

University of Sussex
School of Global Studies

International Development



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Global Studies

www.sussex.ac.uk/development

What's special about International Development at Sussex?



A leading centre to study development

International Development at Sussex brings together Anthropology, Geography, International Relations, Economics, Sociology and History to provide you with an integrated approach to development issues. Our international reputation means leading development practitioners regularly visit campus, giving talks and providing career advice. Our staff are also practically engaged in development issues.

International opportunities

Sussex understands the need for graduates to gain a global perspective and so we encourage our undergraduate students to either study abroad, take up international work placements or compete for a bursary to fund international summer projects. Recent projects have included establishing an NGO in Rwanda, training chefs in India, teaching in Tanzania, and delivering a course on football refereeing, also in East Africa.

A vibrant international student community

We are proud to recruit lively, passionate and proactive students. From the Sussex International Development Society, student organised seminars and film series to local and international volunteering, there are plenty of opportunities for students to get involved.

Excellent teaching

Our teaching encourages critical thinking and analysis. Lectures and seminars are complemented by activities that reflect many of the challenges of working in international development.

Global careers

Sussex graduates in development are found across a wide range of international organisations and NGOs, including Oxfam, the UN and the British Red Cross. Sussex alumni include the former UK Minister for International Development, Hilary Benn, and senior civil servants and policy makers across a number of countries.

How can I study International Development?

There are different ways of studying International Development: as a single honours degree or as part of a joint honours degree. Students on single honours programmes choose elective modules from outside their discipline, while joint degrees allow you to study exciting combinations of different subjects.

We offer the following degrees:

Single honours

- International Development

The single honours programme allows you to focus mostly on Development. Within this subject, you will have a range of options, so you can explore particular areas. You can also select elective modules from other degrees to help you understand the subject in its wider context.

Joint degrees

If you want to study more than one subject in depth, our joint degrees offer exciting combinations of subjects. What you learn in one subject complements and enhances what you learn in the other. Spending half your time on one subject and half on the other, you can still choose options that interest you in each.

- Anthropology and International Development
- Economics and International Development
- Geography and International Development
- International Relations and Development
- Sociology and International Development
- International Development and a Language (one from French, Italian or Spanish).

We also offer a joint degree in International Development and a Language, which currently gives you the option of French, Italian or Spanish.



Course structure

The following tables provide an outline of the modules offered on our international development undergraduate courses.

International development single honours

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Term 1	Term 1	Term 1
Colonialism and After	Economic Perspectives on Development	Development thesis
Concepts in Development	Research Skills for Development	Advanced option
International Development: Ideas and Actors	Social Change, Culture and Development	Advanced option
Elective	Elective	Term 2
Term 2	Term 2	Development thesis
Institutions of Aid	Placement/Study abroad	Advanced option
Issues in Development	OR	
Key Thinkers in Development	Choose three out of five development options	
Elective	Elective	



International development joint honours

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Term 1	Term 1	Term 1
Colonialism and After	Economic Perspectives on Development	Development thesis or thesis from other programme
International Development: Ideas and Actors	Social Change, Culture and Development	Advanced option
Module from other programme	Module from other programme	Term 2
Module from other programme	Module from other programme	Development thesis or thesis from other programme
Term 2	Term 2	Advanced option
Issues in Development	Placement/Study abroad*	Advanced option from other programme
Key Thinkers in Development	OR	
Module from other programme	Choose two development options	
Module from other programme	Module from other programme	
	Module from other programme	

* Placements are not available to students on joint courses with other schools



Module summaries

Year 1

You are introduced to a range of perspectives on development and to a constellation of development actors – from international organisations to local NGOs. You also learn about the significance of colonialism in understanding contemporary development policy and the contribution of key thinkers to our understanding of development. You consider some of the current issues and dilemmas in development and learn first-hand about your teachers' experiences with these issues and dilemmas.

You will also be allocated an experienced member of the teaching team who will be your Academic Advisor. Your Academic Advisor will meet with you regularly, offering support to all aspects of your academic work and helping you to adjust to the demands of University study.



Colonialism and After

This module is an introduction to a range of key historical problems and conceptual questions relating to the colonial and postcolonial experiences. Focusing on the characteristics of capitalism, imperialism, and modernity, the module examines the making of the modern world. It provides an introduction to European expansion, the slave economy, the development of wage labour, industrial growth, imperialism, creation of the modern state, genocide, the idea of development, anticolonialism, and the creation of the 'third world'.

Concepts in Development

The module provides a foundation to the study of international development, providing an explanation of key concepts in development studies by drawing on the first hand research experiences of International Development faculty. Each week, a concept will be explored and illustrated through examples from the research experience of Sussex lecturers discussing 'real places', and 'real issues'. Students are introduced to the diversity of approaches to defining and understanding development through interrogation of concepts such as 'globalisation', 'war', 'aid', 'states', 'markets', 'community' and 'civil society'.

Institutions of Aid

This module enables students to interrogate the changing relationships between the different institutions involved in international aid and development. Apparent consensus about the aims and objectives of aid is manifested in instruments such as the Millennium Development Goals and international agreements concerning aid harmonisation. But behind this apparent consensus is a complex – and changing – range of institutions, with different histories, interests and incentives. Focusing each week on a different institution or set of institutions, the module explores the factors shaping contemporary aid practices. Institutions covered will include: the multilateral development banks and the United Nations agencies; official bilateral agencies, including so called 'emerging' donors; and the widening range of private and non-governmental actors.

International Development: Ideas and Actors

This module offers an introduction to key ideas and actors in international development. It begins by considering what the term 'development' means, exploring a range of different interpretations and the different kinds of practices that are associated with the idea of development. It goes on to look at trends in development thinking, and from there to identify a series of ideas and actors who have been influential in shaping international development thinking, policy and practice. By looking at the kinds of ideas about development associated with different kinds of actors, and at debates about aid, development and social change, the module gives students an overview of the field of international development and puts in place some of the foundations for subsequent development modules.

Issues in Development

The aim of the module is to provide you with an overview of international development using key topics to explore the different theoretical and conceptual perspectives that underpin understandings of development. The module is not a comprehensive review of all development-related issues but instead focuses on a smaller set of issues in development, covering amongst other matters, topics of poverty, international trade, growth, population, environment, aid and debt.

Key Thinkers in Development

This module provides an introduction to some of the most important thinkers in international development. It provides a broad historical overview of the evolution of development thinking by starting with key debates initiated in the 18th and 19th centuries and moving to contemporary thinkers from diverse geographical regions. For each week students will read an original text from the key thinker discussed as well as an additional supporting/critical text. Overall the module's aims and objectives are to provide students with a broad understanding of different approaches to development thinking, why they arose and their current applicability in the age of globalisation.



Year 2

You explore social and economic dimensions of development in more depth and receive training in the techniques and skills used by development researchers in the field. You also choose from a range of options and have the opportunity to spend part of this year on a placement or study abroad.

Economic Perspectives on Development

This module introduces students to how economics can be used to understand contemporary international development issues. Students will obtain a basic understanding of tools that economics uses to analyse and evaluate development questions. The emphasis is on analysing a topic and the nature of the problem, and policy responses, from both an economic and critical perspective. The module begins with a non-technical introduction to economics and then covers a set of topics, such as determinants of economic growth and the connection between growth, inequality and poverty, trade and trade policy, poverty reduction policies, the roles of corruption, legal and political institutions in economic development, agriculture, land and credit markets, the determinants and consequences of violent conflict and environment and development.



Research Skills for Development

This module is an introduction to the research methods, techniques and skills used in development research and provides a foundation for the International Development thesis in the third year. The module is taught through workshops during which students focus on practical issues to do with research skills, as well as consider some of the more abstract issues that inform how we do research. The module encourages students to think about research ethics and the linkages between project design and methods of data collection. During the module team work is emphasised, and many of the workshops involve hands-on group work.

Social Change, Culture and Development

This module starts from the observation that development is more than economic change and involves important social and cultural aspects. It begins with an interrogation of the way development practices and ideas are embedded in cultural contexts, and specifically how the development industry is historically and culturally entangled in Western conceptions of progress, rationality, and the individual. Against a view of culture as 'tradition' and an impediment to development we will examine different cultural conceptions of progress. This involves both alternate visions of future development as well as the negative impacts that development policies and interventions have on local people, communities and cultures. Questions of power and cultural relativism inevitably arise: what happens when different interests and commitments collide, and who or what determines the module development interventions take?

Year 2 options

Development and the State

This module is concerned with the role of the state in development. It considers this subject matter both theoretically, that is by exploring debates in state theory, and on the relationship between the state and development; empirically, by investigating a range of historical and contemporary state forms, and the impacts of these state forms on processes of development; and normatively, by posing questions about what the nature and role of the state should ideally be. The module examines the main theoretical approaches to the state and historical state forms and their attendant development experiences, in the North and in the post-colonial South. Finally, the module moves to Development since the 1980s, exploring the impacts of state failure, neo-liberalism, democratisation and global governance on state forms and patterns of development.

Environmental Perspectives on Development

The module explores development with an explicit focus on environmental issues. It looks at the relationships between development and the environment: the consequences of development on the environment, environmental constraints to development and problems of development in marginal environments. It examines how the environment and issues around sustainability have been considered (or ignored) in relation to development and how this has changed over time. The module includes historical perspectives on environment and development, illustrating continuities and changes in policies related to environment and development. It also explores core issues around environmental management and development in relation to key resources, such as wildlife, forests and water.

Finance for Development

This module discusses and analyses the major challenges and current initiatives in the creation of finance industries appropriate to and effective in developing countries. The module focuses on the private financial sector and issues relating to access to finance. After a general overview, the module begins by examining the forms of finance available for larger firms in developing countries,

mainly the banking sector and the stock market. Subsequently, it covers the evidence on the effects of financial development on economic growth and the role of institutional factors, such as corporate governance, in financial development. It then moves on to examine the access to finance for smaller firms and households and the implications of a lack of access. Finally, the module touches upon private international sources of finance, namely private capital flows, FDI and remittances to developing countries.

Gender and Development: Theory, Concepts and Issues

This module considers development processes in the light of how they are shaped by and impact upon gender dismodules and relations. The module introduces you to key concepts in the analysis of social relations between women and men in different cultural, economic and political contexts. This includes examining the nature of gender inequality and of the household as a social construct, and reviewing concepts of power and empowerment. While concerned with providing a theoretical and conceptual grounding by reviewing debates on the household and the gender division of labour, the module is organised around substantive and policy topics related to poverty, labour markets, women's employment, migration, and globalisation.

Health, Poverty and Inequality

This module is concerned with issues of culture, power and knowledge in the study of health and development. It draws on perspectives from medical anthropology, medical sociology, public health, cultural psychology, feminist and activist politics and development studies to focus on the relationship between poverty, social marginality and illness in a variety of historical and contemporary contexts. Apart from a focus on emerging infectious diseases such as HIV and Aids, we also consider the implications of homelessness, mental health and organ donation for individual health and well-being. The scrutiny of health planning and policies, such as in the domain of maternal and child health, as well as the impact of an increasing intervention of medical technologies in healthcare delivery, are further important aspects of the module.

Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism

This module is an introduction to various themes and conceptual issues in the study of culture, ethnicity and nationalism as seen from a range of disciplinary perspectives. The module is comprised of three sections and is designed to provide an understanding of the interaction between power and cultural meanings, particularly as they relate to the construction of boundaries and the creation of difference between social groups. After considering such key concepts as race, culture, ethnicity, and nationalism, there is an emphasis on ethnic and religious mobilization and we shall consider the extent to which similar and different processes are at work in South Africa, the Caribbean, and the Indian sub-continent. These cases are included to give students a contextualized understanding of the complex historical and cultural dimensions of modern political struggles.

Work Placement: International Development

This module is designed to allow students to gain practical work experience in an area of relevance to their degree programme, as well as carrying out a supervised project that builds on research or practical skills learned in the first three terms of the degree. It takes the form of a 12-week work placement, to be undertaken during the second teaching block of the second year and replacing modules offered at the University. Students are given assistance in finding placements both locally and internationally in development and other organisations, NGOs and businesses. Placements are not available to students on joint courses with other schools.

Year 3

You expand on what you have learnt in the first two years, and have the opportunity to pursue specialist options to deepen your theoretical and practical understanding of development in practice. Options cover a range of development issues and address the real-world concerns faced by those who work in development. You also have the opportunity for intensive study for your thesis.



International Development thesis

The International Development thesis provides students with an opportunity to integrate what they have learnt in the other modules of their studies into a single, sustained piece of writing that will explore a topic in depth. The module will involve the design, planning and execution of the thesis, with the support of a supervisor, and may include the collection of empirical data or the use of secondary source material. Students choose their own topics, and develop their own approaches to investigating the topic, drawing on earlier skills-based modules and on interests developed through the course of the degree programme.

Year 3 specialist options

Please note that not all these options run every year.

Conflict, Violence and Peace: Critical Perspectives

In recent years, there has been increased focus on conflict, violence and peace-building in the media, popular literature and aid programmes raising important questions about how these processes are understood and represented and what implications this has for the local and international response and in turn the transformation of conflict and violence. This module will offer critical perspectives on mainstream approaches to the study of conflict, violence and peace drawing on both anthropology and development studies.

Contemporary Issues in the Global Political Economy

The central theme that runs through this module is how the structures of capitalism have to be adjusted or brought into balance with the needs of expanding markets. We begin by looking at attempts by global governance institutions like the WTO to create a largely deregulated world market. We then examine how financial systems are expanding and how the stock market has become a key institution of modern capitalism. We discuss the changing nature of the multinational enterprises and the state as they reorient themselves towards a global market. Finally, we examine empirically the post-Cold War expansion of capitalism into Eastern Europe.



Development Tools and Skills

The aim of the module is to introduce students to a range of key tools, approaches and skills used in the development world to identify, design, and evaluate development interventions. The module takes a 'hands on' approach and allows students to develop skills which are useful not only in development but also in many other types of work in the public policy, private and voluntary sectors. In addition to the specific skills and tools covered in this module – such as problem analysis, stakeholder analysis, risk analysis, cost-benefit analysis and logical frameworks – students also gain experience in working in teams, in presenting clear and convincing arguments, and in advocacy and negotiating skills.

Development, Business and Corporate Social Responsibility

This module explores the role of business in development and the rise of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement. In recent years, the private sector, and transnational corporations (TNCs) in particular, have become increasingly important players in the development process. The business and development movement has emerged as part of the dramatic rise of CSR over the past decade – providing a new vision for the role of business in society as 'corporate citizen'. Development institutions, such as DFID and the UN, as well as global NGOs, have become

increasingly interested in mobilising business, not only as donors, but as partners in development. At the same time, ethical trading initiatives, the fairtrade movement and pro-poor enterprise models offer opportunities, in different ways, for harnessing the power of the market in the service of development. The module explores a number of key questions concerning the role of business in development and the rise of the CSR movement, from the perspective of both its proponents and opponents.

Environment, Ecology and Development

This module examines the impact of social and economic transformations, trade and technological development on people, environment and ecology in the tropics. The analysis includes a historical perspective, present-day impacts and future scenarios. Topics include problems of water and energy supply and their health and environmental consequences; indigenous environmental knowledge; intellectual property rights and biotechnology; local and national perspectives on wildlife, ecotourism and environmental protection.

Ethnographies of Aid

This module considers what could be called the 'ethnographic turn' in development studies, which brings ethnographic methods and perspectives to bear on aid institutions, policies, and actors. These include particular methodological approaches, such as participant observation within aid organisations or 'expert' communities; attention to neglected dimensions such as the material culture of aid, and the role of the body in development work. In addition to the ethnography of policy-making, we will also investigate the role of non-official materials such as aid worker blogs, memoirs, and 'development blockbusters'.

Human Rights

This module focuses less on human rights rules and laws than on the assumptions of human rights, the historical context and issues around their operation and implementation. It draws from a new and growing literature on the sociology and anthropology of human rights which seeks to move beyond the assumptions of legal positivism (rights as being 'read off' from lists of human rights covenants) in order to develop the 'legal realist' argument which focuses upon the living law of the

operation of courts, the police, and the everyday understandings which citizens give to notions such as truth, justice, and morality.

International Relations of the Modern Middle East

The Middle East remains at the centre-stage of international politics and media. Yet its specificities and complexities continue to challenge politicians and academics alike. This module explores the explanatory potentials of a three-dimensional international, social and historical approach to modern political history of the Middle East. It consists of three major parts. First, it critically surveys the traditional theoretical approaches to the analysis of Middle East politics. Second, it delineates the broader historical contours of the contemporary politics of the region by retracing the socio-international context and outcomes of the formation of 'modern' Middle Eastern states. Thirdly, and drawing on the second part, it provides in-depth analysis of three major contemporary political developments in the region, namely the Iranian Revolution, the Arab-Israeli conflict and Iraq War. The module concludes by a brief evaluation of the broader implications of an international-historical approach to the study of the Middle East for theory and practice of international relations.

Medicines, Health and Development

This module examines the relationship between health and development paying particular attention to the international role of the pharmaceutical industry, the globalisation of its operations and how medical drugs are assessed for safety and efficacy. It examines the degree to which the pharmaceutical industry represents a positive (or negative) force for health in the developing world and the role of organisations such as WHO.

NGOs and World Politics

There has been an enormous growth in the number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active around the world, especially since the end of the Cold War. This module explores the significance of this trend, and asks what representations and practices of world politics are produced and reproduced by NGO activity. Are NGOs a flexible, responsive form of actor well-suited to promoting human rights and development in a post-Cold War world?



Are they irresponsible, unaccountable do-gooders impinging on states abilities to do their jobs? Are they stooges of globalising capitalism, undermining local struggles for social justice? Or do they signal a transformation in the architecture of world politics, away from government and towards networked forms of governance? These and other accounts of the role of NGOs in world politics will be addressed in this module, requiring students to identify, understand and critique a variety of ways of conceptualising NGO activity in world politics.

The module is divided into three broad sections: the history of NGOs; current issues regarding NGO activity; and conceptual approaches to the study of NGO activity. Within this, each week we take a broad theme that asks a big question about NGO activity and combine it with a focus on a particular NGO or issue. This will allow students to become familiar with (contemporary or historical) empirical forms of NGO activity whilst simultaneously thinking critically about the significance of NGO activity in general for world politics.

Population and Development

This module examines the relationship between population issues and economic, social and environmental aspects of development. It introduces theoretical frameworks for analysing population change and assesses the consequences of population growth for food supplies and the environment at both global and local levels. It goes on to examine factors affecting the components of population change including fertility and mortality decline, changing sex ratios, the growth of megacities and international migration. Policies on health, family planning and migration are also discussed.



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