

Syllabus Spring 2024  
Harvard Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University

**APPLICATIONS AND CASES IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**DEV-401Y**  
Spring 2 2024 Class

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**The first day of class is Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Classes: Monday

*Group A: 9:00 am – 10:15 am, Classroom L-130*

*Group B: 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm, Classroom Wex-436*

Plenary: Wednesday\*

Group A and B: 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm, Classroom Wex-436

\*Sometimes, it will shift to morning 9:00–10:15 am or other days or times owing to speaker availability; students will be advised accordingly.

[Access the Canvas page.](#)

**Teaching team**

Faculty: Juan Jimenez (he, him, his) - [juanjimenez@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:juanjimenez@hks.harvard.edu)

Office L-108

Office hours: Wednesdays, 4:30-6:30 pm or by appointment (sign up [here](#))

Assistant: Beth Tremblay (she, her, hers) - [beth\\_tremblay@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:beth_tremblay@hks.harvard.edu)

**Course Assistants:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Office hours</b>
Sofia Aron	<a href="mailto:sofiaaron@hks.harvard.edu">sofiaaron@hks.harvard.edu</a>	Tuesdays 5-6 pm Flexible OH by appointment in this <a href="#">link</a> .
Catalina Reyes	<a href="mailto:catalinareyes@hks.harvard.edu">catalinareyes@hks.harvard.edu</a>	Fridays 2-3 pm Flexible OH by appointment in this <a href="#">link</a> .
Vinicius Bueno	<a href="mailto:vinicius_bueno@hks.harvard.edu">vinicius_bueno@hks.harvard.edu</a>	Fridays 9-10 am Flexible OH by appointment in this <a href="#">link</a> .

**COMMUNICATION NORMS**

My office hours are Wednesdays from 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm, either in person or via Zoom, along with several other openings which are available via this [link](#). During office hours students are welcome to discuss topics and cases already seen in previous meetings, or to clarify doubts regarding cases that would be later seen in class. However, students should not expect to discuss cases in advance or to obtain the teaching team's view on a particular case, as case preparation should be done individually and with the study group.

Students can also contact me by email if they have a question they think could be answered by email. I will respond to your email within two business days. However, weekend messages will be returned on Tuesday. Please email me directly via HKS email and not through Canvas. I will use your HKS email accounts.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

DEV-401Y is a year-long course designed to help MPA/ID students develop analytical skills that are necessary in the policy arena by using frameworks and theories from economics and other social sciences to understand social phenomena, diagnose policy problems, and draft possible solutions that are technically correct, politically supportable, and administratively feasible.

The course uses case studies, simulations, and debates from the real world to deepen understanding of concepts and techniques from other core MPA/ID courses by illustrating their application in the diagnosis of development change and policy design. Additionally, the course includes interactions with practitioners and advisors to discuss their approach to policy problems.

## **COURSE LEARNING GOALS**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the appropriate framework to understand a social phenomenon and diagnose a policy problem.
2. Use data to discern the underlying causes of a social phenomenon or a policy problem.
3. Identify possible policy responses to address the underlying causes of a policy problem.
4. Identify the pros and cons of each possible policy response, including how it would affect different stakeholders.
5. Formulate policies that are technically correct, politically supportable, and administratively feasible.
6. Think iteratively about the policy diagnosis and design process.

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION AND PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH**

### **Course Organization & Workload Expectations**

The class involves meeting on Mondays in subgroups (Group A meets in the morning, and Group B meets in the afternoon) to have an intense discussion regarding a particular real-world problem, using case discussion, simulations, and debates. In each class, students are expected to present their points of view

and argue in favor of them, being explicit about the theory or framework and the data that supports their position. The class would not seek consensus, as most policy challenges have a variety of solutions, but rather the class would seek informed discussions and understanding of different points of view.

To prepare for Monday classes, students need to read and analyze the material, and students are encouraged to meet with study groups to discuss the cases. All students are required to answer the pre-class questions by filling out an electronic quiz by no later than Sunday noon.

On most Wednesdays, the class will meet in plenary for a speaker series, usually related to the policy discussions from the prior Monday.

## **Instructional Methods**

This course develops analytical skills via:

- Case discussions: students will have to solve a policy problem, for which they will have background information (case studies, articles, videos) and supplementary tables that would help them understand the nuances of the problem and decide their diagnosis and proposed solutions. During class discussion, students will present their arguments and discuss why their approach is the most suitable.
- Simulations: using a real case, students will be assigned a role that they should represent at the discussion table, for which they would need to put themselves in the shoes of people in the assigned group and anticipate their approach. Then, they would need to develop the arguments leading the audience to choose their approach over other groups.
- Debates: students will be assigned a conclusion and need to develop the arguments to convince the audience that their assigned conclusion is correct.
- Speakers: the class will have guest lectures that combine analytical approaches and personal experience in real-world policy situations.

## **Course Materials**

[All the necessary material will be available online on Canvas.](#)

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

### **General requirements**

The main goal of this course is to help students develop the skills they need to understand social phenomena and design public policies to solve social problems. For that reason, the class emphasizes practicing the application of those theories and frameworks in real-world settings, as skills development requires frequency and intensity in practice.

To achieve this, we expect students to exhibit the highest professional and ethical standards for every activity in the course, including preparation before class and participation in class. Class participation is mandatory, but if a situation prevents you from attending class, please communicate with the teaching team as early as possible.

The class grade will be based on the following criteria:

- 30% - Class participation and engagement
  - 20% Frequency
  - 10% Quality
- 10% - One Op-ed
- 20% - Pre-class online quizzes
- 40% - Final Assignment

**Class participation and engagement (30%):** Includes attending every class, actively participating in classes (at least five times during the Spring 2 module), and quality of the arguments in the discussion. To assess the quality, in case discussions at the end of each class, CAs will be asked to select the five students with the most interesting comments and arguments, who would get 2 points (up to a maximum of 10 points). In simulations and debates, a winning teams will be selected, which would get 3 points.

**Pre-class quizzes (20%):** Each pre-class quiz will have five open-ended questions to help students prepare for Monday's class discussion. The quiz deadline for each Monday is Sunday noon.

**Op-ed (10%):** Students must write a two pages op-ed that aims to convince the public about their proposed pension reform. The op-ed should emphasize the benefits of their pension design and highlight the risks of other competing options. This assignment is a group project, so each group in the pension system reform simulation should submit one op-ed.

**Final assignment (40%):** The final assignment for DEV-401 is combined with DPI-410 final assignment. Students should design a public policy to implement the recommendations concluded in the DPI-410 final assignment.

### **Re-grading policy**

After receiving the feedback and grade for a memo or the final assignment, look carefully through the observations and comments provided by the teaching team and the attached grading rubric. If a student thinks the score does not reflect the characteristics of the memo, the student should email Professor Jimenez (copying all the CAs) and ask for a meeting with the teaching team to discuss the grade. They should request the re-grade within two weeks of receiving the feedback and grade. The teaching team will assign a different grader and re-evaluate the assignment using the same grading rubric. Students should expect a revised grade in two weeks.

The class participation score is not subject to regrade as it is an objective counting of the number of times the student participated in class or the number of times a student or group was elected as the best by the Teaching Team o the rest of the class.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Class attendance, participation, and classroom conduct**

This course will cover a wide breadth and depth of technical topics over a short period; hence every class represents a unique opportunity to further develop the skills necessary for a particular policy challenge. Therefore, **class attendance is mandatory in Monday classes and Wednesday speaker series.** Students

are expected to participate in class actively, as class participation is essential to your own learning and the learning of your classmates. Below are some elements that should be taken into consideration:

**Engagement in class:** students should give their opinion on the topic/case being discussed using frameworks and theories from social sciences, especially economics, and backing their opinions with data. Students are encouraged to think independently, permitting themselves to disagree with classmates or the faculty.

**Engagement outside class:** even though group meetings are not mandatory, students are encouraged to meet at least once a week in study groups to discuss the topic/case, presenting their assessment of the situation and proposed solutions. Study questions for each class will be distributed to facilitate the preparation and discussion.

**Respect for different opinions:** students must commit to a respectful and collaborative learning environment. There is much to learn from your peers and the teaching team, so even though discussions are expected to be intense and disagreement is encouraged, expressing a different opinion and contradicting others should be done very respectfully, limiting the arguments to the specific discussion, not personal characteristics. Offensive language or attitudes would be penalized.

**Listening to other points of view:** students are encouraged to actively listen to the arguments presented by the rest of the class and evaluate the merits of the arguments in terms of the theoretical and empirical merits. In cases where a student changes their mind by listening to others, it is encouraged to express it. This means “stepping up” to participate actively and “stepping back” to contemplate and listen attentively.

### **Academic integrity**

Students are encouraged to discuss the cases in study groups as it enriches their learning. However, **the pre-class online quiz is a mandatory individual assignment that must be answered before Sunday noon**. Similarly, students can discuss their understanding and approach in the memos, but the memo's content is presumed original. If interactions with other classmates might produce similarities in the memos, students should list whom they worked with in an appendix to the memo.

Proper citation is expected when including ideas from other authors (any citation style is permitted, but it should be uniformly used throughout the memos).

Similarly, the final assignment is a group project, and the content is presumed to be the group's original work. Proper citation is expected in the final assignment.

More information about Harvard's policies on academic integrity may be found in the [Student Handbook](#).

### **Generative AI**

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) will likely influence the way you work in your future careers. We encourage you to spend some time at HKS learning to use this powerful new tool to work more productively and learn more effectively.

For your academic work at HKS, generative AI can help you learn but can also hinder your development. You could use this technology to complete class assignments while doing little work yourself, but doing so would rob you of the learning experiences you came to HKS for. Working through the course

assignments will help you develop your thinking and skills, a key goal of an HKS education. At its best, generative AI can be like an instructor with unlimited time to work with you one-on-one. This virtual instructor should be used to help you learn rather than to do the work for you.

The three guidelines below are designed to help you use generative AI to maximize your HKS experience.

1. It is generally acceptable to use generative AI to find information and solidify your knowledge of the course content. For instance, it is acceptable to use AI-powered web search and to have “conversations” with tools like ChatGPT to help you explore ideas, refine your thinking, identify examples, and better understand the course material. However, unless otherwise specified, **it violates the HKS Academic Code to incorporate into your coursework text produced predominantly by generative AI — similar to copying from a book or article.** For example, it would be inappropriate to rewrite an AI-generated draft.
2. Generative AI can produce false or misleading information. You are ultimately responsible for the accuracy of any work you submit.
3. Given the range of learning goals at HKS, individual instructors may create course-specific policies that differ from these general guidelines. If you need clarification on whether a specific use of generative AI is permitted for an assignment or course, you should discuss it with your instructor before using it.

### **Inclusive citation**

Students are expected to seek out a range of academic (peer-reviewed) and non-academic sources (reports, analysis, original sources, and op-eds) over the course of the semester. Often including the perspectives from underrepresented voices is a very enriching exercise, as it helps students develop a broader understanding of the policy challenge.

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING**

Harvard University values inclusive excellence and providing equal educational opportunities for all students. Our goal is to remove barriers for disabled students related to inaccessible elements of instruction or design in this course. If reasonable accommodations are necessary to provide access, please get in touch with the local disability coordinator, Melissa Wojciechowski St. John ([melissa.wojciechowski@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:melissa.wojciechowski@hks.harvard.edu)). Melissa is the Senior Director of Student Services in the HKS Office of Student Services. Accommodations do not alter the fundamental requirements of the course and are not retroactive. Students should request accommodations as early as possible since they may take time to implement. Students should notify Melissa anytime during the semester if adjustments to their communicated accommodation plan are needed.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students experiencing academic, personal, or mental health difficulties are encouraged to connect with [Jimmy Kane, Senior Associate Director of Student Support Services](#). Jimmy’s role is to support students and connect them to resources/individuals so they can continue being successful. He will also provide outreach and support to students when someone in the HKS community has expressed concern for them.

If students are experiencing any distress and would like to connect with a counselor over the phone, in the evenings, late at night, or on the weekends, students are strongly urged to call 617-495-2042 to speak with a [CAMHS Cares Counselor](#).

## **RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION**

### **Course Diversity Statement**

The learning experience at Harvard University is greatly enriched by the diversity of the students, faculty, teaching, and administrative staff, as each person brings a unique life experience that translates into interesting perspectives and worldviews that are encouraged to be discussed in classes and campus life. Therefore, being open to seeing the world through other people's lenses can further develop you as a professional and human being. In this class, students should feel free to express themselves and bring their own perspectives to the discussion or the perspective of the different groups that might be affected by the policy challenge being discussed. Along those lines, I expect students to be open to learning from others and respectful of all opinions, even the ones they might disagree with.

Please get in touch with me directly if you have ideas or concerns for enhancing inclusion. Additionally, HKS has an excellent [Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#).

### **Personal Pronoun Usage**

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with each student's legal name. We will gladly honor any request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise the teaching team of your preferences as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate changes to our records. If your name and/or gender pronoun changes during the semester, we are also happy to accommodate this.

### **Content Warnings**

Social phenomena are complex, and every public policy decision affects many people's lives. Since the course involves real-world situations, it is possible that at some point in the semester, there might be content that will be emotionally and intellectually challenging. I will do my best to make this classroom a space where we can engage bravely, empathetically, and thoughtfully with difficult content.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly in advance if you anticipate that a discussion might end up being emotionally challenging, and feel free to contact me if you feel someone in the discussion raised a point that did not pay due respect to your traditions of worldviews.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

Harvard University is located on the traditional and ancestral land of the Massachusett, the original inhabitants of what is now known as Boston and Cambridge. We pay respect to the people of the Massachusett Tribe, past and present, and honor the land itself, which remains sacred to the Massachusett People.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Class dynamic</b>	<b>Country focus</b>	<b>Format</b>
1	18-Mar	Politics and institutional change	Case discussion	Bolivia	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
2	20-Mar	Politics and public policies	Guest speaker: Patrick Achi, former Prime Minister of Ivory Coast	Ivory Coast	Plenary in WEX-436
3	25-Mar	Public versus private provision	Case discussion	Hungary	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
4	27-Mar	Infrastructure economics	Guest speaker: Timo Valila		Two plenaries: Morning: WEX-436 Afternoon: WEX-436
5	1-Apr	Pension reform in a developing country	Simulation: Public hearing in Congress	Fictional country	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
6	3-Apr	Pension reform in a developing country	Simulation: Stakeholders negotiation	Fictional country	Sections: Group A in L-140 Group B in WEX-436
7	8-Apr	Climate change and game theory	Case discussion	Multilateral	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
8	10-Apr	Leading climate change policy in a developing country	Guest speaker: Carlos Alvarado, former President of Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Plenary in WEX-436
	12-Apr	<b>Assignment 1 Due</b>			
9	15-Apr	Building institutions in Afghanistan	Case discussion	Afghanistan	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
10	17-Apr	Building institutions in Afghanistan	Panel: Scott Guggenheim and Khalid Payenda	Afghanistan	Plenary in WEX-436
11	22-Apr	Measuring impact of COVID-19 measures in the Dominican Republic	Case discussion	The Dominican Republic	Sections: Group A in L-130 Group B in WEX-436
12	24-Apr	Development conversation	Panel with Jie Bai, Asim Kwaja and Juan Jimenez		Plenary in WEX-436
	1-May	<b>Final Assignment Due</b>			



## READING LIST INFORMATION

All the case studies, papers, and articles for this course are available on the Canvas site. If you find a broken link, please email Beth Tremblay ([beth\\_tremblay@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:beth_tremblay@hks.harvard.edu)) so she can fix the Canvas page.

All required reading for this course is available on the class page on Canvas. ***Please check Canvas frequently for announcements and other information.***

Readings marked with \*\* are required readings for the class and students are expected to have read the material, analyzed it and discussed it in their study groups. Readings with \* are readings that are strongly recommended; these will deepen your understanding of the material and will provide you with additional material you can use to better prepare for class. Some readings without any stars are for students that would like to go deeper into a topic. These papers may be important examples of the material being discussed and contribute towards enriching your knowledge on the topic. Keep in mind that the goal of the syllabus is to create a resource for you that you can use to extend the breadth and depth of your knowledge on development economics throughout your MPA/ID studies and beyond.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

**\*\* = required readings (before lecture); \* = strongly recommended readings;  
no stars = additional reading for further background**

Required readings can be found on Canvas.

### 1. Politics and institutional change (18-Mar). Case discussion

Required reading (18 pages):

\*\* Capitalization: The politics of privatization in Bolivia. HKS Case Study #1447.0. 18 pages.

Optional reading:

Donahue, J. D., & Donahue, J. D. (1989). The privatization decision: Public ends, private means (p. 45). New York: Basic Books.

### 2. Politics and public policies (20-Mar). Speaker series: Honorable Patrick Achi, former Prime Minister of Ivory Coast (2021-2023).

*No readings*

Suggested videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIH8QX99cOw>

### 3. Public versus private provision (25-Mar). Case discussion

Required readings (45 pages):

\*\* Who Should Own What? Choosing a Public Sector in a Newly Capitalist State. HKS Case Study #1206.0. 21 pages.

\*\* Vålilä, T. (2005). How expensive are cost savings? On the economics of public-private partnerships. EIB papers, 10(1), 95-119. 24 pages.

### 4. Economics and infrastructure (27-Mar). Lectures by Timo Valila (European Investment Bank and University College London)

*No readings*

Suggested podcast:

\* Straub & Islam (2022). When do public-private partnerships work well?.  
<https://blogs.worldbank.org/ppps/when-do-public-private-partnerships-work-well>

Suggested reading:

\* Sabol, P., & Puentes, R. (2014). Private capital, public good: Drivers of successful infrastructure public-private partnerships.

### 5. Climate change and game theory (1-Apr). Case discussion

Required reading (15 pages):

\*\* Negotiating climate deals at COP21. Case study draft. Approximately 15 pages.

Suggested reading:

\* Gardiner, S. M. (2006). A perfect moral storm: Climate change, intergenerational ethics and the problem of moral corruption. *Environmental values*, 15(3), 397-413.

### 6. Pension reform in a developing country (3-Apr). Simulation of a congressional public hearing

Required reading (40 pages):

\*\* *Reforming a pension system in a developing country*. Case study draft. Approximately 17 pages.

\*\* Barr, M. N. (2002). The pension puzzle: prerequisites and policy choices in pension design. *International Monetary Fund*. (23 pages)

### 7. Pension reform in a developing country (8-Apr). Simulation of stakeholders negotiation

Required reading (5 pages):

\*\* *Reforming a pension system in a developing country. Stakeholder instructions.* Case study draft. Approximately 5 pages.

Suggested reading:

\* Blinder, A. S. (2018). *Advice and dissent: why America suffers when economics and politics collide.* Hachette UK.

## **8. Leading climate change policy in a developing country (10-Apr). Speaker series: Carlos Alvarado Quesada, former President of Costa Rica (2018-2022).**

Suggested videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRRsBpNHHdU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIYqsYh37D0>

## **9. Building institutions in Afghanistan (15-Apr)**

Required reading (29 pages):

\*\* *Building institutions in Afghanistan: wrong goals or wrong strategy?* Case study draft. Approximately 20 pages.

\*\* Sopko, J. F. (2023). What we need to learn: Lessons from twenty years of Afghanistan reconstruction. Chapter 7. (9 pages).

Suggested readings:

\* Stewart, R. (2009). The irresistible illusion. *Lond. Rev. Books*, 31, 3-6.

\* Stewart, R. (2008). How to save Afghanistan. *Time*, 30-34.

\* Stewart, R. (2021). The last days of intervention: Afghanistan and the delusions of maximalism. *Foreign Aff.*, 100, 60.

## **10. Building institutions in Afghanistan (17-Apr). Panel: Khalid Payenda (former Minister of Finance in Afghanistan) and Scott Guggenheim (former advisor to the President of Afghanistan)**

Required podcast:

[https://dcs.megaphone.fm/NPR8533782888.mp3?e=993647572&key=690a5752b61ee2177fbaa8febe68a661&p=510324&request\\_event\\_id=ccda3fa6-fe73-428f-9823-0cb278ff2a6f&sc=siteplayer&size=45142187&t=podcast](https://dcs.megaphone.fm/NPR8533782888.mp3?e=993647572&key=690a5752b61ee2177fbaa8febe68a661&p=510324&request_event_id=ccda3fa6-fe73-428f-9823-0cb278ff2a6f&sc=siteplayer&size=45142187&t=podcast)

## **11. Measuring impact of COVID-19 measures in the Dominican Republic (22-Apr). Case study**

Required readings (15 pages):

\*\* Measuring the impact of the COVID-19 cash transfer program in the Dominican Republic. Case study draft. Approximately 15 pages.

**12. Development conversation (24-Apr). Panel: Asim Kwaja, Jie Bai and Juan Jiménez.**

*No readings*

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT (May 1)**