

Civil Society and International Development – Course Syllabus Fall 2019

Civil Society and International Development

International Affairs 6138

Course Syllabus

Prof. Larry Garber

**The George Washington University
International Development Program**

Fall 2019

**Wednesdays
17:10-19:00**

Course Overview: Since the end of the Cold War, academics, international development practitioners and national policymakers have expended considerable energy and resources studying and promulgating the idea and practice of civil society. Civil society, of course, is not a new phenomenon. Religious denominations, economic cooperatives, labor unions, media outlets and advocacy groups stretch back into ancient history. This course investigates how civil society is viewed in past and current environments, the specific roles that civil society plays as an engine for promoting development and democracy across the globe, and the particular challenges that have emerged during the past decade's backlash against civil society in numerous authoritarian and semi-authoritarian countries ("the closing space phenomenon").

The course combines academic exploration of concepts and practical application of skills needed by today's international development practitioners when working with civil society or for civil society organizations (CSO). Some topics are addressed at the macro level and others are addressed through micro-level activities focusing on individual organizations or distinct development goals.

Course Objectives: This course will equip students with theoretical, practical and operational perspectives and skills related to the concept of civil society and what this concept means in the context of international development for contemporary practitioners. Specifically, students should be able: to define and describe civil society, particularly how it relates to national and international development; to assess the different ways CSOs function in promoting international development; to understand the political, financial and bureaucratic challenges CSOs face in navigating the international development space; and to evaluate programmatic interventions to affect change.

Achieved Competencies: At the end of this course, the student will:

- Know the history, spectrum of definitions, strengths and limitations of civil society
- Understand the evolving roles CSOs play in the different sectors of international development
- Be able to prepare the basic components of a proposal for a civil society development program in multiple settings
- Know how international and national laws affect civil society and how governments are trying to limit the role of civil society
- Be able to discuss different functions of civil society and tools that civil society uses for development goals

Learning Strategy: The course will be delivered by an international development practitioner, who served in several policy positions within USAID, as the Chief Executive Officer of an international nongovernmental organization and as a trainer/resource for many civil society organizations. Classes will combine lectures with open discussion prompted by questions and comments on the assigned readings. Classes will incorporate case studies, role playing practicums and presentations by guest speakers. Student assignments will include oral class presentations and written assignments. Classes will also draw from the individual experiences of the students and current events throughout the semester.

Course Requirements: Students will be required to read the assignments and participate in class discussions. Students will be graded on their active participation in class discussion. The writing assignments will include a short issues paper and a more extensive policy paper. The final exam will be a take-home writing assignment.

Grading: Grades will be determined based on the following scheme:

In-class Participation	15%
Oral Assignments	20%
Written Assignment 1	10%
Written Assignment 2	25%
Take Home Exam	30%

Readings: Most readings will be electronic documents either saved on the class Blackboard site or available on the Web. Students should also purchase the following books:

- Michael Edwards, *Civil Society* (3d ed 2014); and
- Paul Collier on *The Bottom Billion* (2007).

I also recommend joining the mailing list of Duncan Green's [From Poverty to Power Blog](#), which comes out daily (I will draw heavily from his Blogs going back several years).

Reading assignments are included in the syllabus, but are subject to change. Please consult with the announcement section on Blackboard to confirm the reading assignment for the particular week. All reading is required (unless otherwise indicated) and will average about 40 pages per class – while some of the background readings are 10-20 pages, many of the readings are short 2-4 page blog-like pieces.

Contact Information:

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COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 – 8/28: Course Introduction and Framework

Topics: Individual Introductions and Experiences
Course Syllabus and Performance Expectations
Defining Terminology - Civil Society and International Development

Readings:

- Michael Edwards, *Civil Society* (3rd Edition), Preface and Introduction (should be purchased but will also be on reserve at Library).
- Civicus, [State of Civil Society Report 2019: The Year in Review](#)
- Lysa John, [Opinion: Government attacks on humanitarian organizations and human rights rising](#), June 6, 2019.
- Duncan Green, [5 trends that explain why civil society space is under assault around the world](#), August 20, 2015, published on the From Poverty to Power (FP2P) Blog.
- Duncan Green, [5 Things that will Frustrate the Heck out of you when studying International Development](#), February 5, 2019, FP2P Blog.

Week 2 (9/4): Historic Foundations & Defining and Framing Civil Society

Topics: Historical Overview
Perspectives and Lenses to Civil Society Definitions
Post-Cold War Considerations

Readings:

- Michael Edwards, *Civil Society*, 2014 (3rd Edition), chapter 2.
- Alexis De Toqueville, [Democracy in America](#), Book, Volume 2, Part 2, **Chapters 5-7, pp 581-593**, (Henry Reeve Translation 2002).
- Eleanor Davey, with John Borton and Matthew Foley, [A history of the humanitarian system Western origins and foundations](#), pp. 1-3, 5-15, 29-36, June 2013
- Robert Putman, [Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital](#), originally published *Journal of Democracy* 6:1, Jan. 1995, 65-78.
- [Vaclav Havel speech](#) delivered at Macalaster College in April 1999

Week 3 (9/11): Civil Society and the NGO

Topics: Types of NGOs;
Principles of Working with NGOs;
Legal Frameworks Governing NGOs;
Challenges Facing Contemporary NGOs.

Readings:

- Michael Edwards, *Civil Society*, 2014 (3rd Edition), chapter 3

- Lester Salamon, “The Rise of the Non-Profit Sector,” Foreign Affairs, 1994 (Blackboard)
- Lester Salamon et al, [Global Civil Society: An Overview](#), pp 1-3, 6-10, 2002
- Duncan Green, [What is Civil Society for? Reflections from One of Tanzania’s Leading CSO Thinkers](#), November 1, 2018
- Civicus, [Understanding the Resourcing Landscape for Small and Informal Civil Society Groups in the Global South](#), July 2019.

Class Assignment 1 - Please review the web site of the International Center for Non-Profit Law and for your country (assigned during 9/4 class) identify three key aspects of the legal system related to freedom of association or NGO regulations.

Week 4: (9/18): Civil Society and Political Change

Topics: Advocacy Groups;
 People’s Movements;
 Post-Transition Roles;
 Government Crackdowns on Civil Society

Readings:

- Michael Edwards, Civil Society, 2014 (3rd Edition), chapter 4
- Larry Diamond, “Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation,” Journal of Democracy, Vol. 5, no. 3 (1994) [Blackboard]
- Thomas Carothers, “Civil Society,” Foreign Policy (Winter 1999-2000) [Blackboard]
- Sheri Berman, “Civil Society and the Collapse of Weimar German,” Excerpts from article published in World Politics Vol. 49 No. 3 (1997) [Blackboard]
- Maria J. Stephan, Sadaf Lakhani, and Nadia Naviwala, [Aid to Civil Society: A Movement Mindset](#), February 2015.
- Duncan Green, [Book Review - Civic Activism Unleashed: New Hope or False Dawn for Democracy? by Richard Youngs](#), July 19, 2019.

Written Assignment 1 - due on Tuesday, September 24.

Week 5 (9/25): International Development

With this class, we shift gears and consider what we mean by international development. We will consider the Human Development Index, which was formulated and began publishing in 1991, and how its conception of development differs from the classical view. We will also consider the optimist v. pessimist perspectives regarding global development progress during the past 30 years and familiarize ourselves with the MDGs and SDGs. We will reintroduce civil society more directly into the discussion the following week when we consider the role of development assistance.

Topics: Evolution of the Development Industry;
 Contemporary Civil Society Actors Involved in International Development

Readings:

The readings (and short video watch) for next week include

- Hans Rosling, [200 Countries 200 Years](#), Four-minute video 2010
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, pp. 3-13, 79-96.
- UNDP, [About Human Development Index](#), 2017.
- Steve Radelet, Prosperity Rising, Foreign Affairs 2016 (Blackboard)
- UNDP, The [Millennium Development Goals Report 2015](#), pp. 1-9, July 2015
- Stephanie Thomson, “[What are the Sustainable Development Goals](#),” World Economic Forum, September 16, 2015
- UN, [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019](#), pp. x-xi, 1-17, June 2019.

Week 6: (10/2) International Assistance

Topics: Historical Evolution
 Competing Paradigms
 Critics and Supporters of Country Ownership

Readings:

- Tom Carothers and Diane de Gramont, *Development Aid Confronts Politics: The Almost Revolution*, Chapter 1 (pp. 21-51), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2012) (Electronic Reserve)
- Stephen Krasner, [Review Article – Foreign Aid: Competing Paradigms](#), Journal of Intervention and State-building, June 2011 (Blackboard - read from bottom of page 132 through middle of page 148).
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 7, pp. 99-123.

In reading the materials, please consider the following questions:

- Who provides development assistance and why?
- What are the economic justifications for providing assistance?
- Where do “politics” fit in the context of assistance? What does Carothers mean by politics as means and politics as ends with reference to assistance?
- What are the different types of assistance provided?
- How successful has assistance been in achieving its goals?
- Where does civil society fit in the assistance paradigm?

Class Assignment 2 - During class, we will address the pro and con arguments for assistance. Students should be prepared to defend the arguments of their assigned protagonist. In addition to the Krasner article and Collier book, where the competing perspectives are presented, students should research the biography of their assignee and familiarize themselves with their careers.

Jeffrey Sachs Ashraf Ghani/Claire Lockhart Dambiso Moyo William Easterly

Week 7 (10/___): 21st Century Aid Effectiveness Discourse

Before turning to the role of civil society in specific sectoral issues, we will examine the international discourse around aid effectiveness, which began in early years of the 21st Century. Below are links to several of the key documents, as well as some evaluative work that was produced under the auspices of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in the run-up to the 2011 Busan meeting. [The documents are generally two pages each.]

- OECD, [The Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness: Five Principles for Smart Aid](#)
- OECD, [The Accra Agenda for Action](#)
- OECD, [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)
- OECD/UNDP, [Making Development Assistance More Effective: Headlines of Parts I and II of the Global Partnership 2019 Progress Report](#), pp. 2-7.
- Jonathan Glennie, [Balancing Scope with Accountability – A Challenge for Development Effectiveness](#), September 7, 2018
- Open Government Partnership, [Democracy Beyond the Ballot Box: Executive Summary](#), May 2019.

Class Assignment 3 - The second half of the class will examine several initiatives that have emerged during the past 15 years to address aid effectiveness issues. Please research your assigned topic and be prepared to provide a summary of the key points to the class.

Week 8 (10/16): Case Study 1: The Role of Civil Society in Economic Development

For this class, we will focus on strategies for promoting sustainable economic growth, eliminating extreme poverty and reducing inequality. Please consider what is meant by these terms, what policies are required to achieve them and how the requisite investments can be financed. And of course, we will consider the role that civil society plays in contributing to the desired outcomes.

Topics: Philosophical Considerations
 Business and Civil Society as Engines of Growth
 Civil Society as Protectors of Fair Business Practices

Readings:

- Commission on Growth and Development, [The Growth Report: Strategies for Sustained Growth and Inclusive Development](#), pp. 1-12, 2008
- USAID, [Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development](#), pp. 1-15, April 2014.
- Development Leadership Program, [The case for thinking and working politically: The implications of ‘doing development differently’](#) (2015).

Eradicating Extreme Poverty

- Laurence Chandy and Homi Kharas, [“The Last Mile in Ending Extreme Poverty,”](#) in *USAID Frontiers in Development 2014*.

- USAID, [Vision For Ending Extreme Poverty](#), pp. 2-22, 2015
- Ebba Dohlman and Mikael Soderback, [Economic growth versus poverty reduction: A “hollow debate”?](#), OECD Reporter March 2007

Promoting Policy Reform

- Dylan Mathews, [The small study in Rwanda that could change the way the US does foreign aid](#), Vox, September 16, 2018
- Philip DeCosse & Sharon Van Pelt, “[Opinion: Thinking and working politically to strengthen agricultural market systems](#),” November 30, 2017.
- Management Systems International, [MSI’s Advancing Policy and Institutional Change Framework](#), December 2018.

Class Assignment 4 - For each of the next three classes, three-five students will prepare to role play their assigned organization’s response to specific policy and operational issues in a designated sector. Hence, in preparing for the assignment, you should be familiar with your organization’s role in the designated sector. Those not assigned a specific organization for a given week should be prepared to serve as part of a review board asking specific questions and evaluating the responses.

Week 9 (10/23): Case Study 2: The Role of Civil Society in Service Delivery – Health and Humanitarian Assistance

Topics: Socio-Economic Considerations;
Development v. Humanitarian Assistance
Government/Civil Society Cooperation and Competition;
Examination of Specific Examples

Readings:

Health

- Council on Foreign Relations, [The Global Health Regime](#), June 19, 2013.
- Julia Smith, Kent Buse and Case Gordon, [Civil society: the catalyst for ensuring health in the age of sustainable development](#), July 16, 2016.
- Katerini Tagmatarchi Storeng & Antoine de Bengy Puyvallee, [Civil society participation in global public private partnerships for health](#), Health Policy and Planning, August 2018.
- Nanoot Mathurapote, [Global health disruptors: The rise of civil society](#), November 2018.

Humanitarian Assistance

- Development Initiatives, [Key Trends in Global Humanitarian Assistance](#), June 2019.
- USIP, [Guidelines for Relations Between U.S. Armed Forces and Non-Governmental Humanitarian Organizations in Hostile or Potentially Hostile Environments](#), 2005.
- Humanitarian Futures Programme, [The Future of Non-Governmental Organisations in the Humanitarian Sector: Global Transformations and Their Consequences](#), May 2013.
- Lisa Schirch, [Civil Society-Military Roadmap on Human Security](#), May 2011.

Week 10 (10/30): Case Study 3: The Role of Civil Society in Elections

Topics: Promoting Reform
Educating the Public
Monitoring Elections
Interface Between Domestic and International Groups.

This class will engage in a deep dive into the role of civil society in elections. We will consider the multiple activities that international and domestic NGOs undertake with respect to elections and examine their efforts in the specific case of Zimbabwe's 2018 elections. And we will role play how three NGOs might respond to the scheduling of an election in a country where they are working.

In reviewing the assigned reading materials, please consider the following questions:

1. Where do elections fit in terms of international development?
2. Why do countries invite international observers?
3. What are the legal and policy rationales for dispatching international observers? When would you not send international observers?
4. What standards are used by international observers for assessing elections?
5. What are the advantages/disadvantages of domestic election monitors?
6. What specific challenges do domestic monitors face in assessing an election?
7. What activities beyond observation do international and domestic organizations undertake in support of a credible electoral process?

Readings:

- Jennifer McCoy, Larry Garber and Robert Pastor, [Pollwatching and Peacekeeping](#), Journal of Democracy, Fall 1991. [Blackboard]
- Tom Carothers, [The Observers Observed](#), Journal of Democracy, 1997.
- Neil Nevitte and Santiago Canton, [The Role of Domestic Observers](#), Journal of Democracy, July 1997. [Blackboard]
- [DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES FOR INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION](#), Commemorated October 27, 2005, at the United Nations, New York
- [DECLARATION OF GLOBAL PRINCIPLES FOR NON-PARTISAN ELECTION OBSERVATION AND MONITORING BY CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS](#), Commemorated April 3, 2012, at the United Nations, New York, 1-21.
- Michael Cohen and Brian Latham, [How Zimbabwe's First Elections After Mugabe Went Wrong](#), Bloomberg, August 5, 2018.
- IRI/NDI, [Zimbabwe International Election Observation Mission Final Report](#), pp. 6-15, 52, October 2018.

The next segment of the course will examine the planning cycle of donor agencies and their relationship to making change happen, practical considerations regarding the formation and operation of a nonprofit organization, and the challenges that lies ahead for civil society in the current global context.

Week 11 (11/6): Civil Society Programming: The Planning Process

Topics: Defining the Challenge
 Designing an Intervention
 Budgeting Considerations
 Monitoring and Evaluation
 Restricted Activities

Readings:

- Duncan Green, [How Change Happens](#), pp. 1-27 (2016) (Green convinced his publisher to post the entire book on-line free of charge – the assigned pages include the introduction and the first chapter).
- USAID, [Strategy and Planning](#) (web site)
- MCC, [Our Impact](#) (web site)
- OECD, [The DAC's main findings and recommendations: United States Peer Review 2016](#)
- Sarah Rose and Amanda Glassman, "[Committing to Cost-Effectiveness: USAID's New Effort to Benchmark for Greater Impact](#)," Center for Global Development, September 2018.
- Duncan Green, [What's the Problem with Projects?](#), November 15, 2018.

Class Assignment 5: Please read as per the assignments below:

- USAID, [Evaluation Policy](#), January 2011
- DFID, [International Development Evaluation Policy](#), May 2013
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, [Evaluation Policy](#) (web site)

Week 12 (11/13): Forming an NGO

Readings:

- US Department of State, [Non-Governmental Organizations in the US](#), January 20, 2017.
- Noel Diem, [Non-Profit Organizations: What are the Rules?](#), Law Street, April 8, 2015
- Peri Pakroo, [Nonprofit Basics](#), NOLO.
- [Five Reasons To Incorporate your Nonprofit Association](#), NOLO
- Grantspace, [How Do I Start A Nonprofit?](#)
- Chuck McLean, [Understanding the IRS Form 990](#), Guidestar Blog, October 18, 1999
- John F. Wasik, [How To Choose a Charity Wisely](#), New York Times, November 7, 2013.

Please examine the 990 form and a charity rating (e.g., Guidestar, Charity Navigator, Charitywatch, etc.) for the NGO of your choice.

Week 13 (11/20): Contemporary Challenges

Topics: Closing Space Phenomenon and Policy Responses;
Civil Society Accountability
Anti-Terrorism
Playing Defense
Ethics of Foreign Assistance

Readings:

- Larry Diamond, [Democracy Demotion](#), Foreign Affairs, June 11, 2019. [Blackboard]
- Duncan Green, [Closing Civic Space: Trends, Drivers and what Donors can do about it](#), February 14, 2019
- Thomas Carothers/Saskia Brechenmacher, [Defending Civic Space: Four Unresolved Questions](#), May 31, 2019.
- Saskia Brechenmacher, [Opening Government, Closing Civic Space: Resolving the Paradox](#), June 18, 2019.
- Adrian Shahbaz, [The Rise of Digital Authoritarianism](#), pp.1-10 (2018)
- Overseas Development Institute, [‘A humanitarian sector in debt:’ Counter-terrorism, bank de-risking and financial access for NGOs in the West Bank and Gaza](#), August 2018.
- Tom Baker, [“A toolkit for playing defensive advocacy,”](#) July 29, 2019.
- Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, [“How the world is proving Martin Luther King right about nonviolence,”](#) Washington Post Monkey Cage, January 28, 2016.

Written Assignment 2 (Due November 24) - Civil Society Project Paper

Week 14 12/4 Class Wrap-Up

Having covered a broad swath of subjects throughout the semester, our last class will look to the future. We will consider the following series of questions:

1. Will civil society “look” the same in ten years as we view it today?
2. How will it interface with government and the private sector?
3. What role(s) do we envision civil society playing in achieving the sustainable development goals and, more generally, in the discourse regarding international development?
4. How will civil society contribute to the challenges posed by global climate change, migration, urbanization and seemingly intractable conflicts?
5. Will we still be discussing the “crackdown on civil society” in five-years?

We will also examine careers in Civil Society and International Development.

Readings:

- Michael Edwards, *Civil Society*, Chapter 6 (3d ed. 2014)
- Penny Lawrence, “[Can Big NGOs Survive and Thrive Again](#),” Bond, November 2018.
- Courtney Martin, “[The Reductive Seduction of Other People’s Problems](#),” Bright, June 11, 2016
- Anand Giridharadas. “[The Win-Win Fallacy](#),” The Atlantic, September 9, 2018.
- Thomas Dichter, “[Is There a Foreign Aid Industrial Complex](#),” Medium, August 8, 2016.
- John Feffer, [How to Decide the Fate of the Planet](#), July 30, 2019.
- Richard Youngs, [Can Citizen Participation Really Revive European Democracy?](#), July 30, 2019.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND POLICIES

[a] Class Policies

- Attendance policy

- University Policy on Religious Holidays:

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

[NOTE: for other university policies on teaching see
<http://www.gwu.edu/~academic/Teaching/main.htm>]

[b] Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For the remainder of the code, see:

<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>

[c] University Policy on Examination Schedule

Final examinations for undergraduate courses are scheduled to occur at the end of each semester, as announced by the Registrar's Office, normally through the Schedule of Classes. No changes in the schedule day and hour are to be made unless approved by the Registrar and by the dean and coordinated through the Scheduling Office. Examinations for courses numbered 6000 or above are scheduled, if desired, by the individual departments or instructor. Room assignments for these examinations must be cleared with the Registrar's Office in a timely manner. Final examinations for the Law School, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, and School of Public Health and Health Services are scheduled by the appropriate dean's office.

[d] Support for Students Outside the Classroom

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counselling services (individual and small group), and referrals

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>

[e] Security

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.