

IDEV*1100 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT

Short Outline
Guelph Institute of Development Studies
University of Guelph

Winter 2026
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

IDEV*1100 explores the dominant and alternative theoretical perspectives that have been used to understand and define the field of international development studies. Students will examine the ways in which different theories have emerged and changed over time and how they relate to disciplinary and philosophical traditions. They will explore the impact of development theory on policy and practice aimed at bringing about development that is inclusive and sustainable.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Identify the key theoretical perspectives on inclusive and sustainable development, including their disciplinary and philosophical foundations.
2. Explain how and why prevailing theories of development have emerged, changed, and been abandoned over time.
3. Develop a critical understanding of mainstream and alternative theories that have been used to understand and explain processes of international development.
4. Reflect on your own ideas, beliefs, and values regarding inclusive and sustainable development.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is divided into four parts. **Part One** provides a critical introduction to the study and practice of international development. **Part Two** next considers the “grand theories” of development, tracing the political economy of capitalist development in Europe and in various non-European settings. Insights about the nature and scale of European capitalism will inform our understanding of European colonialism, which at its zenith forced a liberalization whose parallels

are comparable with contemporary globalization. **In Part Three**, we consider the strategies that developing countries have used to manage and plan national economic development during two critical phases: (1) the period immediately following the end of the Second World War; and (2) the period following the debt crises of the 1980s. Comparative and historical insights about these experiences will inform theoretical perspectives about globalization and the political economy of development in the contemporary era. Finally, in **Part Four**, we explore “alternative” countercurrents in post-colonialism, post-development, feminism and ecological theory.