by students to turn in work that is not their own or to cheat the system in other ways. In my classes I take an extra effort to make sure that this does not happen. If I find a student has cheated, I will make sure the student is punished to the fullest extent by the Scholastic Conduct Committee. If you think that you may do this, I recommend taking another class.

*Late and Make up policy:* Tardiness is not accepted in other work environments and will not be accepted in this class. **Late homework and papers will not be accepted unless there is documented illness/other emergency.** If you cannot make it to class, please drop off your homework or paper in my box in the Sociology office on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the Social Science building **BEFORE** class with an attached note explaining why you cannot turn it in to class. If it is an emergency, please see me individually. **Homework sent by email will not be accepted.**

*Incompletes:* No incompletes will be given unless you have a prior written agreement with me and will only be given out in rare situations with extenuating circumstances present.

*Classroom Behavior:* This is a college-level class. Therefore, I will treat you like adults. I expect you to participate often, engage the material both critically and constructively, and to have the highest respect for others, even if you disagree with what they say. We will have intellectual discussions, not petty arguments. It is my duty as an instructor to ensure that each student feels safe and respected when speaking in the classroom. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. If problems arise we will not spend class time solving them. You will be asked to leave and we will work on a solution after class. Remember, both learning and teaching requires humility. Open yourself up to being changed.

*Cellphones and Texting:* I believe that talking on the phone or texting during class is disrespectful of the professor and of other students. If I see you texting during class, I will stop lecture or discussion and ask you to leave to the room to finish your texting. Please do not do it.

*Email:* The simplicity of writing emails, I believe, has encouraged students to email their professor at every whim. I received dozens of emails last quarter in which the answer could have been found in the syllabus, from a classmate, during class, or during office hours. Please only email me if it is critically urgent.

*Disabilities:* It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. I encourage you to contact me to discuss any individual needs for accommodations. The sooner you do the better.

*Media/Speakers:* I believe that technology and guest speakers are valuable tools to increase student learning. Therefore, various multimedia pieces will be used including movies, "You Tube" clips, speeches, and documentaries. These effects give life to the readings by showing real people and institutions being affected by race, class and gender.

*Disclaimer:* While I believe that it is important to treat the syllabus as a contract between us, I also reserve the right to make minor changes in the course as I see necessary. That said, I will do my best to maintain the syllabus as-is and if changes need to be made, I will alert the class in a timely and appropriate manner.

WHEN YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT SOMETHING OR HAVE A QUESTION:

1. First re-read the syllabus
2. Then check Polylearn
3. Then check with a classmate
4. Then wait until class or office hours
5. Then, or if it is an emergency, please email me.

## *Class Schedule*

Week	Date	Readings (Monday) (McMichael)	Readings (Wednesday) (Kidder)	Assignments or Tests (all are due on Wed.)
1	March 26	Introduction BUY YOUR BOOKS!	Part 1 Dokte Paul	
2	April 2	Ch. 1 Development: Theory and Reality	Part 2 Tin Roofs of Cange	
3	April 9	Ch. 2 Instituting the Development Project	Part 3 Medicos Aventureros	
4	April 16	Critical Development <b>Polylearn</b> One of five readings	Part 4 A Light Month for Travel	Food Miles Assignment
5	April 23	Ch. 4 Globalizing Developments	Part 5 O for the P	
6	April 30	Ch. 5 Instituting the Globalization Project	Afterward & Epilogue	Midterm (Weeks 1-5)
7	May 7	Ch. 6 The Globalization Project in Practice	Conscientious Consumerism <b>Polylearn</b> Where am I wearing? Timmerman	Militarization Assignment
8	May 14	Ch. 7 Global Countermovements	Critical Development <b>Polylearn</b> Alaniz or Lummis	
9	May 21	Ch. 9 The Sustainability Project	Climate Change <b>Polylearn</b> Climate Change Articles	Climate Change Assignment
10	May 28	No Class	Ch. 10 Rethinking Development	
11	June 4			Final Exam (Weeks 6-10) Wednesday June 6 12:10-3:00pm