

**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
FALL SEMESTER 2018**

SYLLABUS

ETHICS, DEVELOPMENT, AND FOREIGN AID

LECTURER: Chloe Schwenke, Ph.D.
Course Number: PLCY 783 Class Room: VMH _____
Time: Tuesdays 7:00pm to 9:30pm

Syllabus version of August 12, 2018

INTRODUCTION

"There is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations – our economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that once helped us develop our own economy – and our political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom."

President John F. Kennedy

"Stop sending foreign aid to countries that hate us."

President Donald J. Trump

This course employs an explicitly moral lens to address the empirical, conceptual, political, institutional, and ethical dimensions of foreign aid and relief. In so doing, we will carefully consider the varying perspectives and widely differing roles of those involved, which includes the US Government and other governments who provide foreign aid, civil society organizations, experts and consultants, recipient country governments, targeted aid beneficiaries, marginalized peoples, aid critics, and mission-driven individuals who engage in international development work.

As a graduate level course, the syllabus is designed to develop within students the fundamental reflective and discernment skills and sensibilities, and a basic grounding in leading normative analytical frameworks, so that students can be aware of and responsive to the ethical public policy dimensions of international relief, humanitarian assistance, and foreign aid. The course will also include comparisons with other fundamental ethical principles that shape international relations and foreign assistance public policy: human rights, social inclusion, human capabilities and functionings, gender equity, social justice, and human flourishing.

During this course, we will consider together such questions as:

- Is public policy's dominant analytical paradigm – political-economy analysis – sufficient on its own to

guide critical, morally-defensible decisions in foreign aid?

- Is the diplomatic priority of pursuing strategic national self-interest an appropriate framework for managing international relief and development?
- Should Americans care about the plight of poor people living outside our borders? Why?
- How should “development” be conceived, and by whom? How different does aid look when viewed from the receiving end of foreign aid?
- Who is morally responsible for emergency humanitarian assistance, and why?
- What development strategies are best, and most sustainable – and what does “best” mean in this context?
- Where do concepts about human dignity and human rights fit into international development, if at all?
- Is the moral burden of alleviating global poverty simply too heavy? Or is this often-stated goal only empty rhetoric anyway?
- What does it mean to “do no harm” when it comes to international development interventions? Doesn’t someone’s interest always get harmed when change happens?
- Do each of us have a direct and personal stake in how these questions about international relief and development are answered, or at least an obligation to find such answers?

The course has three main components:

- 1) What is foreign aid, international development, and humanitarian relief? Should we as a nation, and you as an individual, be involved? This part of the course offers a moral perspective on the history, trends, key roleplayers, effectiveness, and justification of foreign aid and international development.
- 2) What does ethics have to do with the politics and structure of foreign aid and international development? This part of the course seeks to identify explicit moral obligations that apply to us as individuals, to civil society, to the private sector, and to the government.
- 3) How do we identify, “unpack”, and hopefully resolve moral dilemmas that are an integral part of dealing with poverty, marginalization, patriarchy, exploitation, uncomfortable histories, and rapid increasing inequalities? This part of the course presents a basic introduction to the “moral toolbox” that is available for us in this work.

Upon successful completion of the course, students with a wide variety of specific sectoral interests should be able to:

- ❑ Articulate a persuasive and thoughtful view of the role of foreign aid and international development in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, and offer arguments for and against the continuation and reform of foreign aid, and for alternative ways to engage in and support international development.
- ❑ Contextualize specific moral challenges to human dignity and gender equality in the context of foreign assistance and international development, and suggest approaches to address these.
- ❑ Understand and articulate – from the different perspectives of the Global North and the Global South – the many dimensions of “progress”, development, human dignity, human well-being and flourishing, social inclusion, and gender equality.
- ❑ Frame policy analysis, outputs, and outcomes in terms of international development priorities and concerns.

ASSIGNMENTS, READINGS, AND GRADING

There will be one short paper required early in the course, a mid-term examination, a group presentation, and a final examination:

- ❑ **Assignment One:** Due by 6pm on Tuesday September 25th. Review and respond to one of the four policy positions described below. Seek to identify and make the normative case for a specific moral position that you align with, while also identifying the most likely points of disagreement that you would anticipate encountering in taking your stance. Assert in a persuasive and well-argued rational manner how your stance manages to overcome each of the stated disagreements:
 - ❑ US foreign assistance should be designed primarily by Americans and should be closely linked to the diplomatic objectives that are prioritized by the US State Department, and – since this aid is funded by US taxpayer resources – should clearly emphasize American strategic self-interest; or
 - ❑ US foreign assistance should be designed collaboratively by senior government officials from the intended beneficiary country and USAID senior staff, and should be entirely about addressing shared convictions on specific humanitarian relief and development objectives – with no direct reference to American strategic self-interest; or
 - ❑ US foreign assistance for humanitarian relief and development should be primarily redirected to reputable American civil society organizations (instead of for-profit development firms) through competitive grants, for them to pursue their own mission-driven goals and programming, so long as this programming meets high performance standards set by USAID. USAID should dramatically reduce its missions abroad (and associated costs), and use regional teams to inspect project performance.
 - ❑ The vast majority of US foreign assistance for humanitarian relief and development should be entirely set apart from political and diplomatic goals, and should be allocated based on a morally defensible set of criteria that respond to urgency of need, level of suffering, social inclusion, equity of distribution, and human rights goals (specifically, the Sustainable Development Goals). A large proportion (to be determined by Congress) of the remainder should be set aside to: (a) address the impact of global climate change in the Global South, and (b) significantly expand the Peace Corps' operations.

Prepare and submit an 8 to 10-page (1.5 line spacing) paper with proper citations (Chicago Manual of Style) delineating your position. Papers will be graded for the standard of scholarly writing, and for the strength and persuasiveness of the moral argument. **(20% of grade)**

- ❑ **Exam:** There will be a sixty-minute closed book mid-term examination on October 9th **(20% of grade)**, and a sixty-minute closed-book final examination on November 27th **(20% of grade)**.
- ❑ **Assignment Two – Student podcasts:** In teams of two, students will prepare and present in class a podcast on a topic that they select, once approved by the professor. The goal of the podcast will be:
 - ❑ to raise an important political, policy, or cultural threat to the future of U.S. foreign assistance for humanitarian relief or for international development (generally, in a specific sector e.g. agriculture, in a specific geographic location e.g. in Benin, or for a specific need, e.g. drought relief);
 - ❑ to persuade the listener to support a specific policy or action designed to counter an identified threat to human flourishing or to overcome a problem, or alternatively to advocate with

sufficient strength to persuade the public to support such U.S. foreign assistance generally. Grading will be based on how persuasive the podcast is, and how well the podcast makes use of secular moral language. Details of how to produce a podcast are included on the ELMS site, including information about where to find assistance on campus. All podcasts must be submitted digitally by class eleven (November 6th), even though presentations (and associated class discussions) will take place on a schedule starting that class and extending the next two weeks. **(20% of grade)**.

- ❑ **Student-led class discussions:** Each student is to identify (and submit in advance to professor for her review and approval) an article, blog, or short essay that is relevant to the topic of ethics and international development. Once approved, and a date is selected for the student to lead a 15-minute to 20-minute class discussion on this article, the professor will circulate this article or blog to all the class in advance of the scheduled date. The professor will also provide some suggestions to the student of what the discussion might emphasize. Student-led class discussions begin on the second class of the term. **(10% of grade)**.

Class attendance and participation are extremely important. Students will be expected to complete the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Since the class does not follow a text consistently, students can only keep up through regular attendance. *Constructive and thoughtful participation in classroom discussions counts for 10% of grade.*

Part One: What is foreign aid, and why should we be involved?

Class 1, August 28th – Introductions and pronoun preferences, review of syllabus, and engagement on initial case studies.

Case study one – urban development: Northwest Luzon Growth Quadrangle project and the workshop at Pangasinan Province, Philippines of Sep. 3, 1993 (2-page case study to be distributed in advance by professor)

Case study two – social inclusion for marginalized persons, see <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/following-pride-event-kenya-s-gay-refugees-fear-their-lives-n885136>

Case study three – the continuation of dictatorship in Uganda, and the diverting of US foreign aid, see <http://vanguardafrica.com/africawatch/2018/8/16/ugandas-dictatorship-becomes-increasingly-brazen>

Readings for the next class (Sep. 4th):

- The Case for Aid, by Jeffrey Sachs, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/21/the-case-for-aid/>
- The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World by Steven Radelet, chapters 1-3, pages 3-71
- “A Brief History of Aid”, see <http://www.aidwatch.org.au/stories/a-brief-history-of-aid/>
- “The Development Dance”, chapter 1 of The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid, by Haley J. Swedlund
- “Economic development and the effectiveness of foreign aid: A historical perspective”, by Sebastian Edwards, see <http://voxeu.org/article/development-and-foreign-aid-historical-perspective>

Class 2, September 4th – Short history of fifty years of international development.

An overview of what the main goals, themes, expectation, assumptions, successes, and failures look like over the past five decades, and what has really changed. Building on the crumbling history of colonialism, and the new global institutions that emerged after WWII, we will explore foreign aid conceived as “economic progress” and “modernization” (usually through industrialization) to a “softer” view that included social concerns, human rights, and the grinding impact of poverty on the most vulnerable. We will see how the MDGs and the Paris Declaration have now led to the SDGs, and how new areas of focus have now emerged that embrace social inclusion and the plight of the most marginalized. We will also begin to assess Steven Radelet’s assertion that the developing world is on the rise.

Readings for the next class (Sep. 11th):

- “The Future of Aid and Beyond” by Myles Wickstead, chapter 2 of The Donor’s Dilemma: Emergence, Convergence and the Future of Foreign Aid edited by Andy Sumner and Tom Kirk
- “Aid as Disruption” by Shanta Devarajan, chapter 23 of The Donor’s Dilemma: Emergence, Convergence and the Future of Foreign Aid edited by Andy Sumner and Tom Kirk
- “Does the US Have an Obligation to Give Money Abroad?”, blog by Ella Cady, see <http://borgenproject.org/us-obligation-give-money-abroad/>
- Peter Singer’s 1972 paper “Famine, Affluence, and Morality”, see <http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/1972----.htm>

Class 3, September 11th – The moral obligations to assist – to some extent – others in need

Why should the developed countries of the world be sending off millions of dollars or pounds sterling to “Bongo-Bongo Land” (as questioned by Godfrey Bloom, the leader of Britain’s UKIP party)? Is the United States, as arguably the world’s wealthiest country, remarkably stingy on what percentage of the national budget goes to aid those experiencing dire poverty abroad? Are certain forms of assistance (health) more morally compelling than others (democracy-building)? Since aid resources are never sufficient, how should we divide and distribute what we have in a way that is ethically defensible? Should we focus on how much money is given (or lent), or on what results are achieved (and for whose benefit)? Do developing countries need to “earn” their foreign aid by clamping down on runaway population growth? Or are we to be swayed by Peter Singer’s 1971 argument to shoulder a very heavy moral burden, which implies that our way of life in the more developed countries must change radically so that the global “pie” of resources and wealth (and food and medicine) can be more equitably shared? Do we really care about social justice, poverty, social inclusion, equity, and emergency assistance?

Readings for the next class (Sep. 18th):

- The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World by Steven Radelet, chapters 4-7, pages 72-179
- Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach, by Martha Nussbaum, chapters 1-2, pages 1-45
- “Foreign Aid: For What and for Whom”, by Samuel P. Huntington, see <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/12/30/foreign-aid-for-what-and-for-whom/>
- “It Takes Two to Tango”, chapter 2 and “Studying the Dance”, chapter 3 of The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid, by Haley J. Swedlund

Class 4, September 18th – Roleplayers and morality in international development

The terminology of international development tells a tale. We have “insiders” and “outsiders”; experts and beneficiaries, facilitators and analysts, target groups and key populations. Elites and the poor live in close proximity but in dramatically different “worlds”. Development ethicists are notable by their absence.

International development is carried out by for-profit and non-profit organizations, by civil society and government, by faith-based groups, and even by the military. Researchers, academics, think-tanks, economists, and development scholars set the intellectual tone to shape foreign aid policy. Do the poor themselves have any voice?

Readings for the next class (Sep. 25th):

- “The political and economic dynamics of foreign aid: A case study of United States and Chinese aid to Sub-Sahara Africa”, by Kafayat Amusa, Nara Monkamy, and Nicola Viegiz, ERSA working paper 595, available at: www.econrsa.org/system/files/publications/working_papers/working_paper_594.pdf
- The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World by Steven Radelet, chapters 8 and 9, pages 180-230
- “The 1961 Foreign Assistance Act”, see <http://www.essaydocs.org/the-1961-foreign-assistance-act.html>

Part Two – Ethics and the politics and structure of foreign aid

Class 5, September 25th – Political environment, foreign aid institutions, and the role of self-interest in international development

- ***First assignment due***

Foreign assistance from the United States to the developing world (the Global South) has never been politically popular among American citizens, which may account for the fact that the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 remains the foundation for our foreign aid. Congress sets annual foreign aid allocations and imposes strict guidelines for how such money is to be spent (mostly on health, never on abortion), and the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act remains in place – even though the nature of aid has changed drastically since then. The World Bank and other (regional) multilateral aid institutions are more flexible and have a much better-defined evolution in their thinking and policy priorities, but such institutions are constrained from being too “political” and hedge around on the issue of human rights. The United Nations (UNDP, UN Women, etc.) is not as constrained, and speaks out forcefully on human rights and social inclusion – but lacks any robust or reliable funding. Other countries have cut back (often drastically) on bilateral foreign aid due to self-interested nationalism and isolationist pressures, leaving philanthropists, faith groups, and various foundations to try to pick up the slack – but with many strings attached. And then there is the argument that trade should replace aid...

Readings for the next class (Oct. 2nd):

- “Transforming Development Aid” by Asuncion Lera St. Clair, chapter 7 of The Donor’s Dilemma: Emergence, Convergence and the Future of Foreign Aid edited by Andy Sumner and Tom Kirk
- “Mirages of International Aid”, by David Sogge, see <https://www.globalpolicy.org/social-and->

[economic-policy/financing-for-development-1-45/international-aid-1-126/45032.html](http://www.economic-policy.com/financing-for-development-1-45/international-aid-1-126/45032.html)

- “The UK’s foreign aid industry goes from bad to worse”, by Jonathan Foreman, see <http://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/656547/UK-foreign-aid-industry-bad-worse-Turkey-Palestine>
- “How the foreign aid industry demeans Africa”, blog by Fraser Nelson (and watch the embedded short video too!), see <http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2013/11/how-the-foreign-aid-industry-demeans-africa/>
- “May I Have This Dance?”, chapter 4, and “A Halfhearted Shuffle”, chapter 5 of The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid, by Haley J. Swedlund

Class 6, October 2nd – Moral content and the structure of the international development “industry”

Foreign aid is a major industry, marked by accelerating consolidation into ever-larger (and ever more bottom-line focused) development firms and non-profit organizations, who also are locked in fierce competition with each other over how aid contracts and grants ought to be procured. This “industry” has many sub-divisions: international development, emergency relief, humanitarian assistance, human rights advocacy. It also has several main sectors: economic growth, health, agriculture, infrastructure, environment and natural resources, education and human development, urban development, rural development, trade. These sectors in the past formed separate “silos”, but they are now overlaid with cross-cutting strategic areas: democracy, public sector governance, rule of law, human rights, social inclusion and marginalized populations, gender equity, social protection, conflict mitigation and management/peacebuilding.

How do we make sense of this elaborate industry, its incentive structures, its leadership, and its orientations (sustainable and measurable “results”, profit maximization, competitive edge, ability to influence policy and resource allocations)? Whatever happened to the Paris Declaration? Is there any room for collaboration and solidarity within this highly competitive industry? Does anyone at the top really care about the poor?

Readings for the next class (Oct. 9th):

- “From Charity to Social Justice” by Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, chapter 15 of The Donor’s Dilemma: Emergence, Convergence and the Future of Foreign Aid edited by Andy Sumner and Tom Kirk
- “The Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Ethics”, by J.A. Singh, see <https://www.google.com/search?q=sustainable+development+goals&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8#q=sustainable+development+goals%2C+morality>
- “Tracking a Craze”, chapter 6, of The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid, by Haley J. Swedlund

Class 7, October 9th – Mid-term exam for first hour of class. Remainder of class: Development priorities, the governance of foreign aid, and the Sustainable Development Goals

Who sets the development agenda, and why? Who is excluded both from the agenda-setting process, and/or from the anticipated benefits? How much influence do the new SDGs really have, and what is their moral

significance?

Readings for the next class (Oct. 16th):

- Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach, by Martha Nussbaum, chapters 3, 4 and 5, pages 46-112
- “The Future of the Development Dance and Why We Should Care”, chapter 7 of The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid, by Haley J. Swedlund

Videos to watch for the next class (Oct. 16th):

- Julia Markovits on Utilitarianism, (4:30 minute): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvmz5E75ZIA>
- Kant Ethics, (7:56 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQcC1qYP08s>
- Rawls Theory of Justice (6:49 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZ2CaSI1dvM>

Part Three – Moral dilemmas and the “moral toolbox” of foreign aid, visits to development practitioners

Class 8, October 16th – Brief overview of alternative moral frameworks as applied to foreign aid (development and relief) – part one

- Utilitarian perspective
- Kantian moral theory
- Rawlsian theory of justice

Readings for the next class (Oct. 23rd):

- Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach, by Martha Nussbaum, chapters 6, 7 and 8, and Conclusion, pages 113-192
- The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World by Steven Radelet, chapters 10 and 11, pages 231-269

Videos to watch for the next class (Oct. 23rd):

- Human Rights and Global Ethics. NEH Institute, (13:15 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPu1ztugyLE>

Class 9, October 23rd – Brief overview of alternative moral frameworks as applied to foreign aid (development and relief) – part two

- Human rights
- The capabilities approach

Readings for the next class (Oct. 30th):

- The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World by Steven Radelet, chapters 12 and 13, pages 270-293

Videos to watch for the next class (Oct. 30th):

- Introducing Virtue Ethics, (9:21 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHVuzec6s0c>

- Tony Kashani on Virtue Ethics (4.55 minutes),
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8bDxQDMRCU>
- Carol Gilligan on Women and Moral Development (6:30 minutes),
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2W_9MozRoKE
- Gilligan's Moral Development Theory (4:26 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlzpBuWzkBU&feature=youtu.be>

Class 10, October 30th – Brief overview of alternative moral frameworks as applied to foreign aid (development and relief) – part three

- Ethics of Care
- Virtue ethics and ethical leadership

Readings for the next class (Nov. 6th):

- none

Class 11, November 6th – **All podcasts due**. First set of teams (as per schedule) present their podcasts and then lead class discussions.

Readings for the next class (Nov. 13th):

- none

Class 12, November 13th – Second set of teams (as per schedule) present podcasts and then lead class discussions.

Readings for the next class (Nov. 20th):

- none

Class 13, November 20th – Third and final set of teams (as per schedule) present podcasts and then lead class discussions. Final exam review class

Final Exam, November 27th

READINGS

Readings will include the following complete books or e-books (purchase recommended):

- *The Great Surge: the Ascent of the Developing World*, by Steven Radelet, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2015
- *The Donors' Dilemma: Emergence, Convergence and the Future of Foreign Aid*, edited by Andy Summers and Tom Kirk, Global Policy E-Books, 2014
- *The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid*, by Haley J. Swedlund, Cornell University Press; 1st edition, 2017
- *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, by Martha C. Nussbaum, Belknap Press, 2013

Readings will also include numerous selections from (free) online sources or as provided by the professor, to be detailed prior to the start of the semester.

OFFICE HOURS AND FACULTY BIO

Students may schedule time by calling or emailing the lecturer, so as to understand issues more fully or to discuss their work. Dr. Schwenke's cell phone 301-448-2953. Dr. Schwenke's email is chloemaryland@gmail.com.

Dr. Chloe Schwenke is an experienced executive manager, author and researcher, educator and trainer. She is also an international development strategist and practitioner, human rights advocate and activist, and ethicist. With over three decades of international experience – nearly half of it while living in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, Prof. Schwenke has a long record of success in the management of non-profit organizations. Currently, she is serving as the Interim Executive Director of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs, a 52-year-old non-profit that supports creative writing programs and writers throughout North America and beyond. Previous to this interim assignment, she successfully completed a one-year grant-funded contract as the Director of the Global Program on Violence, Rights and Inclusion at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) in Washington. In prior employment, she has served as vice president for global programs at Freedom House in Washington, D.C. and (as a political appointee under the Obama Administration) as Senior Advisor on Human Rights at the Africa Bureau of the US Agency for International Development (USAID). While at USAID, Chloe was involved in shaping USAID's new Strategy for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, and in participation in the drafting of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. She also provided leadership for USAID's development policies and programs supporting the development needs of sexual and gender minorities, and represented USAID's Africa Bureau in contributing to various Agency initiatives and policy efforts on gender equality, GBV issues, women's empowerment, and anti-trafficking.

Prof. Schwenke's writing is inspired by her own experience as an openly transgender woman who has lived an international life, mostly in the Global South. In her scholarship and programmatic work, she is informed by feminist ethics, the capability approach, social inclusion, and human rights moral concepts. She received her Ph.D. in public policy at the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland at College Park, where she was Alumna of the Year for 2013. In that same year, she was awarded a National Public Service Award by the National Center for Transgender Equality, and in 2016 she was awarded the Global Advocate Award by DC Center – Global. Recently, in 2018, she was made an honorary member of Lavender Leadership Honor Society, at the University of Maryland. She is the author of two books: *Self-ish: A Transgender Awakening* (Red Hen Press 2018) and *Reclaiming Values in International Development* (Praeger 2008).