

ECON 360-002: Economics of Developing Areas

Patrick Crawford
pcrawfo6@gmu.edu

Fall 2022

Nguyen Engineering Building - 1109 — 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm (MW)

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

1 Course Description

The course aims to introduce students to the field of economic development. Why are some countries rich and others poor? What can we do to raise countries from poverty? We will explore both historical development and contemporary theories and practices to try to understand and answer these questions. Because of the significant real world stakes, this is a highly contentious field. My aim is to introduce a broad range of perspectives and give students the tools to analyze the effectiveness of recent policy responses.

Recommended Prerequisites: ECON 103 and ECON 104.

2 Materials

You should have all the readings for each week done before each lecture. All of the readings will be available online through the Library or be posted on Blackboard. Two of the three books are linked below through the Mason Library and all three should be available for purchase at the Bookstore or Amazon. If you have any trouble getting access to the readings, let me know as soon as possible and I will do my best to provide an alternative.

We will be reading academic articles that contain econometrics. While you are not required to have taken a statistics course for this course, and I will explain findings without delving far into the weeds. The following links are two good primers for you to review if you need to brush up on general concepts: [A Primer on Linear Regression](#) & [A Primer on Causality](#).

2.1 Required Texts

- *The Elusive Quest for Growth* by William Easterly [Library – Bookstore]
- *Poor Economics* by Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo [Library – Bookstore]
- *How the World Became Rich* by Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin [Bookstore]

3 Grading

Grading for this course will follow a standard ten-point scale. Your course grade will comprise of five short Discussion Assignments (25%), a Presentation (15%), Participation (5%), a Midterm (20%), and a Final Exam (35%).

Late Policy: Every day an assignment is late will drop full letter grade. For example, an A- quality assignment will receive a B- if it is turned in a day late. Exceptions will only be made for emergencies approved in accordance with University policy.

3.1 Participation

While you will not be graded on attendance, you are responsible for the readings, lecture material, and any activities we may do for each class. I encourage all students to speak up each class and comment on or ask questions about the readings to demonstrate engagement with the material. This class will be a space for respectful and open discussion.

3.2 Discussion Assignments

You will write five 2-3 page (double-spaced) responses throughout the semester *briefly* summarizing a prior reading, then discussing its arguments, comparing it to other readings, or critiquing its findings.

3.3 Presentation

Pick a country anywhere in the world. You will have 5 to 10 minutes to briefly explain the economic history of the country and then discuss a policy response that you believe will help encourage development or what past policies failed to promote growth and why.

3.4 Exams

Both exams will be a closed note. Students who show up late will only be given to the end of the exam time to complete the exam, and no student may begin the exam after the first test has been turned in.

- The Midterm Exam is on Wednesday, Oct 12th
- The Final Exam is on Monday, Dec 12th at 1:30 pm

Grade	Percent
A+	97 - 100%
A	93 - 96.9
A-	90 - 92.9
B+	87 - 89.9
B	83 - 86.9
B-	80 - 82.9
C+	77 - 79.9
C	73 - 76.9
C-	70 - 72.9
D	60 - 69.9
F	00 - 59.9

4 University and Class Policies

4.1 Honor Code

The George Mason University Honor Code is as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

I expect each of you to abide by this code. Any student suspected of any violation will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please visit their [website](#) for more information.

4.2 COVID-19 and Safe Return to Campus

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check prior to coming to campus. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system **and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, Red, or Blue email response**. Only students who receive a "green" notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. **If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.**

4.3 Disability Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu — Phone: (703) 993-2474

4.4 Office Hours

I will be available by appointment to meet over Zoom if you have any questions or concerns. Please [email me](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) to schedule a time to meet (I am free most afternoons). NOTE: You must use your Mason email account for all University communications.

5 Schedule (*subject to change*)

Please visit the [Registrar's website](#) to see the full University schedule.

- **Week 1:** Introduction, Malthus and Solow
Easterly, *Elusive Quest for Growth*, Ch 1 & 3
[MRU: The Solow Model with math](#)
- **Week 2:** Poverty Trap & the Aid Debate
Easterly (2006) “Reliving the 1950s”
Banerjee & Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Chs 1 & 2
Easterly, *Elusive Quest for Growth*, Ch 6
- **Week 3:** Labor Day & Geography
Alson (2015) “The Effect of the TseTse Fly on African Development”
Koyama & Rubin, *HtWBR*, Ch 2
- **Week 4:** Infrastructure & Market Access
Alvarez-Palau, et al (2020) “Transport and Urban Growth in the First Industrial Revolution”
- **Week 5:** Institutions
North (1991) “Institutions”
North (1968) “Sources of productivity change in ocean shipping, 1600-1850”
Koyama & Rubin, *HtWBR*, Ch 3
- **Week 6:** Violence & Social Orders
Nye (2011) “Why do Elites Permit Reform?”
Cox, North, & Weingast (2019) “The Violence Trap: A Political-Economic Approach to the Problems of Development”
- **Week 7:** Culture & Religion
Schultz (2022*) “Kin Networks and Institutional Development”
Caicedo (2019) “The mission: Human Capital Transmission, Economic Persistence, and Culture in South America”
Koyama & Rubin, *HtWBR*, Ch 4
- **Week 8:** Health, Human Capital, & Midterm
Bleakley (2007) “Disease and Development”
Banerjee & Duflo, *Poor Economics*, Ch 3 & 4
Easterly, *Elusive Quest for Growth*, Ch 4
- **Week 9:** War & Colonialism
Broadberry & Wallis (2017) “Growing, Shrinking, and Long Run Economic Performance” (Only pg 1-13)
Koyama & Rubin, *HtWBR*, Ch 6
- **Week 10:** Historical Persistence
Nunn (2008) “The Long Term Effects of Africa’s Slave Trades”
Nunn & Wantchekon (2011) “The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa”
Dell (2010) “The Persistent Effects of Peru’s Mining Mita”
- **Week 11:** State Capacity or Anarchy?
Leeson, *Anarchy Unbound*, Ch 10
Johnson & Koyama (2017) “States and economic growth: Capacity and constraints”
- **Week 12:** Status of Europe & Asia
Haggard (2004) “Institutions and Growth in East Asia”
- **Week 13:** Status of Latin America & Africa
de la Escosura (2004) “Why Did Latin America Fall Behind?”
Pinkovskiy & Sala-i-Martin (2014) “Africa is on Time”
- **Week 14:** TBA & Thanksgiving
- **Week 15:** Presentations and Review
- **Jul 29:** Final Exam