



The Academy's Potential in International Development

For too long, the academic field of international development has been characterized by disciplinary claims to exclusive truths frequently resulting in petty academic battles and sophomoric snubbings. Disciplinary silos erected and maintained by the academy have always struggled to see past their own specialized view of the world. Unfortunately, BYU has all too often mirrored these academic turf wars—too many people too entrenched in unyielding dogma.



Indeed, the disciplinary doctrines of international development are commonly preached with a missionary zeal of uncompromising truth. It is my opinion that our close adherence to this approach has greatly stymied our potential in this arena, a potential that few other institutions can match in terms of our available natural resources: languages, connections, wealth, well trained and intelligent students, and, yes, missionary zeal. We have consistently fallen short of our potential. With the revamping of the international development minor, that uncompromising adherence to disciplinary doctrine is beginning to give way to an actual “big tent” approach, one that overtly recognizes that development is multifaceted and, thus, multidisciplinary.



No Events