1. **Overview**

This course focuses on the political economy of neoliberalism and its alternatives in the global south. We seek to answer two key questions: (1) if the goal is to attain a sustainable, just, and democratic development, does the dominant neoliberal doctrine provide a reliable guide? (2) if it does not, are there more desirable, yet feasible, alternatives to guide movements to these environmental, social, and political outcomes? Case studies drawn from Latin America, Asia, and Africa complement our discussion of general themes and issues.

2. **Organization and Requirements**

The instructor will introduce the second session, which will involve a guided discussion based on the required reading.

A member of the class will introduce the topic of the remaining seminars with a 30 minute presentation (or a 20-minute presentation each in jointly-led seminars). Each class member will make one presentation. **Please note that the instructor will terminate presentations at the end of the allotted time (following warnings), so please be careful in gauging the length of your remarks.** Guidelines for making strong presentations are provided below – one aim of the course is to assist each participant in the important skill of presenting concise, coherent, and persuasive oral reports. Please provide a list of three sessions, beginning with session 3, which you would be willing to lead by Monday September 19th. The schedule of presentations will be posted on Blackboard on September 20th. I will do my best to assign you your top choice.

The **course requirements** are as follows.

- **1 term paper**
  
  (inclusive length: about 4,000 words or 16 double-spaced pages; due in class on December 1st. Write a critical essay exploring the main issues and debates on one of the themes or issues discussed in the course. Feel free to use a case study or comparison of cases to sharpen your discussion. Alternatively, you may pose your own question
involving a pertinent issue not covered in the seminar (for example, neoliberalism and gender, neoliberalism and nature, neoliberalism and informal economies etc.) but be sure to get my approval before you start work on your topic.

**Late penalty: 2 percentage points per day, excluding weekends.**

- **1 oral presentation**
  The available topics include sessions 3-12. Your presentation should **not** be on the topic of your research paper. It should be based on [but **not** a summary of] the required and several of the supplementary readings for your session. The time limit for solo presentations is 30 minutes, and 20 minutes for shared assignments. Guidelines are provided below. You will receive a written evaluation.

- **Contribution to seminar discussions (other than your presentation)**
  (Steady but quiet attendance yields 40% of the total marks for this element. Active and informed participation yields higher grades.)

- **2 written critical reflections on the required readings for sessions**
  (You should write 3-5 single-spaced pages reflecting on the cogency of the argument(s) presented. Guidelines are provided below. Assignments should be handed in at the beginning of the relevant classes. Choose sessions **other than that on which you make your presentation.**) Deadlines for submission are October 13 (readings for any of sessions 4-6) and November 3 (readings for any of sessions 7-12).
Guidelines on Writing the Critical Reflections

1. This assignment involves the submission of a critical reflection on the required readings for 2 of the sessions, excluding the session on which you deliver a presentation.

2. The critical reflection should be only 3-5 single-spaced pages in length – no longer. The emphasis is on concise, focused thought. You need to identify each author’s thesis, and respond critically to that thesis. Is the argument logically sound? Is it supported both by the evidence that the author cites and by further data or knowledge of which you are aware? Does the piece pose an ‘important’ question in a challenging manner? Is the article/book/excerpt well-organized and clearly written? Does the essay suggest interesting new avenues for thought or research? Does a particular argument support or contradict the thesis of another of the authors? Some of these questions, and perhaps others, should guide your critical reaction.

3. You will receive a brief, written evaluation of your submissions. The grade on this assignment will account for 30% of the final mark (15% on each of the submissions). The evaluation will be based on the following criteria:
   - effectiveness in taking a clear and critical position on issues
   - capacity to synthesize complex ideas
   - familiarity with the material you have selected to review
   - clarity and conciseness of expression.

Guidelines on Making an Effective Presentation

1. A presentation is an oral essay. Therefore, you need to present a thesis near the beginning, and organize your material to support or elaborate this thesis. Note, however, that written and oral essays are delivered differently. Merely reading aloud an essay that one intends to be read is rarely effective. Instead, consider delivering your presentation from notes. The three hallmarks of a good oral presentation are the following:
   - **Organization.** Sufficient signposts guide your listeners through your argument; everyone is always aware of the relevancy of the point you are making. (One experienced speaker summarized his advice this way: “Tell your audience what you are going to say, say it, and then tell them what you said!”)
   - **Clarity.** Avoid ambiguity and vagueness by adhering to your outlined, clearly connected, points. Avoid jargon. Explain all concepts concisely.
   - **Pacing.** Slowdown in your delivery. Make eye contact. Do you notice puzzled looks or signs of boredom? If so, try to respond to these cues. Clarify the point you are making, or speak more slowly/loudly/with more emphasis.

Consider rehearsing your presentation, perhaps before a sympathetic listener or tape recorder. You will discover whether you have too much material to cover in 40 minutes.

2. **Technical Details.**
   - Your presentation is not a research exercise. Base your oral essay on the required reading for your session, plus several relevant items from the supplementary list.
   - If you are sharing a topic, work out a division of labour with your partner. Each person should speak for about 20 minutes.
   - Tell your audience whether you welcome questions as you proceed, or whether you wish your listeners to hold all their questions until the end. Alternatively, you might entertain only questions of clarification (not challenges) while you work through your commentary, saving the latter for the discussion period. (Remember that, if you respond to objections to your argument as you proceed, you may lose the thread of your case. However, the time limit for your talk will obviously expand if you entertain discussion while you proceed.)
   - End your presentation with an issue or issues that you think merit further discussion.
   - After (or during) your presentation, respond in a reasoned and friendly manner to questions, comments, and challenges. Remember that you do not have to be right on every aspect of your case, but you do need to be clear.
3. **Reading for the Course**

This syllabus identifies required readings for each topic (*), plus supplementary readings. You should find the latter useful in preparing your presentation and essay and following up on a subject which particularly interests you. Obviously, you must read the required readings each week if we are to have a stimulating seminar. The required readings are on reserve in the short-term loan section of Robarts Library. I have also tried to select as many readings as possible from electronic journals (identified as EJ) and from the heavily used books listed below.

The bookstore stocks copies of the following:


Also on Reserve in Short-term loan:


1. **Overview of the course** (Sept. 15)

**Note:** submit a list of your 3 choices for seminar presentations by Monday September 19th via email.

2. **What is the political economy of development?** (Sept. 22)


3. **What is neoliberalism? What is an ‘alternative’ to neoliberalism?** (September 29)


Manfred Steger and Ravi Roy, Neoliberalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), chapters 1-3.


A. Saad-Filho & D. Johnston, eds., Neoliberalism, chaps. 1, 2, 5, 6


PART II: RISE AND EFFECTS OF NEOLIBERALISM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

4. The evolution of neoliberal development doctrine: from the Washington to the Post-Washington Consensus and beyond (October 6)


5. Broadening the agenda in the Post-Washington Consensus: “Good governance” and “quality institutions”: What are they? How does a country get them? (October 13)


*Rapley, Understanding Development, Chapter 5.


M. Moore and M. Robinson, “Can Foreign Aid Be Used to Promote Good Government in Developing Countries?” Ethics and International Affairs 8, 1994, pp. 141-58.


6. How did it happen that the IMF, established with limited powers at the Bretton Woods conference, has assumed such a dominant position in shaping development programs in the global south (October 20)

*Peet, Unholy Trinity, chaps. 2 & 3.


7. How significant have the World Bank and the WTO become in ‘disciplining’ countries to adhere to neoliberal development policies? (October 27)

*Peet, Unholy Trinity, chaps. 4, 5, & 6.


8. The economic and social record of neoliberal reform (November 3)

*J. Rapley, Understanding Development, chap. 4.
*D. Harvey, Brief History of Neoliberalism, chaps. 4 & 6.


A. Saad-Filho & Johnston, eds., Neoliberalism, chaps. 26, 27.

9. Neoliberalism and imperialism: Is there a connection? (November 10)


A. Saad-Filho and Johnston, eds. Neoliberalism, chap. 9.
PART III: CASE STUDIES OF NEOLIBERAL REFORM

You should pose one or more of the questions from the following list in your presentation and/or essay. Your selection of questions will depend upon your interests, your particular case, and the orientation of the relevant literature.

1. What has been the relationship between the IMF and World Bank, on the one hand, and the ‘adjusting’ government, on the other? Was this relationship characterized by ‘policy dialogue’ and ‘partnership’, or coercion, or a combination of the two?
2. What has been the nature of the economic reform programmes, and how ‘successful’ have they been? What has been the impact on poverty? On women? On the environment?
3. To what extent have poor governance and poor institutions been implicated in this country’s economic problems? What have been the domestic and international pressures towards democratization? To what degree has democratic governance been consolidated? What has been achieved in the way of institutional reform, other than in the realm of democratization?
4. What are the politics of economic reform? To what extent is the government committed to economic reform, and what accounts for this degree of commitment? If the country is undergoing or underwent democratization, has this process been favourable or unfavourable to economic reform and/or economic progress?
5. Has the integration of this country into global markets helped its economic recovery? What has been the impact of this integration upon inequality? Poverty reduction? Democratization?

10. Chile: Neoliberal Reform and Capitalist Transformation. Why did Chile undertake economic liberalization? How successful were the reforms? What is state’s present role economic development? (November 17)


11. **India**: Why did India undertake economic liberalization? What is the state’s present role in economic development? What success have the reforms wrought? (November 24)


M. Bouton, “India’s Problem is not Political,” *Foreign Affairs* 77:3 (1999), 80-93.


R. Jha, “Reducing Poverty and Inequality in India: Has Liberalization Helped?” WIDER, United Nations University, WP 204, Nov. 2000. (Download from WIDER web site)


A. Kohli (ed.), The Success of India’s Democracy Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

12. Ghana: From neopatrimonialism to neoliberalism? (December 1)
What has been the relationship between economic and political reform? Has political liberalization wrought clear improvements in governance and prospects for sustained market-based economic development?

*S. Lindberg, “It’s Our Time to ‘Chop’: Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than Counter It?” Democratization 10:2, 2003. EJ