

Economic Development: Re-vamped for Late Spring

Instructor: Simon D. Halliday

Smith College, Spring 2020, Post-Recess

This syllabus is preliminary and subject to change.

Contact & Admin Details

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Exordium

Before anything else, I wish us all fortitude, compassion, and generosity. We shall now endeavor to complete our semester – for many of you your final semester at Smith College – from a distance. Notwithstanding physical distance, I hope what we do together as a class brings us closer. We shall further our understanding of economic development through understanding economic growth, through investigating the role of institutions in development, and through understanding the dynamics of markets, market failures and transactions costs in economic interactions. We may also cover one or two other topics depending on time and the choices you make in the class. I'm navigating what it means to expect a team project while working online and we're going to work on this together as we proceed to manage our joint expectations. Best of luck to us all. Let us all both moderate our expectations of what we can get done this semester, while also expecting the best of each other in tough times.

Revised Methods of Instruction

What to say here? Well the course was once lecture and discussion-based. Now, I plan to base it on you reading at home, online face-to-face discussions, online discussions in Slack, short videos I record and that you can watch asynchronously, and more. We shall see. We shall adapt as we go. Let's enter this with compassion and warmth in our hearts.

Texts

Textbook

We shall continue to use our textbook, *Essentials of Development Economics* which can be access as an e-book if necessary. We shall also use *Poor Economics* and I shall ask you to read and report on it as we now conclude the semester.

Course Schedule

This Course Schedule is Preliminary and Subject to Change Below is my revised course schedule for the next few weeks until the end of semester, starting from 30 March 2020.

Date	Week	Topic	Reading	Assignment
3/31-4/1	Week 8	Economic Growth (cont.)	Readings	Midterm Exercise 1 Due
4/7-9	Week 9	Institutions	EDE Ch. add in/8	Midterm Exercise 2 Due
4/14-16	Week 10	Institutions & Market Failure	EDE Ch. add in/8 EDE Ch. 8/11	Midterm Exercise 3 Due
4/21-23	Week 11	Market Failure & Credit & Risk	EDE Ch. 10/12 EDE Ch. 10/12	Midterm Exercise 4 Due
4/28-30	Week 12	Credit & Risk	EDE Ch. 10/12	-
5/4-8	Week 13	Presentations and Reports	-	Project Due

I've currently excluded the chapters on agriculture and transformation.

Assessment

The following table summarizes the different aspects of the course's revised assessment. This is subject to change.

Assessment	Percentage	Cumulative
Class Participation	10%	10%
Poor Economics Tasks	10%	20%
Midterm exercises	25%	45%
Team Project & Presentation	20%	65%
Project Reflection & Lit Review	10%	75%
Homework (Problem Sets)	25%	100%

- *Class Participation*: Class participation will be based on your participation in your group Slack, in the Google doc for Poor Econ & your team project, in the general Slack, etc.

- *Midterm exercises*: We're no longer having the full take-home midterm as originally planned. Instead, I'm splitting the original midterm into four exercises that you'll do over several weeks. I hope to get *all* of the exercises to you at the same time so that you can do them at your own pace if you'd like to get them all done quickly, but you will have to hand them in in sequence so there are deadlines for each exercise. I can give you leeway on the due date for handing in two of the four exercises if you need it, but I would like you to commit to handing in at least two of the exercises on or before the scheduled due date (these are all listed on Moodle and you have over four weeks to complete them all).
- *Team Project*: In teams of 4 you will consider a question in economic development that you can use a data to answer. This is going to be revised to be driven towards a "policy brief" on a topic we will decide jointly (between your team and me) for a given country or comparison of countries in a specified region.
- *Final presentation*: I'm going to try to work out whether you can still do a presentation in the final scheduled week. I don't know how to make it work yet, but I'm hoping that combining Google Slides + Zoom will allow us to do something that works.
- *Poor Economics*: I was not initially sure if we could use Poor Econ as much as I had wanted to, but now we are going to dedicate time to your reading it, providing summaries and discussion questions to fellow students, and producing a brief presentation **with members of your team**.

Moodle & Slack

The main way we'll communicate will be via Slack (not email, not Moodle). I'll upload documents to Moodle as a back-up. I want you to discuss readings in your teams and in the general slack channels corresponding to the related topics.

Slack

You are all already on our [Slack](#) workspace We're going to lean more heavily on Slack during the rest of the semester than we did during the first half of the semester.

- Please contribute to the chats about the diverse array of topics we'll discuss
 - start threads, respond with emojis, clip parts of papers you're not sure about, do all the things.
- Remember, participating on Slack will now be a part of your **participation grade**.
- You're already members of a channel for your team project.
- Feel free to post silly, fun, uplifting stuff about what you're up to in #random. I shall do the same.

Zoom

We'll use Zoom (which we tested before break) as a way to access synchronous discussions and class time. I shall record these. Initially, I shall endeavor to record them using Zoom's cloud technology, which we can then view with Smith log-ins. If that doesn't work, I'll record videos locally and upload them to a private YouTube Channel.

YouTube

I've created an ECO211 Channel on YouTube to which I will post public videos. I'll post the link on Slack. For private videos, I'll post them unlisted and private and provide you with the link. Please subscribe to the channel as I'll be posting new content to that channel. I'll also post it to the #video channel on Slack. Note: I will **not** be uploading my recorded Zoom videos to the Zoom cloud as the last time I tried to do that the video took four days to process (during Spring break) and I have little faith that will improve during the semester.

Team Project Deadlines

You have a few deadlines that I have imposed on your Team Research Project.

- initial meeting with me via Zoom after spring recess
- initial literature review submission
- team Zoom presentation
- final submission of policy report

How would I recommend you allocate tasks and monitor each other? Recently, I've come to really appreciate an app called [Trello](#). It allows you to create boards for tasks that can include checklists and which team members can monitor for progress. I highly recommend a tool like this for your team project (and do share your board with me if you create one; we can discuss this).

Stats Prep & Spinelli Center

Mr. Osman Keshawar is the [statistics consultant](#) at the Spinelli Center. He can coach you on the use of Excel, Stata and R. If you want a virtual appointment with him then email spinelli@smith.edu. From what I understand, he will still be available for consultations during this new post-Spring recess period.