

Introduction to Planning Institutions and Processes in Developing Countries (11.701)
Assignment 1, due September 22 Monday
(covering sections II-IV on the syllabus, covered in class on 9/9-9/25)

For each of the required readings listed under Topics II-IV on the reading list, write a paragraph or two about points that intrigued, struck, or surprised you, revealing something you did not know before. You can react to each reading separately, or group more than one reading in discussing your reaction. Though either option is equally acceptable, the latter approach is often easier and more stimulating to think about; students who find it possible to write better papers often do so by reacting to a group of readings, the theme or themes that run across them, or the contrasts between positions taken in them and the resulting tension or perplexity this creates in the reader's mind. Whichever approach you choose, be sure to list in parentheses at the end of the paragraph or other appropriate place the author's last name for the reading to which you are referring, followed by the date (e.g., Chang 2002). By the end, your paper should have referred to all of the assigned readings.

Say what it was that surprised you, and then explain why it was that you were surprised. Examples are: "I had always thought that... but the article (or a particular point made by it) showed me that my previous way of seeing things may have been inaccurate because..." Or, "this point surprised me because from other things I have read, or experience I have had, I had always thought that..." Feel free to write in the first person--i.e., use "I."

Choose surprises that made you see things differently or that created perplexity in the place of previous certainty. Write about the surprise concisely and concretely--with examples, where possible. Do *not* try to cover all the points made in the readings (you may well be able to mention only one point from any particular reading), and *do not summarize the articles*. There is no "right" answer or set of answers.

Common mistakes to avoid: Be sure to avoid simply critiquing the article. Avoid choosing for surprises points with which you simply disagree. Avoid saying you are surprised that the author *left out* certain points or evidence or perspectives that you consider important. You may disagree with or simply not like the article as a whole, but there is almost always something new you can learn from it--even if it is in a footnote.

The assignment should be no longer than 6 double-spaced pages or 1,500 words, whichever is shorter. The papers can also be shorter, and should have at least *one-inch margins* for written feedback. The font should be no smaller than this one and, preferably, larger.

The assignment is due by the end of the day on Monday, September 22. Hard copies of the papers should be delivered to Prof. Tandler's mail slot and to Teaching Assistant's mailbox. For last-minute delivery only, send electronic copies (with a request to print). Students who will be out of town on the due date of the paper should send it electronically. ***No late papers will be accepted, and students should not miss class in order to complete a paper.*** Late-paper grades will be automatically reduced.