



ECON 295E: Seminar. Political Economy of Development

CRN *****

Summer YYYY

Monday and Wednesday, 00:00 pm – 00:00 pm

Room: Nicely Hall ***

Instructor: Dr. Hossein Radmard

Office: 235 Ada Dodge Hall

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 00:00 pm – 00:00 pm, **and by appointment**

E-mail: hr30@aub.edu.lb

Office Phone: Ext. 4066

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will survey both major policy issue in the developing world and the political economy literature. The class will inform students of the historical and contemporary dynamics of economic development, with a focus on political issues.

We will tackle a number of “big questions” in development literature, such as:

- Why are some countries poor, repressive, and violent?
- Why have some seen growing incomes, stability and freedoms while others stagnate or decline?
- What is at the root of state capacity, political participation, and other aspects of “political development”?
- What role has the West played in both failure and success, and what role (if any) should it play in future?

As an interdisciplinary course in the Economics and Political Development concentration, this course is more theoretical and more reading and writing intensive than most. It is designed to give students a broad theoretical architecture for thinking about the big questions above. It is also expected to improve students’ critical reading and writing of academic work. By the end of the class, students will have an overview of the important intellectual work being done, and will be equipped to understand and critically evaluate new intellectual works.

The course is political in two senses. First, we explore the politics of economic development—the role of leaders, political systems, and institutions in promoting or retarding economic growth. Second, we look at political development as an end in itself—the forces that drive systems of representation versus repression, and property rights versus expropriation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GENERAL COMMENTS

- This is not a textbook-based course. At the beginning of every week, the reading of following sections will be provided to students.
- Moodle page of the course and email are the main means of communication between students and the instructor.
- Required and optional readings are from journal articles, book chapters and online resources.
- Lectures will be mixture of multimedia presentation, chalk&board, discussion and debates. In the first half of the class we go over theoretical parts and practice some empirical methods. Second half is mostly students' reflection from their assigned readings in the form of discussion.
- Students are highly encouraged to take note in the class.
- I do not enforce attendance directly, but regular attendance is essential if a student wants to do well in the course. Moreover it is a short 7-weeks semester, and missing any lecture can be costly! You may miss a pop-up in-class assignment (which has no make-up), besides the actual lecture material.
- I reserve the right to change this syllabus as time and circumstances dictate. Necessary changes will be announced in class in advance when possible.
- My responsibility as the instructor is helping you to learn the material. I should be organized, well-prepared, helpful, and courteous. Your responsibilities as a student are to be prepared for class and to take an active role in learning.

GRADING POLICY

Students' performance will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Three in-class assignments: 15% (5% each)
2. Participation in class discussions : 5%
3. Written Exam: 25%
4. One (fun) team project: 5%
5. One term paper: 50% (First draft: 10%, Final draft: 40%)

In-Class-Assignments

These are small pop-up assignments in class from current topics of the course. They can be written or oral, individual or in team.

Team Project

Students will be grouped in four teams. There will be a simple topic (mainly quantitative practice) assigned to each group. Later during the semester, one short presentation for the team, and individual reports will be gathered from students.

Term Paper

Each student is expected to complete a short research paper by the end of semester. We will have a full session on research methodology and quantitative skills which will mostly benefit those who decide to work on an empirical paper. Selected topics can be from a wide range related to the course. We will discuss some possible topics and some suggestions will be provided.

The first draft of paper should be submitted earlier for guideline and feedback from the instructor.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (): (Part I) **Introduction to Development: Patterns and Theories**

- Patterns and measures of development

Week 2 (): (Part I) **Introduction to Development: Patterns and Theories**

- Overview of development theories

Week 3 (): (Part II) **Forces of Development in the Long Run**

- Institutions
- Formal vs. Informal institutions

Week 4 (): (Part II) **Forces of Development in the Long Run**

- Endowments and geography
- Religion, Culture, Media
- Legacies of slavery and colonialism

Week 5 (): (Part III) **Development in the late 20th century**

- Patrimonial rule and corruption
- The politics of foreign aid and humanitarianism
- Crisis, reform and collapse
- Conflict

Week 6(): (Part IV) **Political Development**

- State and institution building
- Democracy vs. Autocracy

Week 7 (): **Project Presentations**

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

- The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course.
- Cheating is not tolerated at American University of Beirut. Anyone caught cheating will be penalized following the procedures described in the Student Code of Conduct. (<http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/generaluniversitypolicies/Documents/StudentCodeConduct/StudentCodeConduct.pdf>)