



ECON 360-002: Economics of Developing Areas

(Fall 2019)

04:30 PM to 07:10 PM T

Robinson B111

Instructor: Luai A. AlSadiq, lalsadiq@gmu.edu
Office Hours: T 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm (or by appointment)
Prerequisites: ECON 103, 104 or permission of instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Economic growth characteristic of developing countries. Economic development, obstacles to development, policies, and planning. Limited to three attempts.

MASON CORE: [Global Understanding](#)

This class would qualify as a *Mason Core* course and thus would fulfill three *Global Understanding* credits under the *Exploration Requirements*. The *Global Understanding* credits are intended to help you achieve the following *Learning Objectives and Outcomes*.

Learning Outcomes:

The goal of the global understanding category is to help students see the world from multiple perspectives, reflect upon their positions in a global society, and be prepared for future engagement as global citizens. While it may include a historical perspective, global understanding courses focus primarily on a contemporary understanding of one's place in a global society.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify and articulate one's own values and how those values influence their interactions and relationships with others, both locally and globally.
2. Demonstrate understanding of how the patterns and processes of globalization make visible the interconnections and differences among and within contemporary global societies.
3. Demonstrate the development of intercultural competencies.
4. Explore individual and collective responsibilities within a global society through analytical, practical, or creative responses to problems or issues, using resources appropriate to the field.



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COURSE MATERIAL

1. Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty, by Daron Acemoglu, James A. Robinson¹
2. The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators, and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor, by William Easterly²

GRADING

Criteria	%
Weekly Quizzes ³	20%
Weekly Class Conversations	20%
Weekly Reflection Papers	20%
Leading Class Discussion	20%
Term Paper/Book Review	20%

WEEKLY QUIZZES

Every class you will be given a short quiz at the beginning of class to make sure you are on top of your reading assignments. Your scores on these quizzes will mount to 20% of your final grade. There are **no makeup quizzes**, and **no extra time would be granted to latecomers**. Once a quiz has been collected, you won't be able to take it for that given week.

WEEKLY CLASS CONVERSATIONS

You will be required to have an active role in the weekly class conversations. This means that you need to participate several times each class to show me that you have read the assigned material. **Failing to participate on a regular basis will have a significant negative impact on your participation grade** and thus would adversely affect your overall grade for this course.

At the end of the semester, I reserve the right to bump a student's grade up one level (i.e. A- to A) if I feel they have gone above and beyond in participation while keeping a steady attendance. This will give you an incentive to attend regularly and contribute to class conversation beyond the bare minimum.

¹ Will be referred to as **WNF** throughout the rest of this document

² Will be referred to as **TTOE** throughout the rest of this document

³ **A syllabus-based quiz will be given on the 1st day of classes, so read the syllabus thoroughly and carefully**



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WEEKLY REFLECTION PAPERS

Every week starting week#2 you will have to hand in your reading-response assignment. To do so, you will need to read the assigned chapters from the WNF and TTOE books and then write a reflection paper⁴ that is between 1-2 pages in length. For the chapters due each week, see [Schedule](#) below. Reflection papers must be submitted in **typed hard copy format** at the beginning of each class. **No emails will be accepted. Late homework will not be accepted.**

LEADING CLASS DISCUSSION:

On the first day of classes, each student would be assigned one or more chapters from TTOE and/or WNF where you would be responsible to lead the class discussion for those chapters. On your assignment's day, you'd spend about ten minutes (per chapter) presenting the major themes, main points, and key takeaways from what you read. The presentation plus a list of guiding questions⁵ prepared by the discussion leader should facilitate our class discussion to highlight the chief outcomes from each chapter.

Your grade as a discussion leader will amount to 20% of your total grade in this class and it will be based on the thoroughness of your presentation, the quality of your questions, and the substantive nature of your discussion-leading. **If you miss your assigned session and do not substantiate your absence, you will receive a score of zero.**

BOOK REVIEW

By the last day of classes (see [Schedule](#) below), you are expected to submit a hardcopy of a detailed book review that should take the form of a JEL review essay ([see sample here](#)). Your Book Review will be your term paper and it should be between 5 – 8 pages. You need to choose a book from the following list and have your choice approved by me within the first couple weeks of the semester.

- i. Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance, by Douglass C. North
- ii. Development as Freedom, by Amartya Sen
- iii. After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy, by Christopher J. Coyne
- iv. From Subsistence to Exchange and Other Essays, by Peter Bauer

⁴ I will talk more about the reflection papers format in class

⁵ To come up with "high-quality" questions that would be useful for facilitating our class discussion, try to bring the most critical (and sometimes controversial) elements of each chapter into the discussion. Needless to say that your questions don't need to be questions per se. They can be insightful comments or thoughtful concerns about the reading material as well.



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- v. Out of Poverty: Sweatshops in the Global Economy, by Benjamin Powell
- vi. Making Poor Nations Rich: Entrepreneurship and the Process of Economic Development, by Benjamin Powell
- vii. Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World, 3rd Edition, by John Rapley

GENERAL CLASS POLICIES

- ⇒ **This syllabus serves as a contract between myself and the students:** I expect you to execute the clauses and guidelines of the syllabus to the best of your ability and I will do my best to uphold my part of the agreement as well. However due to the fluid nature of the teaching process, changes to the syllabus may take place as the semester progresses.
- ⇒ **Elastic Clause:** I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus throughout the course as needed.
- ⇒ **Check your email regularly:** Students must use their MasonLive email to receive any information and updates about this class.
- ⇒ **Electronic device policy:** During lectures, laptops and cell phones are *permitted* provided that they do not cause a disturbance. Disruptive students will be asked to leave.
- ⇒ **Audio recording:** The use of *any type* of audio recorders is **NOT** allowed.
- ⇒ **No electronics are allowed during quizzes/tests/exams:** including calculators capable of text storage. Simple calculators are allowed for computational use only. Use of a prohibited device during an exam constitutes cheating.
- ⇒ **Cheating results in a zero score:** Exams and assignments are governed by the University's academic honesty policy.
- ⇒ **Assignments are due at the beginning of class:** Any hardcopy assignment is due at the beginning of class; *late assignments will receive a score of zero*. Collaboration on assignments is *allowed*, but each student is responsible for turning in their own work.
- ⇒ **Regular attendance is vital for your performance on this course:** Missing many classes won't only have a direct adverse effect on your quizzes, participation, and reflection grades, but the quality of your final paper and your capacity to lead a successful class discussion would dramatically decreased as the number of classes you miss go up. In other words, missing classes would affect every aspect of your final grade.



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HONOR CODE

GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Submit only your own work for assignments, exams, and presentations, and include citations for attributions for any text that is not your own writing, through quotation marks and reference citations.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is obviously a serious offense. Your papers should be your own original work. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please see the George Mason Honor Code: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>. If I find that you have plagiarized, I will fail you for the course and report you to the George Mason Honor Committee.

DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic arrangements concerning disabilities must be made through that office.

ENROLLMENT

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is allowed only for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the schedule of classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The university catalog (catalog.gmu.edu) is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at universitypolicy.gmu.edu. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES

- ✓ **Writing center** – A114 Robinson Hall – (703) 993-1200 – writingcenter.gmu.edu
- ✓ **University Libraries** – <https://library.gmu.edu/>
- ✓ **Counseling and Psychological Services** – (703) 993-2380 – caps.gmu.edu



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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date	WNF	TTOE	Notes
Aug 27	-	-	Syllabus Quiz
Sep 03	Preface: Why Egyptians filled Tahrir Square to bring down Hosni Mubarak and what it means for our understanding of the causes of prosperity and poverty Chapter One: So Close and Yet So Different	Chapter One: Introduction Chapter Two: Two Nobel Laureates and the Debate They Never Had	September 3: Last day to add classes
Sep 10	Chapter Two: Theories That Don't Work	Chapter Three: Once Upon a Time in China	September 9: Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition Refund
Sep 17	Chapter Three: The Making of Prosperity and Poverty	Chapter Four: Race, War, and the Fate of Africa	September 17: Final Drop Deadline: Last Day with 50 % Tuition Refund
Sep 24	Chapter Four: Small Differences and Critical Junctures: The Weight of History	Chapter Five: One Day in Bogotá	
Oct 01	Chapter Five: "I've Seen the Future, and It Works": Growth Under Extractive Institutions	Chapter Six: Values: The Long Struggle for Individual Rights	
Oct 08	Chapter Six: Drifting Apart	Chapter Seven: Institutions: We Oppress Them If We Can	
Oct 15	-	-	Fall Break
Oct 22	Chapter Seven: The Turning Point	Chapter Eight: The Majority Dream	
Oct 29	Chapter Eight: Not on Our Turf: Barriers to Development	Chapter Nine: Homes or Prisons? Nations and Migrations	
Nov 05	Chapter Nine: Reversing Development	Chapter Ten: How Much Do Nations Matter?	
Nov 12	Chapter Ten: The Diffusion of Prosperity	Chapter Eleven: Markets: The Association of Problem-Solvers	
Nov 19	Chapter Eleven: The Virtuous Circle	Chapter Twelve: Technology: How to Succeed Without Knowing How	
Nov 26	Chapter Twelve: The Vicious Circle Chapter Thirteen: Why Nations Fail Today	Chapter Thirteen: Leaders: How We Are Seduced by Benevolent Autocrats	
Dec 03	Chapter Fourteen: Breaking the Mold Chapter Fifteen: Understanding Prosperity and Poverty	Chapter Fourteen: Conclusion	Last day of class
Dec 17	Term Paper due by 4:30 pm		Hardcopy in class