



ANTH3023

Development Studies: Global Economic Inequality, International Aid, and Human Rights

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Chris Vasantkumar

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Why are some countries rich and others poor? Why do billions live on less than \$5 a day while the 26 richest billionaires together own as much wealth as the poorest 50 percent of the planet's people? What, if anything, should we do about this? This unit tackles these questions anthropologically, focusing on international aid as a key means of closing the gap between rich and poor. We will focus on a number of key topics. Specifically, we will explore the history of global poverty and economic inequality, the emergence of human rights as a key vocabulary for staking claims to economic equality, and the complexity of the relationship between culture and development, examining in some detail the ways in which culture can both impede and aid development projects. Finally, we will pay some critical attention to why programs designed to help people in the developing world have sometimes fallen short of their intended goals.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Analyse and articulate how and why international aid remains such a contested arena within international relations and such a problematic context for altruistic notions of help.

ULO2: Read widely and actively participate in discussions concerning interactions between development agencies and target communities within the developing world and

thereby gain a detailed picture of what international aid entails.

ULO3: Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.

ULO4: Examine the social outcomes that emerge from programs of international aid by looking beyond the rhetoric and developing an appreciation of the complex factors that influence these outcomes.

ULO5: Demonstrate command of anthropological knowledge and theories relevant to international aid.

General Assessment Information

Late Submission Policy

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. **Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm** on the date indicated. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). **Late submission of time sensitive tasks** (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) **will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.**

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Essay 1	15%	No	28/03/2025
Essay 2	30%	No	16/05/2025
Take-home exam	30%	No	08/06/2025
Quizzes	10%	No	Weekly, 23:55 Monday -- Quizzes start Week 2
Participation	15%	No	Ongoing -- tutorials start in Week 2

Essay 1

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **28/03/2025**

Weighting: **15%**

500-700 word short essay on a designated topic.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and articulate how and why international aid remains such a contested arena within international relations and such a problematic context for altruistic notions of help.
- Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.
- Demonstrate command of anthropological knowledge and theories relevant to international aid.

Essay 2

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **16/05/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

1500 word essay on a designated topic

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and articulate how and why international aid remains such a contested arena within international relations and such a problematic context for altruistic notions of help.
- Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.
- Examine the social outcomes that emerge from programs of international aid by looking beyond the rhetoric and developing an appreciation of the complex factors that influence these outcomes.

Take-home exam

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours

Due: **08/06/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

This assessment entails two short essays based on assigned questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and articulate how and why international aid remains such a contested arena within international relations and such a problematic context for altruistic notions of help.
- Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.
- Examine the social outcomes that emerge from programs of international aid by looking beyond the rhetoric and developing an appreciation of the complex factors that influence these outcomes.
- Demonstrate command of anthropological knowledge and theories relevant to international aid.

Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours

Due: **Weekly, 23:55 Monday -- Quizzes start Week 2**

Weighting: **10%**

Quizzes based on unit content

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.
- Examine the social outcomes that emerge from programs of international aid by looking beyond the rhetoric and developing an appreciation of the complex factors that influence these outcomes.
- Demonstrate command of anthropological knowledge and theories relevant to international aid.

Participation

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **Ongoing -- tutorials start in Week 2**

Weighting: **15%**

Active participation in tutorials and class discussion is expected (for internal students).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and articulate how and why international aid remains such a contested arena within international relations and such a problematic context for altruistic notions of help.
- Read widely and actively participate in discussions concerning interactions between development agencies and target communities within the developing world and thereby gain a detailed picture of what international aid entails.
- Learn to think critically and reflexively about recent debates informing development, the motivations behind international aid, what makes development assistance successful in improving lives and/or why there are often difficulties in achieving this.
- Examine the social outcomes that emerge from programs of international aid by looking beyond the rhetoric and developing an appreciation of the complex factors that influence these outcomes.
- Demonstrate command of anthropological knowledge and theories relevant to international aid.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

In person lectures and tutes on Tuesdays. Unit information will be available on iLearn. Readings made accessible via Leganto.

Unit Schedule

Unit Schedule

Week	Date	Lecture Topic (Tues)	Assessments Due (note weekly quizzes and tutes/forums commence in week 2)
1	25 Feb	Introduction to the Unit	
2	4 Mar	Global Inequality I: Coming to Terms with the Problem	
3	11 Mar	Global Inequality II: Defining Wealth and Poverty	
4	18 Mar	Global Inequality III: Global Interconnection from Colonialism to Neoliberalism	
5	25 Mar	International Aid I: Development, The First 60 Years (1940s-2000s)	Essay 1 Due 28 March by 23:55 via turnitin
6	1 Apr	International Aid II: Development Institutions (WB, IMF, WTF?!)	
7	8 Apr	International Aid III: Alternatives to the North Atlantic Universe or Convergence? Development since the 00s	
* Mid-semester Recess 14 Apr-25 Apr			
8	29 Apr	Human Rights I: What are Rights? What is the Human? What are Human Rights?	
9	6 May	Human Rights II: The UDHR and the Limits of Liberty	
10	13 May	Human Rights III: Rights in Conflict	Essay 2 Due 16 May by 23:55 via turnitin
11	20 May	Putting It All Together I: Lost In Translation. Why Well-Intentioned Projects Fail. E.g., The Millennium Villages	
12	27 May	Putting It All Together II: Can One Person Change the World? Fair Trade, Voluntourism and Other Forms of Individual Action	

13	3 June	Putting It All Together III: The End of Development? Alternatives To (And Within) Development	
			Take Home Exam Due 8 June by 23:55 via turnitin

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the

expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2025.01R of the [Handbook](#)