



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PROGRAM DESIGN
GHDP 504 - Fall Semester 2018

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Weeks 1-7: Monday, 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM, 204 White Gravenor Hall

Weeks 8-14: Section A: Monday, 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM, 204 WG

Section B: Friday, 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM, 201-A WG (except for Nov 16, ICC 120)

OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

This course focuses on the nuts and bolts of international development strategy and program design. This includes the core skills required of development practitioners in technical design - whether they work for multilateral organizations, government agencies, private sector firms, NGOs, or social ventures, and wherever they work. The course is designed to build knowledge and skills that match the complex, interdisciplinary reality of development practice. Successful development practice also depends on the capacity of program and project managers to think strategically, integrate different disciplines, and interact effectively with numerous stakeholders, both inside and outside their own organization. This capacity is likely to become more important, and more highly valued, as the global development ecosystem continues to evolve. The course, which has been developed in collaboration with colleagues at SFS, Columbia University SIPA, DAI, the World Bank, USAID and other organizations, blends training in core skills and practices with exposure to the functions and characteristics of key actors in the ecosystem.

The course is divided into **two modules** - each featuring guest lectures by development specialists- and each including problem-solving exercises, practice with relevant planning and management tools, and submissions/presentations by student teams. Time will be set aside for planning group work on team projects.

Module One: Development Strategies. We will begin with an overview of the “development ecosystem”, a concept which refers to the every-widening spectrum of actors that, in one way or another, support, fund, and focus on international development. The class will then focus on shifting paradigms in official development assistance (ODA), including a brief overview of the progression of “development orthodoxies” since the end of WWII. The class will examine the

role of traditional development actors, with student teams providing overviews of their historical evolution, governance and accountability systems, delivery models and resource dynamics, partnerships, funding realities, and overall development strategies. The class will explore the role of strategic planning in development work, using both country and sector-level strategic planning documents from USAID, DFID, multilateral development banks, and other organizations (e.g. corporations, foundations and NGOs). The class will examine how development strategies are developed, as well as how they have evolved over time, both as a result of experience and in response to the changing expectations of external stakeholders. Students will learn how to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of country- and sector-level strategies, and will study several examples of “innovation labs” that have been created within these organizations with the aim of generating and testing new solutions to complex development problems. ***Students will submit three individual assignments analyzing development strategies as part of Module One.***

Module Two: Program Design. Using hands-on exercises and actual project documents, we will examine the stages of the program planning and design process. These will include Logic Models, Theories of Change, Results Chains, and other analyses used to demonstrate the feasibility of a program and its acceptability to the community, the donor(s) and other stakeholders. ***Teams of students will work together on a multi-week assignment to produce and defend program designs for a range of different scenarios before an expert panel*** at the conclusion of Module Two.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Active participation in this course will help students gain knowledge and skills in:

Development Strategies

- Overview of the dynamic, rapidly evolving development ecosystem, including geopolitical trends and political/economic factors that are reshaping the ecosystem
- Differences in strategy, programming, and governance among key actors in the ecosystem
- Use of strategic planning in development work, including in country and sector-level strategy development
- “Theory of Change” approaches used by different funders and donor agencies
- New platforms for innovation, including “development labs” and new financial instruments

Program/Project Design Approaches and Tools

- Basic principles of sound program/project design
- Problem Trees and Situation Models linked to Theories of Change
- Identification and mapping of key stakeholder groups
- Logical Frameworks and Results Chains
- Program financing and cost/benefit analysis
- Tools to assess design quality and the probability of success or failure

EXPECTATIONS:

This course is structured around weekly discussion of readings, student presentations, and practical exercises in the classroom. Module 1 culminates with the submission of a program

strategy outline document, and Module 2 culminates with a multi-week team program design assignment. You will find assigned readings and related materials for each week during the semester on the “Week by Week Readings” page on Canvas. We will spend part of each class discussing documents, tools and practitioner handbooks. Please read assigned material ahead of time, and come to class ready to discuss, debate, and offer your own critical viewpoints on the subject matter. The instructors will draw on your comments to structure class discussions, and your engagement in these discussions will be the principal factor in assigning a class participation grade, which represents 15% of the overall grade for the course.

If an urgent situation arises that causes you to miss class, please inform the instructors beforehand. Assignments must be submitted on Canvas by midnight on the day when they are due. Any items submitted late will be marked down significantly. We expect you to uphold Georgetown University’s standards of academic integrity at all times, which includes appropriate citation of all research materials used in preparation of your briefs.

<http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/info-acad-integrity.cfm>.

RESOURCES:

Course Content: Most required readings are drawn from current guidance, tools and methodologies and recent examples of strategies, design documents, and proposal management tools. These will be posted in weekly segments on Canvas. Some readings will be required, while others will be marked as optional for students who want to explore topics on greater depth.

Guest speakers may include development practitioners from international development agencies, implementing organizations (NGOs and contractors) and the private sector.

To complement material that we cover in the course, you are encouraged to follow current trends, debates and trends in the development sector on blogs and websites such as the following:

- Center for Global Development
- Brookings Institution
- CSIS
- USAID Learning Lab
- World Bank Research Department
- DEVEX
- Society for International Development – Washington Chapter

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND GRADING:

As shown below, individual assignments in Module One account for 40% of the course grade; team projects in Module Two account for 45%; and class participation accounts for 15%.

Individual Assignments – Module One	Due Date	Weight
Analysis of Agency-Level Development Strategy	September 23 rd	10%
Country-Level Strategy: Compare One Belt One Road vs ODA	October 7 th	15%
Theory of Change Analysis for an Innovation Lab Investment	October 28 th	15%

Team Assignments – Module Two		
<p>There are three grading components to the work in Module Two. For all three components, a single grade is given to all members of the team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During class in Week 10, each team will present an Interim Design Framework that shows the overall structure and logic of their program design. After discussion and feedback from peers, the team will revise the Framework and submit it for grading four days after the class presentation. The Framework assignment accounts for 10% of the overall course grade. ● In Week 14, each team will submit a complete draft of its design document for review by members of an expert panel, and will deliver a formal presentation summarizing the design in class. The presentation and the team’s responses to questions from the panel will account for 15% of the course grade. ● The final Program Design document is due five days after the presentation in class, and accounts for 20% of the overall course grade. Teams will have the opportunity to revise and refine their design documents after the class session with the expert panel. 		
Interim Design Framework: Revised After Class Presentation	Section A: November 16 th Section B: November 13 th	10%
Final Design Slide Deck and Oral Presentation in Class	Section A: December 10 th Section B: December 10 th	15%
Final Program Design Document (Revised After Comments from Expert Panel)	Section A: December 15 th Section B: December 15 th	20%
Class Participation – Full Semester		
Team Peer Assessments and Contributions to Class Discussions	Weekly	15%

SCHEDULE FOR MODULE ONE:

- Week 1: Wednesday August 29th
- **LABOR DAY - NO CLASS ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD**
- Week 2: Monday September 10th
- Week 3: Monday September 17th
- Week 4: Monday September 24th
- Week 5: Monday October 1st
- **FALL BREAK – NO CLASS ON MONDAY OCTOBER 8TH**
- Week 6: Monday October 15th
- Week 7: Monday October 29th (CHANGE DUE TO PROF. LEWIS’ SCHEDULE)

SCHEDULE FOR MODULE TWO – SECTIONS A AND B

- Week 8: (A) Monday October 29th, (B) Friday October 26th
- Week 9: (A) Monday November 5th, (B) Friday November 2nd
- Week 10: (A) Monday November 12th, (B) Friday November 9th
- Week 11: (A) Monday November 19th, (B) Friday November 16th
- **THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 23RD**
- Week 12: (A) Monday November 26th, (B) Friday November 30th
- Week 13: (A) Monday December 3rd, (B) Friday December 7th
- Week 14: (A) Monday December 10th, (B) Monday December 10th

MODULE ONE: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In addition to the reading assignments posted by week on Canvas, key resources that will be referenced and used over the course of Module 1 include:

- Rapley, John, *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World* Third Edition, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007),
- *Tools for Development: A Handbook for Those Engaged in Development Activity (DFID, 2002).*
- *Field Guide to Human-Centered Design (published by IDEO, 2015).*
- *World Bank Project Planning Handbook (TBD).*

Week 1 (Wednesday, August 29):

Course Introduction and Development Ecosystem Trends

The course will start with student and instructor introductions and a review of the weekly flow and overall expectations of the course. The instructor will trace the evolution of the development ecosystem over the past five decades, and the emergence of the principal public, private, and nongovernmental actors that are found on the landscape today. References to the assigned reading will explore the growing diversity and complexity of this changing ecosystem, the range of traditional and newer actors and the resources they deploy, and some of the stresses and weaknesses in the overall system.

Week 2 (Monday, September 10):

Shifting Paradigms in Official Development Assistance (ODA): 1960s to the Present

Focus on the progression of “development orthodoxies” over the past six decades that reflect distinct theories about how to achieve economic prosperity and social transformation. The early part of this period featured approaches based on “linear” theories about economic and political modernization. Later trends emphasized structural adjustment, fiscal austerity, reducing the role of the state, and greater reliance on markets. Focus on why the challenges of persistent poverty and the deteriorating conditions within fragile states challenged the “Washington Consensus” and led to more serious consideration of institutional, socio-political, and cultural factors. Discussion of need for traditional development actors to change business-as-usual in order to remain relevant to partner countries and credible to their stakeholders.

Preparation for Week 3: Five teams of 3 students each (comprising half of the class) will be tasked with preparing succinct “SWOT” analyses (maximum of 3 slides per team) for five traditional development agencies: DFID, USAID, MCC, the World Bank, and European Commission.

Week 3 (Monday, September 17):

Current Roles of Traditional Actors: Bilateral Agencies and Development Banks

Focus on the architecture and composition of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) system, comprising multilateral UN agencies, bilateral donor agencies, and the development banks. Origins of the major actors in this system; their governance and decision-making processes; and relationships with key respective stakeholders and audiences. Current development strategies and delivery models (grants, loans, trust funds, co-financing agreements, etc.), including current policy focuses and priorities. With a focus on the current challenges facing these institutions, 5 student teams will present and discuss their SWOT analyses for the five assigned ODA actors (DFID, USAID, MCC, the World Bank, and European Commission).

Individual assignment #1: Based on current documentation and commentary by academics and think-tanks, analyze the current agency-level development strategy of (a) DFID or (b) the Millennium Challenge Corporation. How has the agency’s strategy changed over the past 10 years? What factors explain the principal changes that you observe? The paper should not exceed 1,000 words, accounts for 10% of the overall course grade, and is due at 11:59 pm on September 23rd.

Week 4 (Monday, September 24):

Country-Level Strategies in the Traditional Development System

Focus on the process and products of country-level strategic planning by traditional development donors. Class discussion will examine the ways in which these organizations formulate multi-year development goals with and for partner countries. Examples will include USAID’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), the World Bank’s Country Partnership Framework, and DFID’s Country Program Profiles. These planning frameworks typically cover a five-year period, and seek to align the donor agency’s strategy with the partner country’s development agenda and planning systems.

Preparation for Week 5: Five teams of 3 students each (comprising half of the class) will be tasked with preparing brief “SWOT” analyses for selected nontraditional actors: BRAC, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Chevron, China’s international aid program, and the Green Climate Fund.

Week 5 (Monday, October 1):

Ecosystem Expansion: BRICs, Foundations, Corporations, and Impact Investors

The class will follow a similar pattern to Week 3 by exploring the origins and roles of nontraditional actors in the development ecosystem. This increasingly diverse population ranges from middle income countries that have created their own aid programs, to large and small foundations, multinational corporations, and impact investors. How do their governance and decision-making processes differ from those of long-established donors? How do they respond to their stakeholders? How do their development priorities, delivery models and funding instruments compare with those of the ODA agencies? Are these nontraditional actors more or less responsive than ODA donors to the goal of “country ownership”? With a focus on what

these new actors tell us about their current and future roles in the ecosystem, 5 student teams will present and discuss their SWOT analyses for the five assigned selected nontraditional actors: BRAC, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Chevron, China's international aid program, and the Green Climate Fund.

Individual assignment #2: Prepare a brief paper analyzing key differences between country-level strategies under (a) China's One Belt One Road Initiative and (b) ODA donor frameworks in either Ethiopia or Myanmar. How closely do the strategy, structure, and content of these contrasting development models match national development priorities? Which is likely to have the greatest medium- and long-term development impact, and why? The paper should not exceed 1,000 words. It is due at 11:59 PM on October 7th, and accounts for 15% of the overall course grade.

Week 6 (Monday, October 15):

Theories of Change, Political Economy and Dealing with Complexity

A widely used method for outlining a development strategy is the Theory of Change (TOC), which includes an analysis of key factors that explain the problem to be addressed, and generates "if/then" hypotheses to be applied and tested in given contexts. Through current examples, we will see how TOC has become part of the standard lexicon for donor agencies such as USAID, DFID and many nonprofit organizations. Critics have pointed out that in practice, a TOC often oversimplifies a problem and can result in a linear model of change that exemplifies the "tyranny of results", even when many factors in the situation are uncertain and difficult to predict. In this vein, we will host a guest lecturer to examine the way in which political economy analysis (PEA) is driving both our understanding of the development challenges, as well as of the opportunities for change and reform. We will also explore new analytical frameworks that apply the principles of "complexity theory" to problems that defy linear thinking and have multiple causes. We will examine cases where complexity theory is shaping the way that development strategy is being formed to address problems that require experimentation, adaptation and continuous "learning-by-doing:"

Week 7 (Monday, October 29): *New Models for Innovation and Partnerships*

Among ODA donors and many of the newer ecosystem actors, the challenges of complexity have brought forward a commitment to foster innovation and experimentation in development practice. The term "innovation lab" has been widely adopted to describe organizational models that allocate resources to early-stage exploration of promising new technologies, randomized control trials (RCTs), and early-stage investments in both for-profit and n nonprofit social enterprises. Typically, "labs" are set up alongside but separate from the standard operating structures of the sponsoring organization, in order to provide a safe space for managing risk and a platform for engaging with external partners who have a shared commitment to experimentation. Guest speakers who have been directly involved with innovation labs in different organizational settings will describe key lessons from their experience with the class, and offer insights about how these new approaches help to translate strategic thinking into more flexible and feasible program designs.

Individual assignment #3: Summarize the logic for making investments through "labs" within USAID and the World Bank, and evaluate the Theory of Change that was used to justify at least one investment made by each of the "labs:". This paper should not exceed 1,500 words. It due at 11:59 PM on October 21st, and accounts for 15% of the overall course grade.

MODULE TWO: PROGRAM DESIGN

In Module Two, the class will meet in two sections, one comprising 14 students, and the other comprising 16 students. Classroom sessions, practical exercises, and key readings in Module Two are designed to guide students, working in teams of 4-6 individuals, to build the content, logic, and justification for program designs that will be presented to an expert panel in Week 14. After the presentation, each team will have the opportunity to revise and refine its program design before submitting its final document.

The composition of the teams will be decided through a poll of individual preferences for different country scenarios, and the teams will be announced in late September.

Team assignment for Module Two: Students will be assigned to teams, each of which is given a different country scenario. Each scenario articulates a specific development problem, and poses questions to be addressed in any proposed solution to the problem. The team will be tasked with developing a strategy and program design, consistent with the country scenario, and identifying appropriate sources of funding, referencing the expectations and requirements of the financing agencies.

Because this is a demanding exercise that involves multiple tasks, the teams will be expected to organize themselves and begin preliminary work as soon as the assignments are announced. Classes in Weeks 8-13 will be focused on demonstrating and practicing analytical techniques that are essential to the program design process. The instructor will meet with each design team to review their progress and answer questions during office hours.

Key resources that will be referenced and used over the course of this module are:

- *Tools for Development: A Handbook for Those Engaged in Development Activity (DFID, 2002). **May be replaced by more current program design guidance.***
- *Field Guide to Human-Centered Design (published by IDEO, 2015).*
- *World Bank Project Planning Handbook (TBD).*
- *Compact Development Guidance (Millennium Challenge Corporation, 2017).*

Week 8, (B) Friday October 26th, (A) Monday October 29th ***Participatory Planning and Human-Centered Design***

This class will begin with an introduction to the team dynamics and management requirements that the program design teams will encounter in the second half of the semester. A panel of second year GHD students will describe their experience in the Fall 2017 course, and share advice to the newly formed teams in this course.

The second part of the class will focus on participatory planning methods. The foundation for a sound program design is a deep understanding of the core problem that is being confronted and its underlying causes. In many circumstances, there is abundant “conventional wisdom” about the key issue at hand, some of it articulated either verbally or in writing by senior government officials, academic researchers, or local community leaders. While the views obtained from such sources may have some validity, they are often inconsistent, and may fail to distinguish between symptoms and deeper causes. Since these views rarely have full explanatory power for the problem at hand, program designers have a responsibility to collect and analyze data from a

range of different sources, test various assumptions, and then validate (and often adjust) the content and logical connections between elements of the proposed program. This class will focus on the practice of human-centered design (HCD), an approach that is being applied with greater frequency as a means of incorporating diverse stakeholder views in the conceptualization of a development problem and its underlying causes, and generating a range of potential solutions. HCD emphasizes the use of participatory survey and data gathering approaches such as appreciative inquiry, focus groups, and other tools that facilitate discovery of problems, causes, and solutions that can be prototyped and tested before full-scale implementation can begin. Documents posted on Canvas describe how these techniques are applied, and several in-class exercises will be used to show students how they are put into practice.

Week 9 (B) Friday November 2nd (A) Monday November 5th

Problem Analysis, Logic Models and Results Chains

This class will examine several varieties of “logic models” that are widely used to present a cause-and effect hypothesis that describes and justifies a proposed development program. We will look first the **Logical Framework Matrix**. This widely used planning tool maps inputs, outputs, and outcomes to the structure of an Objectives Tree (or Results Framework) and explicitly sets out the assumptions that underpin the “If/Then” causal model of the program. When completed in a rigorous, systematic fashion, the LogFrame also specifies indicators that are used to monitor delivery of inputs, completion of planned activities, production of outputs, achievement of targeted results, and progress toward overall program objectives. However, many practitioners have found the LogFrame method to be rigid and overly mechanical. We will examine an alternative approach developed by USAID’s Biodiversity Team that uses a more complex and dynamic representation that starts with constructing a “Situation Model”, identifies potential “Impact Pathways”, and leads into a “Results Chain” that displays links between initial, intermediate, and ultimate results. As the class considers the utility of these two approaches, emphasis will be given to developing indicators that are specific, measurable, and relevant both to the ongoing management of the program and to process and impact evaluations conducted by external evaluation teams.

Assignment: Each country scenario team will prepare a deck of 4-5 slides to display the Interim Design Framework for their program during class in Week 10. (Examples from previous classes will be posted on Canvas).

Week 10 (B) Friday November 9th, (A) Monday November 12th

Interim Design Frameworks and Stakeholder Mapping

The first hour of this class will be used for brief presentations of each team’s Interim Design Framework, and will include feedback and questions from members of the other teams. The instructor will grade each Interim Design Framework after the team has revised it; the submission deadlines for Sections A and B are shown on page 3.

The remainder of the class will introduce and apply stakeholder analysis tools. One of the most critical steps in arriving at a sound analysis of a development problem is to understand the range of actors that make up its socio-economic, cultural, and institutional context. Rarely, if ever, does a potential program assure a win-win outcome for all of those who hold “stakes” in the issue being addressed. Program benefits that accrue to one category of actors, if the program is

successful, may have negative impacts on other actors, and the latter may be motivated to block program activities if they feel threatened. In some cases, members of a key target group of beneficiaries may be marginalized and deprived of basic rights, which limits or excludes them from access to the resources offered by the program. A “map” of stakeholder interests is a useful way of analyzing (a) the relative importance of program benefits to different actors, and (b) the relative influence (power) of these actors over the implementation of the proposed program. This class session will explore the steps involved in constructing and interpreting a stakeholder map and applying it as a dynamic tool, rather than a static description, in the implementation of the program.

Week 11 (B) Friday November 16th, (A) Monday November 19th:

Program Management and Financing

This class will focus on program management structures and the budgeting process. Tools will be introduced here to evaluate the pros and cons of different institutional arrangements for delivering the program, providing financial oversight and control, and managing accountability to program funders and other external stakeholders. Decisions about program management involve a choice among different institutional models for delivering program activities, and are usually a major determinant of program feasibility. We will then review and discuss basic principles of program budgeting, and practice building a simulated budget using standardized unit costs, and methods for quantifying program benefits during and after the lifespan of a given program.

Week 12 (A) Monday November 26th, (B) Friday November 30th

Introduction to Cost-Benefit Analysis

This workshop session provides an overview of cost-benefit analysis (CBA), a methodology that is widely used to appraise and justify the proposed investment in a development program or project. Practical exercises will be incorporated in the workshop to support the application of CBA methods into the Module Two program designs being created by student teams. All students should bring their laptops to class, loaded with a CBA Excel file that will be used to demonstrate and test CBA skills.

Week 13 (A) Monday December 3rd, (B) Friday December 7th:

Risk Analysis, Formative Evaluation, and Adaptive Management

This session will focus on methods for estimating and classifying risks to the successful implementation of a development program. Once the interests of stakeholder groups have been mapped, and proposed interventions have been planned and budgeted, critical thinking must be applied to anticipate factors that could delay implementation, or even cause the entire program to fail. An in-depth risk analysis ties together what is known about stakeholders, and their relative positions, with the assumptions that are embedded in the LogFrame or Results Framework. Anticipating “what could go wrong”, and building in mitigation strategies to address risks that fall within the manageable interest of the program itself, is an important final step in solidifying the feasibility and justification for any development program. In preparation for discussion in class, students will read mid-term end-of-project evaluations of several projects, to determine whether and how improved planning and design, specifically in risk management, could have improved the outcome.

Week 14 Both Sections A and B: Monday December 10th:
Program Design Presentations to Expert Panel.

During this final class of the semester, each team will present its proposed program design to a panel of experts (two or three for each country scenario), who will have read the draft design documents beforehand, and will listen to the teams' oral presentations. The teams will be expected to offer a compelling case, defend their design logic and choices, and respond to probing questions from the panelists. The panelists will offer personal perspectives from their experience in preparing and assessing program designs, and specific feedback on each team's presentation.

The teams' slide presentations and dialogue with panel members will be graded by the instructor, and account for 15% of the overall course grade. Students will separately evaluate the performance of their teams in the program design exercise, and assess their own contributions to the work of their teams. The students' peer assessment results will be incorporated in the 15% grading factor for class participation.

Each team will have an opportunity to reflect on key points and comments from the expert panel in Week 14, and revise its final program design document. The instructor will meet with the teams during office hours after the final class to discuss potential improvements and/or corrections, especially those that are relevant to the program design criteria that were introduced at the beginning of Module Two. *Final design documents will be due at 11:59 pm, five days after the presentations to the expert panel.*