

**ECON 341: Economy of Developing Countries**  
**TR 2:30 – 3:45pm, Smith 349**  
**Xavier University, Spring 2018**

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Instructor: Dr. Thomas Lebesmuehlbacher  
Office: Smith 337  
Office Hours: TR 12 – 2pm; By appointment

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**Course Overview:**

During the last two centuries, the world has experienced an Industrial Revolution, two rounds of globalization, and unprecedented technological progress. Despite these advances, a large majority of countries and people live in abject and persistent poverty, and face its natural consequences such as disease, crime, social unrest, and the inability to participate in economic decision-making. This course analyzes the problems and issues that are fundamental to developing countries. We will focus on topics that are "internal" to developing countries, such as population growth, inequality, poverty, sustainable development, education, health, and nutrition. The over-riding question throughout the course will be: can public policies alleviate the problems of developing countries and generate sustainable growth? Case studies will be used throughout the semester to reinforce the material and provide some real-world context for what we're learning. Throughout the course, you will learn to understand and apply some of the theoretical and empirical tools used by economists in this field.

**Learning Goals:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to characterize the developing world and understand the conditions that define developing countries, including the lives of the more than 5.5 billion people who live in them. Furthermore, you will be able to provide a comprehensive explanation of development and the various factors that comprise a country's state of development. You will critically analyze problems in the process of development, including economic, demographic, socio-political, health, environmental and financial issues, and comparatively assess the advantages and disadvantages of corrective policy actions. Finally, you will learn to draw from real-world data to support your analyses and policy recommendations.

**Textbook:**

The recommended textbook for the course "*Debraj Ray, Development Economics.*" It is not required, but it will provide structure for the course and may be useful for some students to use for background reading and to review the material from lecture. Required readings will come from journal and newspaper articles and excerpts from books. These are generally brief in length (~15 pages) and will be made available on Canvas.

**Grading:**

- Exams: There will be two midterm exams during the semester covering material from readings, case studies, lectures, and class discussions. Each midterm grade will count towards 25% of the course. There will not be a Final Exam, instead there will be a short paper due at the end of the semester.

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- Quizzes: There will be about 5 - 8 short quizzes during the semester covering the assigned readings. The average of the quiz grades will account for 10% of the course grade.
- Country Expert: About the second week of class, the class will be broken up into groups of two to four students and each group will be assigned a developing country. The group will prepare a 15 to 20 minute presentation that explains how each topic covered in class relates to the corresponding country. Presentations will be towards the end of the semester, with exact dates and format announced in class. These presentations will count 20% towards your final grade.
- Short Paper: Each group must complete one main writing assignment. Groups will focus on ONE topic covered in class and critically evaluate it for a developing country of their choosing. The paper should include some descriptive data analysis and critical evaluation. The exact content of this analysis will be unique to each topic, but you may want to consider things like the prevailing explanations for a problem (economic, social, political, geographic, etc.) and existing or potential policy actions and their advantages and disadvantages. The grading of the paper will be weighted in the following manner: 20% Writing/Grammar, 20% Organization and Relevance of Content, and 60% Critical Analysis. Sources, including the graphs and data, must be cited appropriately. The paper will be due at the Final Exam date and account for 20% of the final grade. The paper must not exceed 5 pages.

Summary:

- 2 Midterms: 25% each
- 5-8 Quizzes: 10%
- Presentation: 20%
- Paper: 20%

Grading Scale:

A	93+	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 92	C-	70 - 72
B+	87 - 89	D+	67 - 69
B	83 - 86	D	63 - 66
B-	80 - 82	D-	60 - 62
C+	77 - 79	F	<60

Final grades are rounded to the nearest whole number, e.g. 89.50 is a A- and a 89.49 is a B+.

**Missed Exam:**

Absolutely no makeup exams will be given, unless PREVIOUSLY agreed upon. You are forewarned well in advance to properly schedule your time and make proper arrangements for any potential conflicts (exceptions include illness or family emergency, subject to the discretion of the instructor). You are expected to take all exams at the scheduled time in the course and section in which you are enrolled. If you arrive late to any exam, you will only be allowed to take the exam if no other students have left the exam.

**Honor Code:**

The Honor Code is taken very seriously. Cheating will not be accepted. As a Xavier student, you have accepted to abide by the University's academic honesty code. Information about Academic Integrity can be found at <http://www.xavier.edu/handbook/standards/Academic-Honesty.cfm>. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not a reasonable excuse for a violation.

**WCB Mission Statement:**

"We educate students of business, enabling them to improve organizations and society, consistent with the Jesuit tradition."

**Attendance, Participation and Classroom Preparation:**

This course will be driven by presentations and discussions in class, and supplemented by outside readings. My primary goal is to motivate thoughtful analysis of the topics in this course. Active participation and regular attendance are necessary for success in this class. There will not be a mandatory attendance policy, however. Instead, 10% of your grade will be reflected by your performance in quizzes. Students cannot take the quiz if they are not in attendance, and quiz and exam material will include subjects discussed in class that cannot be found in the readings, so students are strongly encouraged to attend every class. If you do not show up to class, do not expect that all your questions can be answered the day before an exam at office hours. Devote as much time and effort as necessary to master the material covered in this course. Like many other skills, economics is best learned by doing. Thus, the more problems you work, and the more you participate in class, the better your understanding of the material will be.

**Disability and Health Related Issues:**

If you are a student with a disability and feel that you may need a reasonable accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of the course that are listed in this syllabus, students with physical, medical and/or psychiatric disabilities or students with AD(H)D and/or specific learning disabilities are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services. See <http://www.xavier.edu/disability-services/index.cfm> for more information.

**Classroom Conduct:**

Your instructor and classmates deserve courtesy. If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so quietly. Do not talk in class, and turn off mobile phones during class. Any disruptive behavior constitutes grounds for dismissal from the course. However, constructive participation in classroom discussion/activities is highly encouraged!

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**Tentative Course Outline:**

**Tuesday**

January	
Day	Topic
9	Why Nations Fail
16	Poverty
23	Inequality
30	Population
February	
Day	Topic
6	Health & Nutrition
13	Education
20	Property Rights
27	Review
March	
Day	Topic
6	SPRING BREAK
13	Conflict
20	Domestic Migration & Labor Markets
27	Domestic Migration & Labor Markets
April	
Day	Topic
3	Microfinance
10	Review
17	Writing day (W/D deadline on 16th)
24	Presentations
May	
Day	Topic
01	Presentations (from 1pm to 3pm)

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**Thursday**

January	
Topic	Day
Why Nations Fail	11
Poverty (When Elephants Fight)	18
Inequality (Arab Spring)	25
February	
Topic	Day
Population (China's One Child Policy)	1
Health & Nutrition (Nothing But Nets)	8
Education (FFE Programs)	15
Property Rights (Xiaogang Agreement)	22
March	
Topic	Day
Midterm 1	1
SPRING BREAK	8
Conflict (Syria)	15
Domestic Migration & Labor Markets	22
EASTER HOLIDAY	29
April	
Topic	Day
Microfinance (Grameen Bank)	5
Midterm 2	12
Presentations/Writing Day	19
Presentations	26
May	
Topic	Day