

Latin America: Development and Policy-Making

Tufts University, Ex-College
Spring 2017

Juan Taborda Burgos

Credits	1.0 Credit, Letter-graded
Instructor	Juan Taborda Burgos (The Fletcher School, Tufts University)
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Time and Location	Wednesdays, 6:00-8:30 pm. Location: East Hall, Room 015
Office Hours	By appointment.
Course Website	http://www.jctaborda.com/dev-policies-latinamerica

Course Description

The objective of this course is to equip students aiming to work in development in Latin America with theoretical, practical, and language abilities to succeed.

The course will provide an introduction to the most pertinent theoretical topics relevant for development policies and the policy making process, while framing the theory in the particular context of Latin America. Students will apply these theories to real-world policy situations through weekly discussion and exercises.

Another key objective of the course is to provide the students with the opportunity to practice Spanish in a development work context and the course is structured to achieve this goal.

This course is divided into two sections. During the first half of the semester we will study topics related to the policy-making process. The topics will focus on the actors involved in the policy making process, agenda framing and setting, the political economy of the policy process, and the policy diffusion process in Latin America. The second section of the course focuses on specific topics relevant to the development processes in Latin America. During this second section we will focus on evaluation methods –since sound policies require understanding of what works and what does

not– and then specific topics like Education, Health and Welfare, Agriculture, Public Goods Provision, Institutions and Conflict, and International Aid.

To ensure that the goals of building the student’s knowledge and language skills are both realized, the Monday class will provide the theoretical framework of each topic and the Wednesday class will apply theory to practice with emphasis on strengthening the student’s Spanish proficiency in a *work-like* environment. Hence, each Wednesday will be taught in Spanish, and students will be encouraged to participate in Spanish. The class will consist of reviewing the assigned reading and linking it to the theoretical Monday lesson. The readings selected for the Wednesday will be in Spanish, but will be relatively basic and the instructor will walk the students through the reading carefully. Much of the vocabulary will feed into the development dictionary, discussed further below. To further build the students’ ability to read and discuss in professional Spanish, the three main assignments of the course can be handed in in Spanish or English depending the preference of the student ¹.

Course Objectives

1. **The objective of this course is to equip students aiming to work in development in Latin America with theoretical, practical, and language abilities to succeed in this environment.**
2. Understanding the policy making process and key actors involved in it in Latin America.
3. Comprehending and introducing the key topics for development policies in Latin America from a theoretical perspective and its applied implementation.
4. Improving Spanish skills to achieve a proficient language level, which allows the student to work and research in development topics in Spanish speaking countries in Latin America.

About Your Instructor

Juan Taborda Burgos

I am a Ph.D. candidate in International Relations at Tufts University’s Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and a Fulbright Scholar from Colombia concentrating in International Political Economy and Development Economics. My dissertation research examines the relationship between institutional reforms and economic development. More specifically, it focuses on evaluating decentralization reform and its links to economic development and improved public service provision.

¹Be aware that at least one of the three main assignments **must** be written in Spanish. See more details in the Grading and Requirements Section of this syllabus.

Prior to enrolling at Fletcher, I worked for the Colombian National Planning Department focusing on regional policy and the construction of public policies to strengthen local government capabilities. In this capacity I oversaw the drafting and implementation of the public policy for the development of Colombian frontier territories and was part of the team working on the Territorial review for Colombia's accession to the OECD. I also worked as an external consultant for USAid and AECOM in a project related to the implementation of the restorative justice system, and as a research assistant studying the way institutional design and fiscal institutions determine the development of financial crises.

Readings and Course Materials

All of the readings except those from the *Economics of Development (Seventh Edition, 2013) Perkins, Radelet, Lindauer, & Block* book (PRLB) will be available through trunk. While there are reserved copies of the text book both in Tisch and Ginn libraries, students are encouraged to buy the book given that it provides an important overview of most of the relevant topics for the class or in general for economic development.

Grading and Requirements

The grading of the class depends on five components. Of these three consist of basic assignments that should be handed in on specific dates and the other two grade components are linked to the students' class participation.

Assignments to Hand-in

Since it is likely that students have little experience writing *Op-Eds* and *Policy memos* examples will be provided well before the due dates of the assignments. Additionally, students will receive basic guidelines and common best practices on how to write these important documents.

Each student can decide whether they will hand the assignment in Spanish or in English depending on their own proficiency. **In any case, at least one of the three assignments must be written in Spanish.**

1. **"Op-Ed" Take Home Exam:** Students will be given one "Op-Ed" take home exam on **March 1st**. The exam will provide a list of topics covered during the semester in class readings and class discussions. The students will have 72 hours to compose an "Op-Ed" essay that makes an informed policy argument about the topic. The "Op-Ed" essay will be 850 words in length and should be submitted electronically through trunk. This assignment can be handed in English or Spanish, depending the preference of the student.

2. **Case-based policy memo:** Policy memos are typical documents required within the public sector and/or organizations where students interested in development may work in. The point of the assignment is to provide policy advice for a policy-maker within a given scenario in a clear succinct manner. Hence, students are expected to prepare a memo due on **April 5th**, which will not exceed 3 pages (12-point font, 1.5 spacing, including any tables, maps, or graphics). All memo should include an executive summary and should provide different policy alternatives to address the issues presented in the scenario. In policy memos students do not provide their own recommendation to address the issue, but present the wide set of options for their "clients", evaluating the cost and benefits of implementing each policy alternative. This assignment can be handed in English or Spanish, depending the preference of the student.

3. **Self-selected policy brief:** Students will choose a topic to explore and provide an in-depth analysis. While a list of suggested topics will be provided, students are encouraged to select their own topic, which should be approved by the instructor. The idea of policy brief, is to provide an opportunity to the student to address a topic of their interest, and propose alternative policy solutions to an actual decision maker. The policy brief should include an executive summary, a section which frames the problem being reviewed and a policy recommendation to address the issue. Basically, it is an extended policy memo where the student recommends to the policy maker how to address the problem he introduced. The policy brief will not exceed 7 pages (12-point font, 1.5 spacing, including any tables, maps, or graphics). This assignment is due on **May 1st** and can be handed in English or Spanish, depending the preference of the student.

Grade components related to class participation

1. **Development Spanish Glossary:** Each student is expected to collaborate with two words to the Development-Spanish Glossary each week. This will be a collaborative work, to build up vocabulary related to development policies and policy making in Spanish. The students will include the new terms to extend their vocabulary in the topics, and the result will be an open collaborative product which is available for consultation in [the course webpage](#).

2. **Class Participation:** One of the main goals of the class is to familiarize students with Spanish language in a technical work proficient level, and provide them a space to discuss the different topics of the class in Spanish. Hence, class participation plays a key role and students will receive a grade for their participation.

Assignment	Grade Percentage
<i>“Op-Ed” Take Home Exam</i>	20 %
<i>Case-based policy memo</i>	20 %
<i>Self-selected policy brief</i>	40 %
<i>Development Spanish Glossary</i>	10 %
<i>Class Participation</i>	10 %

Course Policies

Assignment Submittal and Late Policy

All assignments except the final policy brief are due at the start of the class period. Students are expected to submit all final assignment deliverables via TRUNK. If students prefer to print assignments, they should hand them at the start of the class period (March 1st for the "Op-Ed", April 5th for the Case-based policy memo, and **April 26th for the Self-selected policy brief**).

Because of the structure of the course, assignments received after the due date will be penalized 10% for the first day late and 30% for the second day and beyond. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of class. Please conduct your academic work in a professional manner and consult the instructor if you have personal, academic, or scheduling issues that need to be addressed regarding an assignment or other course workload issues.

Student Responsibilities for Meeting Course Requirements

1. Attend all classes. Classes are mandatory and attendance will be taken. Of course, there are always exceptions. If you need to miss a class, please alert the instructor ASAP. In the case of emergencies, please communicate with the instructor and extensions will be granted. In the case of multiple absences due to illness, a doctor's note will be required in order to receive extensions on assignments. **Please be aware that arriving late to class tends to disrupt the flow of the class and shows little respect to everybody else in the room.**
2. Be prepared for class discussions and participation. Volunteer to both discuss information and answer questions.
3. The use of laptops in the class is not permitted. Not only studies show that students who handwrite notes retain material better than those who use laptops or tablets, but as a student I always found other colleagues' laptops could be extremely distracting. All presentations will be made available through TRUNK.
4. All assignments and in class exercises must be professionally prepared. This means legible, formatted nicely, and free of spelling errors and poor grammar. Figures and tables should be identified and properly labeled. Sections should be labeled with an appropriate hierarchy.
5. Reference material, articles, textbooks, and websites used during assignments should be referenced in your documents and graphical materials. Citations standards should be utilized from your respective area of expertise.
6. If you need to communicate with the instructor, you may do so via e-mail, or by making a personal appointment. If you are having personal issues or have extenuating circumstances, please see the professor ASAP.

7. Please do attend office hours not only when you have questions or concerns about the material in class but also when you just need someone to brainstorm or have a conversation.

Tufts Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct

You will be responsible for following Tufts Academic Integrity Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Both of these are found on the [Student Affairs - Publications web site](#). **Please read these carefully!** Note this site also describes the Student Judicial Process that describes your rights as a student at Tufts and the process to follow if you feel these have been violated.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Tufts faculty are required to report any instance of plagiarism to the Dean's office - at that point, we have no control over the situation. Please read and review [Avoiding Plagiarism](#) on the Tufts Academic Resources Center site to understand the various types of plagiarism, including those you may not be aware of. **If you have ANY questions, please contact either instructor early in the semester before you write any assignments. Otherwise we will assume you clearly understand the plagiarism guidelines.**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

If you need an accommodation for the class – in particular for testing – you must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at the beginning of the semester. Please inform the instructor as soon as possible. For more information about SAS, please refer to their [website](#).

Course Outline

Introduction

Week 1: Defining Development and Policy Making

Required Readings

- Amartya Sen, "The Concept of Development" in Handbook of Development Economics (HDE), vol. I, chapter 1.
- Cardoso (2004) Más allá de la economía: interacciones de la política y desarrollo económico. 2004

Recommended Readings

- PRLB: Chapter 1
- Banerjee & Duflo (2007). Economic Lives of the Poor
- Lahera (1999) Introducción a las Políticas Públicas. Cepal
- Waelbroeck (1998). Half a Century of Development Economics: A Review Based on the Handbook of Development Economics

Policy-Making in Developing countries

Week 2: Actors and the Rational Choice Framework

Required Readings

Theory

- Dargent, E. (2014) Technocracy and Democracy in Latin America: The Experts Running Government. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4 Economic technocrats in Colombia 1958-2011
- Scartascini, Carlos. 2008. "Who's Who in the PMP: An Overview of Actors, Incentives, and the Roles They Play." In Stein, Tommasi, Spiller, and Scartascini, Policy-Making in Latin America: How Politics Shapes Policies. (Chapter 2).

Applied

- Zurbriggen (2006) El institucionalismo centrado en los actores. Cepal

Recommended Readings

- Mascareno, Aldo. Coordinación social mediante políticas públicas: el caso chileno. CEPAL

- Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ostrom, Elinor. (1990). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scharpf, Fritz 1997: *Games Real Actors Play*, Westview Press: Boulder Colorado, Chapters 2-3.
- Schelling, Thomas. *The strategy of conflict*. Chapter 2: Reorientation of Game Theory

Week 3: Political Economy of Decision Making in Developing Countries

Required Readings

Theory

- Evans (1995) *Embedded autonomy: states and industrial transformation*
- Bates Robert (2015). *Markets and States in Tropical Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2nd ed. Introduction & Chapter 9
- Killen & Rogerson (2010) *Global Governance for International Development: Who's in charge?* OECD Development Co-operation Directorate

Applied

- Scartascini, Carlos (2015) *La economía política de las políticas públicas*. BID

Recommended Readings

- Hellman, Joel (1998). *Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Post-Communist Transitions*. *World Politics* 50:2, pp. 203-34.
- Schultz, Kenneth. (1995). *The Politics of the Political Business Cycle*. *British Journal of Political Science*, 25(1)79-99.
- Garreton, Manuel (2002), *La transformación de la acción colectiva en América Latina*”, en *Revista de la CEPAL* N° 76, Santiago, abril de 2002.

Week 4: Problem Framing and Agenda Setting

Required Readings

Theory

- Bakir, V. (2006). *Policy Agenda Setting and Risk Communication: Greenpeace, Shell, and Issues of Trust*. In: *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 11(3), 67-88.
- Baumgartner, Frank R. and Bryan D. Jones 1993. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, chapter 1.

Applied

- Bonvecchi & Scartascini (2015) La economía política de la política social: de las instituciones a las redes sociales

Recommended Readings

- Alemán, Eduardo, and George Tsebelis. 2005. The Origins of Presidential Conditional Agenda-Setting Power in Latin America. *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 3-26.
- Miller-Stevens, K.L. (2010). State nonprofit associations and agenda setting: An exploratory study of lobbying strategies. Denver. University of Colorado Press

Week 5: Diffusion of Public Policy

Required Readings

Theory

- Elkins, Zach, and Beth Simmons. 2005. "On Waves, Clusters, and Diffusion: A Conceptual Framework." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 598(1):33.
- Weyland, Kurt. 2005. "Theories of policy diffusion - Lessons from Latin American pension reform." *World Politics*. 57(2):262-285.

Applied

- Lardone (2005) De exportadores e imitadores.

Development Policies

Week 6: Data and Impact Evaluation

Required Readings

Theory

- Dykstra et al. CGD Global Absolute Poverty Fell by Almost Half on Tuesday
- Clemens (2010) Blog entry: Impact evaluation on the millennium villages

Applied

- Garry, Stefanie & Villareal, Francisco. "El uso de indicadores clave para evaluar el desempeño económico a largo plazo de América Latina" *Revista CEPAL*

Writing Policy Memos

- Duke Thompson Writing Studio. Writing a Policy Memo.

Recommended Readings

- Ravallion (2001) The mystery of vanishing benefits: an introduction to impact evaluation.
- *PRLB* Ch. 2
- Clemens et al (2010) When does rigorous impact evaluation make a difference? The case of the millennium villages?

Week 7: Education

Required Readings

Theory

- *PRLB* Ch. 8

Applied

- Fernández & Del Valle (2013) Desigualdad educativa en Costa Rica

Recommended Readings

- Carlson (2002) Educación y mercado del trabajo en América Latina frente a la Globalización
- Orazem & King Ch. The Primacy of Education HDE ch 55
- Easterly Ch. 4

Week 8: Health & Welfare

Required Readings

Theory

- Kremer (2002) "Pharmaceuticals and the Developing World"

Applied

- Angulo et al (2013) La década ganada: evolución de la clase media y las condiciones de vida en Colombia, 2002-2011

Recommended Readings

- *PRLB* Ch. 9
- Galindo embarazo adolescente

Week 9: Agriculture

Required Readings

Theory

- PRLB Ch. 16
- Johnston & Mellor (1961) The role of Agriculture in economic development

Applied

- Gordillo (2004) Seguridad alimentaria y agricultura familiar

Recommended Readings

- Timmer (1988). Agricultural Transformation, in HDE (Chapter 8)
- Thurlow & Wobst (2007). The Role of Agriculture in Pro-Poor Growth: Lessons from Zambia, in Determinants of Pro-Poor Growth, Analytical Issues and Findings from Country Cases, Chapter 9

Week 10: Public Goods Provision (Technology transfer and infrastructure)

Required Readings

Theory

- PRLB Ch. 17

Applied

- Katz (2006) Cambio estructural y capacidad tecnológica local

Recommended Readings

- Bandiera & Rasul (2006) Social Networks and Technology Adoption
- Foster & Rosenzweig (1995) Technical change in agriculture
- Alvarez et al (2011) Innovación, investigación y desarrollo, y productividad en Chile

Week 11: Institutions and Conflict

Required Readings

Theory

- Rodrik (2008) Second Best Institutions
- Acemoglu & Robinson Why Nations Fail Ch. 2

Applied

- Appendini & Nuijten (2002) El papel de las instituciones en contextos locales

Recommended Readings

- Lin & Nugent HDE 38 Institutions and Development

Week 12: International Aid

Required Readings

Theory

- Radelet Steven (2005) A primer of foreign aid.
- PRLB Ch. 14

Applied

- Read OECD Development Co-operation Report 2016 Executive Summary and Skim Report
- Scartascini (2015) Ayuda internacional y capacidades gubernamentales <http://blogs.iadb.org/>

Recommended Readings

- Riddell, Roger. C, Does Foreign Aid Really Work? Oxford University Press, 2008
- Tickner et al (2015) Cooperación dependiente asociada

Week 13: Conclusion