GRADUATE SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Spring 2026

UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Time: Tuesday 14:00 - 17:00
Place: 140-2 #201 for Offline or Zoom Online when necessary
Instructor: Hyeok Jeong (Email: hyeokj@snu.ac.kr, Tel: 02-880-2921).
Office Hour: Tuesday 17:00 – 17:50 with appointment only.
Course Number: M2048.000600

Last Update: January 18, 2026.

Course Keywords

International Development, Empirical Analysis of Development, Development Cooperation, Development Policy and Institutions, Global Growth and Inequality

Course Description

This course aims to provide fundamental understanding about why development experiences differ across countries and how to bridge such development gaps among them so that global inequality would be reduced by national growth and development. There are diverse dimensions of development from human to economic development, and the surface-level reasons and the root causes of such differences also vary from economic fundamentals, social structure, historical path dependence, culture, geography, governance to pure lucks.

We would like to first build up our empirical understandings about the current status of international differences of various development indicators. Then, we attempt to understand the key mechanisms behind such international development gaps, using both theory and data as consistently as possible. We also discuss a possible set of policy and institutional reforms that would improve the current status of global development. In particular, we will pay a close attention to international development cooperation as a potential institutional instrument to promote the global development.

Evaluation

Course grade will be based on (i) in-class midterm exam (30%), (ii) homework (20%), (iii) take-home final exam (30%), and (iv) class participation (20%). Class participation grade will be measured by (i) attendance (10%), and (ii) the quality of answers and questions that are considered to contribute to class (10%).

Keeping class etiquette is required. For example, no cell phone or personal computer communications including text messaging are allowed. In case of doing online class, the camera must be turned on and students should face the camera. Otherwise, simple log-in violating this rule will be recorded as absence. For any negative disruptions to class, negative participation grade will be given.

According to the revised SNU school rule (the 4th Clause of the Article 85), effective date of September 1st in the year 2018, any students who attend less than two-thirds of the required classes will receive a grade of "F "or "U" with exception of inevitable cases which is upon discretion of the instructor.

Instruction for Online Class If Needed

We may do the lectures, presentations and discussions via Zoom when it is necessary. The URL of the login site of Zoom is https://zoom.us. You can create the login ID for Zoom by using your SNU email ID or by obtaining license from the IT Center (phone: 02-880-8282, email: zoom_tf@snu.ac.kr). The Zoom meeting ID and password for this class will be informed to the registered students by emails from TA. Class materials (reading assignments, presentation files and schedules) and the announcement of the class logistics will be posted on SNU eTL.

Course Policy for the Use of Generative AI

1. Generative AI can be used as a supplementary learning tool in this course. Students may use generative AI to explore ideas or topics or to analyze data in completing assignments or in preparing in-class presentations. If any generative AI is indeed used for these purposes, the name of the tool used, the process of its use, and

the generated content must be specifically and explicitly stated in the assignment or in the presentation materials. Without such specific and explicit citation, the assignments or the presentation are considered as academic plagiarism and cheating and the assignments or the presentation will be graded as zero point, and the final grade for the entire course will be F.

2. This course does not allow the use of any generative AI for any kinds of mid-term and final exams (in either in-class or take-home format). If any generative AI is used for any kinds of exams, the final grade for the entire course will be F, this will be considered as cheating. The related students who use generative AI for any kinds of exams will be reported to their affiliated department and the University Administrative Office of Student Affairs for their cheating behavior for violating the course rule for generative AI use.

Course Outline

Part I. Diagnosis of Development Differences

1. Global Distribution of Diverse Development Indicators
2. Different Stages of Development and Structural Transformation

Part II. Empirical Methods Analyzing Development Differences

3. Development Accounting
4. Growth Accounting
5. Growth Regression

Part III. Development Policies and Institutions: Selected Topics

6. Human Capital
7. Finance
8. City
9. Innovation
10. Environment and Natural Resources

Midterm Exam

Part IV. Development Cooperation

11. Concepts and Motives of ODA and Development Cooperation
12. Determinants and Effectiveness of ODA
13. Toward Effective Implementation of Development Cooperation

Final Exam

Remark 1. When the time constraints prevail or unexpected contingencies happen, we can rearrange the above topics and course schedule.

Remark 2. It may be necessary to make adjustment during the semester upon contingencies.