

Syllabus for INTL 190 – Issues of Economic (under)Development in Africa

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Term: Fall 2010

Location & Timing: SEQ 244, Tuesdays 8AM-10:50AM

Office Hours: By appointment, Econ 318

Notes on grading:

- 30% Submitted discussion notes
- 20% Class participation and attendance
- 50% final project and paper

Final Presentation

- The final class is reserved for presentations on your paper. Each presentation will be 10 mins long (I know this exceeds the normal class time by 40 minutes...perhaps we can have 4 presentations during the previous week's lecture). You have to submit your presentation in PowerPoint (ppt) format 2 days before the final presentations.

Final Paper

- For the African country of your choice, pick ONE issue (from the list below), and write a 20-page paper on how this issue is affecting development in that country. You are expected to provide a clear question (the narrower and more specific the question, the better off you are), and attack that question using arguments in various papers, books, journal articles etc. The paper MUST also contain a section where you produce some results using data on that country. I do not expect fancy statistical analysis – often, simple graphs or cross tables can make for convincing arguments. At the same time, be sure not to confuse correlations with causations (more on this later in the syllabus). Plagiarism will not be tolerated. University of California, San Diego policy requires that suspicious papers will be run through *Turn It In* and referred to the Dean.
- List of issues/topics for final paper and presentation (pick any ONE subtopic):
 - Institutional history
 - Health
 - Education
 - Technology

Picking a country:

- Pick a country and be ready to learn a lot about it during this course
- You should pick a country in Africa that
 - Interests you
 - Has data available on key economic indicators like literacy, GDP per capita etc, preferably for a lengthy period of time (10 years or more)

How the class will work:

- Each class will be broken up into 2 segments – a lecture segment and a discussion segment
- I will lecture broadly on a topic (listed below) for the first hour
- The next hour will be dedicated to Africa specific discussion on the country you have picked.
- Everyone submits a note on the discussion topic of the week – these notes should be 1-2 pages long and can contain key graphs or figures that you are ready to discuss. I don't need a well thought out essay each week – just something to help you guide your discussion. The notes can even appear as bullet points as long as they are written in coherent, full sentences.
- I will pick 2 people at the beginning of the discussion session to start talking about their discussion notes. You are expected to speak for 5 mins or so (or more if you want to). You might (and should) be interrupted by me or your classmates for clarifications or further questions on the topic.

Lectures

Lecture 1 – Introduction to Development

Readings:

1. *Beyond Economic Growth* Chapters 1 & 2
2. *Attacking Poverty: Opportunity, Empowerment, and Security*
3. *13,000 Years of Development* by Jared Diamond
4. “[Trends In Growth and Human Development](#)”, *Human Development Report*, 1996, UNDP, New York.
5. “[Human Development: Past, Present and Future](#)”, *Human Development Report*, 2001, UNDP, New York.

Lecture 2 –Theories of Economic Growth

Rostow's theory of growth, the Harrod-Domar model, successes and failures of the Harrod-Domar model, Solow's model.

Readings

1. Reynolds, Lloyd (1983), “The Spread of Economic Growth to the Third World.” In *Leading Issues in Economic Development* pp. 84-99.
2. *Easterly, 2001, *The Elusive Quest for Growth*, MIT Press, Chapter 2, 3 & 5
3. Pritchett, L. (1997), “Divergence, Big Time.” In *Leading Issues in Economic Development* pp. 127-131
4. Rostow's Theory of Economic Growth – A Summary

Discussion: Introduce your country, and discuss the current political and economic climate. Gear your discussion towards how the models of growth in the readings may or may not have applied.

Lecture 3 – History & Institutions in African Development

What role did colonization and slavery play in subsequent African development?

Readings:

1. How Africa became Black – Jared Diamond
2. P Collier, JW Gunning *Explaining African Economic Performance*, JEL 1999
3. Nathan Nunn *The Long Term Effect of Africa's Slave Trades*, QJE 2008
4. Jutta Bolt & Dirk Bezemer *Understanding Long-Run African Growth: Colonial Institutions or Colonial Education?* The Journal of Development Studies 2009

Discussion: Know the economic history of your country. When was it colonized? Was the slave trade present in your country? Know some facts about these. Also be ready to talk about modern day institutions like the legal & financial system etc. Try to think about Diamond's argument in the role institutions play in development. If ethnic/civil war is rife in your country, also talk about its origins and how that might be affecting the country's future growth.

Lecture 4 - Health Policy in Developing Countries

- *Drèze, Jean, and Amartya Sen. 1989. "Nutrition and Capability." *Hunger and Public Action*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press. 35-45.
- Filmer, Hammer and Pritchett. 2002. "A Prescription for Health Policy in Poor Countries". *World Bank Research Observer* 17(1): 47-66.
- *Millions Saved: Proven Successes in Global Health*, Center for Global Development, Washington D.C. Various Cases
- The Coming Plague – Selected Chapters

Discussion: For the chosen country, find out the percentage of GDP that is allocated to health care, the prevalence of malnutrition, the maternal mortality ratio, and the percentage of the population with access to health care, safe water and sanitation. Figure out the current health climate and what issues are most important in that country. You can feel free to take up any disease or health concern like dengue fever, or ebola etc. What is the government trying to do to combat these?

Lecture 5: AIDS in Africa

Why Africa? What are the major theories regarding the widespread prevalence of AIDS? What are some of the labor market impacts of AIDS? What are policies that are in place now and how are they affecting the population?

Readings:

- Emily Oster - HIV and Sexual Behavior Change: Why Not Africa?
- Pascaline Dupas - Do Teenagers Respond to HIV Risk Information? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Kenya
- Achyuta Adhvaryu & Kathleen Beegle, 2009 - The long-run impacts of adult deaths on older household members in Tanzania

Discussion: Present health statistics about your country. What is the AIDS prevalence? What are some of the current policies in place trying to combat it? What economic indicators is AIDS prevalence correlated with? Do you find it is correlated with literacy, other diseases, income etc?

Lecture 6: Malaria in Africa

What are the causes and consequences of Malaria in Africa? What policies are in place and how effective have they been?

Readings:

1. Achyuta Adhvaryu, 2009 - The effect of introducing new malaria therapy on health care demand in Tanzania
2. Bednet studies – will assign this reading soon

Discussion: Is Malaria a concern in your country? Discuss why or why not – i.e. is the climate not suitable for malaria mosquitoes, are the policies so great that they have effectively combated malaria etc. If it is a concern, be ready with some statistics on how it is impacting the economy and how it might be correlated with economic indicators or mortality as you did for the discussion on AIDS.

Lecture 7: Educational challenges in developing countries

- Psacharopoulos, G., 1991, “The Economic Impact of Education: Lessons for Policy Makers.” In *Leading Issues in Economic Development* pp.223--228.
- Hanushek, E.,1995, “Interpreting Recent Research on Schooling in Developing Countries.” In *Leading Issues in Economic Development* pp. 229--233.
- Kremer et al *Many Children Left Behind? Textbooks and Test Scores in Kenya*

Discussion:

Case Study: For your country, please find out the percentage of GDP that is allocated to education, the primary, secondary and tertiary schooling completion rates for males and females, the average years of schooling for girls and boys, the female labor force participation rate, and any other indicators of educational attainment that are available and interesting. Comment on what you find. Some questions to think about: Do you believe that educational enrolment in your country has been improving over time? Has the gender gap been diminishing? Do you think this country has a “strong” educational system?

Lecture 8: Technology in Africa

How has the spread of technology affected businesses and farmers in Africa? The lecture will focus on the role of cell phones, high yielding varieties of seeds, etc.

Readings:

- Tavneet Suri and Billy Jack, 2009 “Mobile Money – The Economics of M-PESA”
- Jenny Aker, 2009, “Does digital divide or provide? The impact of cell phones on grain markets in Niger”

- Duflo et al, 2008 “How High are Rates of Return to Fertilizer? Evidence from Field Experiments in Kenya”

Discussion: pick a technology that you think is important for development and talk about whether your country has or lacks this technology. Again, some statistics would be very helpful.

Lecture 9 –

At present I am keeping this lecture free to discuss specific topics that the class might be interested in, but that I might have skipped over the last few weeks. Moreover, we might have spillovers from previous lectures, so I am keeping this free for now.

Lecture 10 - Final Presentations