Justice-Based Approaches to Sustainable Development
GESM 130g Section #35438 - Fall 2022

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Class Details:
Day/time: T/TH - 3:30 - 4:50
Classroom: WPH B30
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview:

In September 2015, 193 United Nations member states committed to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets by 2030. The SDGs, also called the Global Goals, have a range of economic, social, environmental, and governance targets. The SDGs present a bold commitment to finish what has been started through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. This course will take a problem-based learning approach to understanding this progressive global initiative. In doing so it will challenge students to consider the following questions:

- To what extent are the SDGs' conception and implementation rooted in various theories of social justice? Is justice really at their core?
- What are the political, cultural, economic, etc. challenges to SDG implementation at the local, national and global levels?
- Which goals have been the most and least successful? How do we use social and political theory to explain these variations?
- Why and how were some goals, targets and indicators chosen over others? Do these quantitative indicators help us accurately measure success in the broader goal?
- How would you improve on this initiative in the post-2030 agenda?

Course Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the development, transition and evolution of the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. Compare and contrast the successes and failures of specific goals focusing on poverty alleviation, global public health and the global environment.
3. Deploy various social theories and analytical tools, such as but not limited to, Rawls' theory of social justice, critical political economy, biosocial approaches to global health, and critical green theory and intersectionality to understand and explain progress, or lack thereof, in the SDGs individually and collectively.
4. Explain the roles that various state, institutional and non-state actors have played in creating and implementing sustainable development initiatives - globally, nationally, and locally - over time.

5. Discuss and critically assess various recommended solutions for improving SDG outcomes through 2030 and in considering the post-2030 United Nations agenda.

Course Mechanics:

Course Readings:

First a note on reading:

- All readings are to be done PRIOR to the class they are listed under.
- Readings are required. As an asynchronous assignment, you are responsible for reading on your own. While I will reference key points and we may debate perspectives held in these readings, I will not be regurgitating the readings back to you in lecture. You are expected to come to class prepared, ready to discuss and to engage with these readings.
- If you are unable to access a reading posted to Blackboard or Google, please let me know ASAP. Broken links are not an excuse to not complete readings.

Required Texts / Readings:

1. Development as Freedom by Amartya Sen. 1991. *Available for free [via USC Library](#) or purchase on Amazon.*
2. Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty by Abhijit V. Banerjee.New York : Public Affairs; 2012. *Available for purchase on Amazon.*
3. Reimagining Global Health: An Introduction by Paul Farmer.
4. The Intersectional Environmentalist: How to Dismantle Systems of Oppression to Protect People+Planet by Leah Thomas. 2022. *Available on [Amazon](#).*
5. The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021, *available free here:* https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/

Requirements & Criteria for Assessing Student Performance:

Participation – 10%:

Participation is crucial!!!! This class is centered around topics on which you all have an opinion and are honestly some of the most pressing, unsolved wicked problems of our lifetimes. In order to really get at the crux of why these issues are so persistent, it requires meaningful engagement with the materials and with each other as class colleagues. Put simply, attendance does not equal participation and you should not take this portion of the grade as a given. Also, you do not start with a 100, instead you earn points via these three routes:
1. Verbal participation in class: This includes answering questions that I pose, posing your own value-added questions and quality interaction during in-class discussions.
2. Participation in In-Class Activities / Short Homework: This includes active learning exercises, such as small group assignments, worksheets, case studies, and polls during class. Make up options will be provided for students who miss class.
3. Course Discussion Board: This is a great place for students who may not feel as comfortable speaking in class to load comments, questions or analysis. For students missing class, posting extra questions can make up for in-class participation missed.

Annotation/Rapporteur Role (15%):

Annotate (v.) = to make or furnish critical or explanatory notes or comment

Rapporteur (n.) = a person responsible for compiling reports and presenting them, as to a governing body

For this assignment, we will be combining two skill sets - individual reading and analysis + group presentation and peer-to-peer teaching. After week 2, each student will sign up for a lesson to take on this role. As part of the role, each student will submit an annotation of one of the assigned readings (7.5%). Next, each student will be responsible for presiding as "rapporteur" (a term I've borrowed from the UN) where they will present to the class the main aspects of the reading, pose their own discussion questions for the class, and work with me to facilitate discussion (7.5%).

Instructions and rubrics for both aspects of this 2-3 page assignment are in Blackboard>Assignments>Rapporteur.

In-Class Vignette Presentation (15%):

Vignette (n.) = a brief evocative description, account, or episode

Each student will also sign up for a week where they present a vignette of an SDG "in action" in a country/city of their choosing, to take us "beyond the readings." Using Google slides or PPT, students will create and deliver a 10-15 minute presentation that engages theory, data (quantitative and qualitative) and case study narrative to teach their fellow classmates about SDGs on the ground.

Instructions and rubric are in Blackboard>Assignments>Vignette.

Final Policy Paper (20%):

On the final day of class you will submit an 8-page policy prescription paper. In this paper you will:
- Engage at least one of the social analysis frameworks presented in class.
- Assess the pros/cons of broader UN 2030 Agenda / SDG Framework.
- Use at least one specific goal as your case study.
- Persuasively conclude with one concrete policy recommendation for the post-2030 agenda.

Instructions and rubric are in Blackboard>Assignments>Policy Paper.

Mid-term (20%) and Final (20%):

Both exams will be given in class. These are Blue Book exams consisting of short answer and longer form essay questions. See schedule for dates and mark your calendars accordingly. Reviews and further details will be given as they approach.

Total Weighted Grade Composition:

Participation	10%
SDG Vignette	15%
Rapporteur/Annotation	15%
Midterm	20%
Policy Paper	20%
Final	20%
Total	100%

** A running weighted total grade column will be present in Blackboard so you can track your progress throughout the semester.

Grading - Please consult carefully, this scale may be different than what you've had in other classes.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
100-94	93-90	89-87	86-84	83-80	79-77	76-74	73-70	69-67	66-64	63-50	< 50

General Course Policies and Principles:

- **Course Modality:** This course will be taught synchronously. What that means is that this is taught as a live course and you are expected to be present for each lecture section regardless if we are on Zoom or in-person. There is no fully asynchronous option for this class. We have group work, simulations, and other assignments that require your active participation. If you cannot commit to this, please let me know and we will work with your advisor to find you a suitable alternative.

- **Class Recordings:** *(subject to change based on Fall 22 University policies)*: We are an in-person university and per the Provost Faculty FAQ #31/32, faculty are not required to record lectures. That said, I get that times are trying right now, so I will do my best to record our lessons for those who miss class. Please note, that recordings will not automatically post to Blackboard. You will need to request a recording via a link in Blackboard and you are allowed a maximum of 2 recordings (just like I normally give 2 free absences in a non-Covid semester). If you require additional absences, please make an office hour appointment to discuss with me.

- **Sharing of recordings / course materials:** My recordings, Google slides, and class exercises are my intellectual property. It is a violation of University policy and the Student Code of Conduct to share, repost or sell these materials.

- **Office Hours:** All office hours are by appointment only whether on Zoom or in-person. You can make an appointment via the "Make an Appointment" menu button on Blackboard. Please be sure to include why you'd like to meet and do me the courtesy of emailing me as soon as possible if you must cancel.

- **Paperless Policy:** For safety and environmental reasons, I will not be printing anything for this class. This syllabus and all in-class assignments will be delivered electronically,

so you should always bring a computer, tablet or internet-enabled device in order to view documents during class.

- **Electronic Devices:** While I do request that you bring these devices to class to access coursework posted on Blackboard, I also require that you use your devices for course purposes only. If I catch you messaging, shopping, or otherwise being distracted by other apps on your electronic device, you may receive 0% for participation that day.

- **Deadlines:** Deadlines matter. First, they're an important part of adulting and your future work life. Second, course deadlines are how I manage my own work-life balance. If I get too many extension requests, that then pushes grading duties into time I may have allotted for myself or my family. So I hope we can all acknowledge that managing deadlines is a two-way street with consequences either way. That said, if you get sick, are dealing with mental health issues, have an emergency, come talk to me. I care about you and what's going on, so if you come to me with a plan, I'll do whatever I can to work with you.

- **Late Work Penalty:** If you submit work late without prior discussion with me, it will be deducted ½ a letter grade at the due time and then another ½ letter grade per 12 hours late. Avoid this penalty by coming to talk to me sooner rather than later!

- **Grading**: I am always happy to discuss with you how you can improve your work, but I will not "regrade work" or consider grade revisions that have nothing to do with your actual submitted work (i.e., your need for a grade to maintain a scholarship, your GPA needs and grad applications, and things of that nature.) If you do have a grade objection, that should be emailed to me with a written explanation of what you feel was graded incorrectly accompanied by supporting information (i.e., referencing the textbook or slides), within 72 hours. All assignments will have either a rubric or comments accompanying them, so I repeat, I will not simply "regrade" something because you disagree with the assessment provided.

- **Extra Credit:** In order to maintain fairness to all, I will never offer individual extra credit. Please do not ask. If I find that grades are lower than usual following the midterm, I may elect to offer extra credit to the whole class, but this is never guaranteed.

- **Statement for Students with Disabilities:**
    - You are required to set up OSAS arrangements with me for each assignment they are needed at least 1 week prior. Please do not count on me remembering as I have a high number of students.
    - USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [www.osas.usc.edu]www.osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu

- **Statement on Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty (i.e., lying about attendance, facilitating others in cheating, etc.) are equally unacceptable.

- **Diversity and Inclusivity**: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. As such, I hope to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. I might not always succeed, but this is my desire. If you have suggestions on materials, readings or topics, they are always welcome. I encourage you to let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

- **Trust, Respect, and Comfort in Class:** At times we may discuss sensitive, challenging, and overtly political topics in this class. It is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. I will do my best to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention.

- **Mental Health and Other Concerns:** This is a trying time in the world. Before I copy and paste the university's boilerplate language on this topic, let me say that I am here for you if you are struggling. I am by no means a therapist and may often have to refer you to outside services, however I am always here with no judgment, an open mind and two ears to listen if you are having a hard time managing your course work or other academic issues for whatever reason. I will do my absolute best to help you work through whatever you are confronting, but please know that the earlier you come to me, the better. Once we reach grading periods or pass withdrawal dates, I am often limited by university policies on what I can and can't do to assist you. Below are some resources at USC that you might find helpful:
  - Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/
  - Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to genderbased harm. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/
  - Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086 Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. https://equity.usc.edu/

- ○ Bias Assessment Response and Support SOWK 637 – Wellness, Recovery, and Integrated Care 23 Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/
- ○ Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710 Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
- ○ Diversity at USC – https://diversity.usc.edu/ Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

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Reading and Lecture Schedule

Reading Key

[Sen] = Development as Freedom book
[PoorEcon] = Poor Economics book
[Farmer] = Reimagining Global Health book
[Thomas] = The Intersectional Environmentalist book
[SDG Report] = SDG Report - available free online
[BB] = articles found via the Google Reading Folder linked in Blackboard

Week 1 (8/23 and 8/25): Theories of Social Justice

- ☐ [Sen] Chs. 1-3, pgs. 1-86.
    - ☐ Ch. 1 "The Perspective of Freedom"
    - ☐ Ch. 2 "The Ends and Means of Development"
    - ☐ Ch. 3 "Freedom and Foundations of Justice"
- ☐ 8/25 - In-Class Assignment: Take the Gapminder quiz and reflect on your answers. https://upgrader.gapminder.org/ Do a quick write reflection and be prepared to discuss next week.

Week 2 (8/30 and 9/1): History of the Sustainable Development Goals

- ☐ [SDG Report] "Forward - Overview" pgs. 1-25.
- ☐ [BB] Chapter excerpts from "Transforming Multilateral Diplomacy: The Inside Story of the Sustainable Development Goals by *Macharia Kamau, Pamela Chasek, David O'Connor.*
    - ☐ Ch. 1 "Setting the Stage" (15 pages)
    - ☐ Ch. 2 "Multilateralism: Complexity and Intrigues" (30 pages)
    - ☐ Ch. 7 "The Cast of Characters" (28 pages)

Week 3 (9/6 and 9/8): Goal 1 - No Poverty

- ☐ [Sen] Chs. 4-5, pgs. 87-145.
    - ☐ Ch. 4 "Poverty and Capability Deprivation"
    - ☐ Ch. 5 "Markets, States and Social Opportunity"

Week 4 (9/13 and 9/15): Goal 1 - No Poverty (continued)

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal One - No Poverty" pgs. 26-27.
☐ [PoorEcon] "Part One: Private Lives" Chs. 1 - 5, pgs. 1-103.
    ☐ Ch. 1 "Think Again, Again"
    ☐ Ch. 2 "A Billion Hungry People?"
    ☐ Ch. 3 "Low-Hanging Fruit for Better (Global) Health"
    ☐ Ch. 4 "Top of the Class"
    ☐ Ch. 5 "Pak Sadurnos' Big Family"

Week 5 (9/20 and 9/22): Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal Two - Zero Hunger" pgs. 28-29.
☐ [PoorEcon] "Part Two: Institutions" Chs. 6-10, 122-235.
    ☐ Ch. 6 "Barefoot Hedge-Fund Managers"
    ☐ Ch. 7 "The Men from Kabul and the Eunuchs of India: The (Not So) Simple Economics of Lending to the Poor
    ☐ Ch. 8 "Saving Brick by Brick"
    ☐ Ch. 9 "Reluctant Entrepreneurs"
    ☐ Ch. 10 "Policies, Politics"

Week 6 (9/27 and 9/29): Goal 2 - Zero Hunger

☐ [Sen] "Ch.9 - Population, Food and Freedom" pgs. 204-226
☐ [BB] "Social Justice, Food Loss, and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Era of COVID-19" by Janet Fleetwood. *Sustainability* 2020, *12*(12), 5027.
☐ [BB] "Articulating the effect of food systems innovation on the Sustainable Development Goals" by Herrero et al. The Lancet Planetary Health Volume 5, Issue 1, January 2021, Pages 50-62.

Week 7 (10/4 and 10/6): Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-Being

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal 3 - Health and Well-being" pgs. 30-34.
☐ [Farmer] Chs. 1-4, pgs. 1-110.
    ☐ Ch. 1 "A Biosocial Approach to Global Health"
    ☐ Ch. 2 "Unpacking Global Health: Theory and Critique"
    ☐ Ch. 3 "Colonial Medicine and Its Legacies"
    ☐ Ch. 4 "Health for All? Competing Theories & Geopolitics"

Week 8 (10/11 - No Class 10/13): Midterm Week
  ☐ **10/11 - IN CLASS MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 9 (10/18 and 10/20): Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-Being (continued)

☐ [Farmer] Select Chapters. Pgs. 111-123; 212-244; 340-354.
    ☐ Ch. 5 "Redefining the Possible: The Global Aids Response"

☐ Ch. 8 "The Unique Challenges of Mental Health and MDRTB: Critical Perspectives on Metrics of Disease"
☐ Ch. 12 "A Movement for Global Health Equity? A Closing Reflection"

Week 10 (10/25 and 10/27): Goal 5 - Gender Equality

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal 5 - Gender Equality" pgs. 36-37.
☐ [Sen] "Ch. 8 - Women's Agency and Social Change" pgs.189-203.
☐ [BB] "Development as Freedom – and What Else?" by Gasper and van Stavern. (2011). *Feminist Economics* (9: 2-3) pgs. 137-161.

Week 11 (11/1 and 11/3): Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities" pgs. 46-47.
☐ [BB] "SDG 10: Reducing Inequalities in and among Countries." (2018) Joel Oestraech. *Social Alternatives* Vol. 37, No. 1, pgs. 34-41.
☐ [BB] "Reducing Inequality Within and Among Countries: Realizing SDG 10—A Developmental Perspective" in *SDGS and Human Rights* by Heike Kuhn pgs. 138-151.

Week 12 (11/8 and 11/10): Goal 13 - Climate Action

☐ [Thomas] Chs. Intro, 1-2, pgs. 3-59.
    ☐ "Introduction"
    ☐ Ch. 1 "Intersectional Theory, Feminism, + Intersectional Environmentalism"
    ☐ Ch. 2 "Environmental Justice: A Wider Lens"

Week 13 (11/15 and 11/17): Goal 13 - Climate Action (continued) / **Prof. Gibson @ COP27**

☐ [SDG Report] "Goal 13 - Climate Action" pgs. 52-53.
☐ [Thomas] Chs. 3-5, pgs. 60-136.
    ☐ Ch. 3 "Unpacking Privilege"
    ☐ Ch. 4 "Who's Affected: The Reality for BIPOC Communities"
    ☐ Ch. 5 "People + Planet"

Week 14 (11/22 and No Class 11/24): Goal 14/15: Life Below Water & Life Above Land

☐ [SDG Report] "Goals 14 & 15" pgs. 54-57
☐ [BB] "Biodiversity Conservation and Poverty Alleviation." (2004) Adams et al. *Science*, 306(5699): 1146-1149.

Week 15 (11/29 and 12/1): Goal 14/15 (continued) and Course Wrap Up

☐ [BB]"Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Are we successful in turning trade-offs into synergies?" (2019) Kroll et al. Palgrave Communications (5:140).
☐ [BB] "Is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) index an adequate framework to measure the progress of the 2030 Agenda?" *Sustainable Development* (26:6) pgs. 663-671.

Final Exam: TBD