

Division of Economics and Business, Colorado School of Mines

EBGN342 - Economic Development

Spring 2009

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Office Hours: 12:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. Mondays, 2:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. Tuesdays and Thursdays, or by appointment.

This course offers an introduction to the fascinating study of economic development. Of note, development economist Amartya Sen was awarded the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics (actually, there is no Nobel Prize in Economics – it is The Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel) and development economist Joseph Stiglitz was awarded the prize in 2002, bringing to light the importance of this field of work in the last few decades.

The course is part of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program at CSM, and is reading and writing intensive. We begin with a review of the Millennium Development Goals and ways to measure poverty. Then we will study the United Nations' Human Development Report 2007/2008. This annual publication is full of interesting development data, and will give you an idea of just where in the development race various countries sit. Each issue of the HDR highlights a specific development issue. This particular issue addresses the actions required to manage climate change. We then will read one economist's answer to the question "Why are some countries so heartbreakingly poor even after receiving so much aid from the West?", which is the topic of The White Man's Burden, by William Easterly. Finally, we will read a rather grand strategy to solve all of the world's problems, Jeffrey Sachs' Common Wealth. We won't use a formal textbook in this course; I will provide any economic models or instruction that you will need to understand these books. I will also provide a few lectures on economic development models that are not discussed in the two books that we read, and a few notes on the work of Sen and Stiglitz. Finally, we will track current issues in economic development by reading the Wall Street Journal each week. I will hand out subscription forms in class.

The course is targeted at the junior undergraduate level, and assumes proficiency in introductory microeconomics. EBGN311 is a therefore a prerequisite. Some exposure to macroeconomics, either in EBGN201 or EBGN312, would be helpful, but is not required.

It is vital that you do the assigned reading for each class prior to that class. I encourage you to contribute to the learning environment by thinking about and even challenging the ideas in the readings, so come prepared with ideas to discuss. I will often provide questions to guide your thinking about the class's reading assignment.

Textbooks

United Nations Development Program, Human Development Report 2007/2008. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. A .pdf file of the report is available on Blackboard, though I would strongly recommend that you purchase the hard copy.

William Easterly, The White Man's Burden, Penguin Press, 2006.

Jeffrey Sachs, Common Wealth, Penguin Press, 2008.

Student Assessment

There will be a midterm examination, a final examination, and a final essay/case study. There will also be shorter written assignments, in-class quizzes, and a class participation (as opposed to attendance) and office hour participation grade. Attendance may also be graded.

I will grade each assignment/exam in whole letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) and then convert these to a GPA score (4.00, 3.00, 2.00, 1.00, 0.00). Class attendance will be graded as A for ≤ 3 classes missed without a CSM-sanctioned absence, B for ≤ 5 classes missed, C for 6 or 7 classes missed, D for 8 or 9 classes missed, and F for absences of 10 classes or more. The final overall grade will be calculated as a weighted cumulative GPA of the individual components, which is then converted back to a letter grade (Cumulative GPA $\geq 3.50 = A$, $3.50 > \text{Cumulative GPA} \geq 2.50 = B$, $2.50 > \text{Cumulative GPA} \geq 1.50 = C$, $1.50 > \text{Cumulative GPA} \geq 0.50 = D$, Cumulative GPA $< 0.50 = F$). The average course Cumulative GPA the last time I taught the class (Spring 2008) was 2.94.

I will let you decide the weights that you attach to each component of grading:

Midterm exam: _____

Final Exam: _____

Essay/Case Study: _____

Shorter written assignments and in class quizzes: _____

Class/office hour participation grade: _____

Attendance: _____

The maximum any one component can be weighted is 40%.

Course Goals

At the completion of the course you should be able to:

1. understand and recite the current thinking on the causes of development successes and failures;
2. apply economic tools to the analysis of development problems and issues;
3. critically assess existing economic analyses, by organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations, supporting various development policies;
4. provide economically sound development policy advice for a developing economy with which you are familiar;
5. articulate your ideas about economic development professionally and clearly in both written and oral forms.

Communications

All course communications will be via the announcements section in the Blackboard site for this course. Check in daily with Blackboard.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes, among other things, plagiarizing, cheating, enabling others to cheat, falsification of data, failure to acknowledge substantial assistance from others, and submitting work you or others did for another course as original work for this course. A student found committing any such act will be penalized and potentially expelled from the University in accordance with the University's general regulations on ethics and honesty. If you are unclear as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, come and see me *before* proceeding.