Economic Development in Latin America - Spring 2019

Instructor: Pilar Useche, useche@ufl.edu

T | Period 8 - 9 (3:00 PM - 4:55 PM) CSE E220
R | Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM) CSE E220

Office Hours: right after class or by appointment

Objectives and Course Description

This course has the dual purpose of familiarizing you with the most important development policy issues in Latin America and the world, as well as providing you with important tools for analyzing economic development. The first part of the class will invite students to reflect on the question: what is economic development and how is development economics used to examine and explain it? We will go through a history tour to understand how ideas about economic development have been shaped and how this has resulted in specific economic policy frameworks. The class will examine in detail the socioeconomic and political context in a number of countries in the region, comparing the different circumstances that have shaped their economic development and potential. A core part of the class consists of examining the strong relationship that exists between markets and institutions; we will review the importance of institutions (embedded within political systems) on economic development, and provide a framework for institutional analysis that will be applied to analyze a set of countries. In the last part of the class we will focus on key economic development models and measures (Income, Poverty, Inequality, Vulnerability, Human Development).

Course Requirements and Grading

Your course grade will be determined by your work on the assignments, presentations and exams

1. Class participation (20%): Students are expected to contribute actively to class. Students will regularly guide class discussion and while only some students will guide at a specific time, all students are expected to have read all assigned materials and contribute to discussion. Students are also expected to ask questions and clarify any issues and class procedures that seem unclear to them. Absences and tardiness will reduce grades as indicated below.

2. Individual and group assignments (30%): Several assignment types will make up part of the grade. From a grant proposal review to poverty calculations, students will become familiar and practice a diverse set of skills that are important for development practitioners. Please email me a digital copy of your work any time before the deadline. In order to encourage students to start they work early, I will answer all questions up until 24 hours before the due date. The same rule holds for exams.
3. **Short paper/essay and class presentation (20%)**: Students choose a development issue to examine during the semester (it could be related to one specific country). First, they will look for 1-2 articles that address it, and present a summary to the class. Then, they will use this research to formulate a particular question related to the chosen topic, which is to be answered by additional literature review and/or analysis of primary or secondary data. Students are expected to write a short paper or essay with their findings and present them to the class (Choose any of the class topics or related ones. For the presentation/s, you should email me your slides **at least one day** before you present.

4. **Exams (30%)**: 2 exams, each 15% of the grade.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is important. The student’s success in this class will be dependent upon their participation and the amount and quality of effort expended. Students will be held responsible for material covered in class. As a courtesy to fellow students and the instructor, students are expected to arrive on time. If the student cannot arrive on time because of extenuating circumstance, the student is strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor during the first week of classes. Absences and tardiness will reduce grades as follows: More than two late arrivals/early departures will reduce the student’s grade by one step. More than one unexcused/non-documented absence will reduce the student’s grade by two steps.

**Lids Down/Messaging Policy**

Laptops are only permitted to be used in class for the purpose of using statistical and econometric software. If students want to review readings during class, they should bring a printed copy of these and avoid reading in the laptops. Text messaging, cell phones and other forms of cyber communication are not to be used in class, unless there is an exceptional circumstance and the student has notified the teacher in advance.

**Prerequisites**: Economic models are frequently used to organize the presentation of the various theoretical approaches and to provide a coherent explanation for some issues. These models should not be a major barrier to participation or successful achievement for students in this course. However, students wishing to deepen their understanding of economic development issues will find appropriate background material in M.P. Todaro, *Economic Development*, 8th ed. (New York, Longman, 2002).
Readings:

The following books are required:


The following books are recommended:


Course Sections:

1. Introduction: Development Economics and Economic Development
   - MLA Chapter 1: Why Latin America?

2. Latin American Economic Development Strategies
   Part 1: An economic overview
   Part 2: Historical overview and political contextualization of Latin American Economic Development Strategies
   - MLA Chapters 12 & 13

3. The connection between Markets & Institutions

4. Institutional Analysis through Latin American History


• MLA Chapter 2: Colonial Foundations

5. Understanding country-level differences

• Historical Cases: MLA Chapters – Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, the Andes, The Caribbean, Venezuela,…

• Institutional Study Cases (institutions): Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Dominican Republic.


Part 1: Models of Agricultural Transformation


Part 2: Models and measures of cooperation


Part 3: Standard Economic Development Measures

- **Income, growth & human development:**
  For reference: Taylor, Edward, Book Chapter on Income, Growth and Human Development

- **Poverty and Inequality**

- **Vulnerability**