

Population and Development

Econ 448

Spring 2016

T/Th 10:30-12:20 pm

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Office: 339 Savery Hall

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3 pm

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the subject of international economic development, with a focus on population issues. Since I am an economist, we will be focusing on the topics and tools of economics, and the body of knowledge so far, as created by economists. Topics include demography, poverty and income inequality, fertility choice, sex selection, marriage choice and the role of women, parental investments in child health and education, including discrimination against girls, and migration and urbanization.

The goals of the course are as follows: 1) Students should be able to identify and discuss the issues surrounding the topics listed above; 2) Students should be able to analyze economic models relevant to these issues; and 3) Students should be able to comment on magazine articles and review articles in economic journals dealing with population and development, explaining and expanding upon the economic analysis they contain.

Course Organization:

This course will combine lecturing on traditional microeconomic theory with discussion of real-world issues. Occasionally, we will break into groups to examine, and form a deeper understanding of, the material. Students are expected to be familiar with the course readings at every meeting and to provide comments and questions relevant to the topic. This is not an easy course in terms of the reading and writing required. Please be prepared to spend a lot of time reading, and writing about, difficult material.

Text:

There is no text for this topic. Lectures will be based on textbook excerpts, journal and magazine articles, and my own knowledge of the subject. All readings will be available in Canvas, either as pdfs or through direct links accessible by UW computers.

Prerequisites:

The explicit prerequisite for this course is a grade of 2.0 or higher in Econ 300. However, we will be reading papers from economic journals, and while we will be reviewing the concepts of regression analysis and interpretation, some familiarity with data analysis is strongly recommended. Please discuss your background with me if you are not sure about your preparation.

Evaluation:

You will be graded on class participation, two 3-4 page writing assignments, and two non-cumulative in-class exams. There is no final exam. Class grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation – 10%

Writing Assignments – 20%

Exams – 70%

Exam, paper, and participation grades will be curved individually, but your final grade will not be curved. I expect the class median to be approximately 3.3.

Class Participation Grades:

Class participation will be graded on your ability to contribute to class discussion through speaking up in class, and your participation in group problem solving exercises and paper brainstorming sessions scattered through the quarter. Each opportunity for class participation is worth one point, with ten points constituting a perfect score. You can get a maximum of six points for speaking in class. Seven points will be offered for other in-class activities. Since so many opportunities for points are given, there is no other make-up offered for any participation points.

Writing Assignments:

Twice during the quarter, you will be expected to write a 3 to 4 page economic analysis of an article from the popular press that is related to the topics we are studying. I will give you a selection of articles to choose from. You may, if you wish, work on this assignment with one other person. Details of these assignments will be discussed in the second week of the quarter. All assignments will be submitted via the Canvas website and run through the Turnitin antiplagiarism program. No hardcopies will be accepted. Note: If you want a W credit, you must write an additional 5 page paper due during finals week. We will discuss it at the same time we discuss the writing assignments.

Problem Sets:

It's nearly impossible to learn the tools of economics without working problems. So, from time to time, I will assign problem sets. These assignments will not be collected, and solutions will be posted. They are optional, but highly recommended, and the best way to prepare for the exams.

Late/Absence Policy:

There will be no make-up exams given, except in the case of extreme emergency or illness, reported to me as soon as possible. Extreme emergencies and illnesses will need to be documented, preferably with a doctor's note or police report. Please look at the exam dates below and plan your schedules accordingly. There is no make-up for class participation points, but written assignments can be submitted late with a 5% grade penalty for every day late after the original due date.

Advice:

I would like to get to know you and to help you do well in this class. The absolute best way for me to do this is to see you in office hours. Please try to come by and talk to me, even if you don't have any pressing questions about the class. If you see other students in my office during office hours, please join us! We are usually discussing something you will find of interest.

Course Outline:

We will follow the general outline below. Please consult the class website before every class to obtain reading assignments and check for any class announcements.

1. Introduction & Methodology (Week 1-2)
 - a. What is economic development?
 - b. Introduction to population
 - c. Population growth and development
 - d. Poverty
 - e. Empirical tools
2. Fertility (Week 3)
 - a. Development and fertility
 - b. Contraception & sex selection
3. Family Formation (Weeks 4-5)
 - a. The economics of marriage

First Exam (Thursday, April 28)

- b. Intra-household decision-making
4. Mortality and Health (Week 6)
 - a. The decline of mortality
 - b. Hunger, health and productivity
5. Investing in Children (Week 6-8)
 - a. Parents and child health
 - b. Child health, schooling, and future outcomes
 - c. Child labor
6. Migration & Urbanization (Week 9)
 - a. Agricultural surplus and urban migration
 - b. International migration

Second Exam (Thursday, June 2)

University of Washington
Department of Economics
Examination rules

1. Material allowed during a closed book exam:

i. All books, papers, notebooks etc. must be placed inside your bag (backpack etc.) and the bag must be securely and fully closed. If you do not have a bag, you must place all your material out of your reach (classroom window sill etc.)

ii. Only keep writing tools and **basic calculators** (i.e. simple 4-functions calculators). Graphing calculators or calculators with memories will not be allowed. **Sharing of calculators is not permitted.**

iii. **Cellular phones** must be turned off before entering the class and placed in your closed bag (not in your pocket). You are not allowed to use a cellular phone during an exam. Doing so will result in the termination of your exam time (your exam being taken from you at this point). Likewise **i-pads** or **i-pods** (or similar devices) are not allowed. The use of **personal computers** is not allowed during an exam.

iv. Baseball caps with visors and any kinds of **headgear** hiding your eyes are not permitted.

2. Attendance and special accommodation:

i. You are expected **not to leave the room** during the exam except in case of emergency. This includes restroom use; be sure to use the restroom before the beginning of the exam. If you must leave the room, you will be asked to leave your phone with the instructor while you are gone.

ii. If you arrive **late** to an exam, you cannot expect to get extra time after the official end of the exam to make up for the missing time at the beginning.

iii. If you have a **documented disability**, please show your instructor your documentation from the Office of Disability Resources for Students on the first day of class, so that your instructor can make all the necessary arrangements if you wish to take your exam in a separate place.

3. Academic honesty: *Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the Department's rules for student conduct and evaluation of student learning. Students accused of academic misconduct will be referred directly to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct for disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Conduct Code and, if found guilty, will be subject to sanctions. Sanctions range from a disciplinary warning, to academic probation, to immediate dismissal for the Department and the University, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Dismissal can be, and has been, applied even for first offenses. Moreover, a grade of zero can be assigned by the instructor for the course.*

i. Exams are individual work and **cheating will not be tolerated**. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, bringing notes to a closed-note exam, consulting a classmate or any other source of information during an exam, or looking at a neighbor's paper. See here for a more exhaustive list:

<http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/help/academichonesty.php>

ii. **My policy is to give a zero for an exam that I believe you have cheated on. This usually results in a failing grade for the course.**

01/02/14