

International Economics, Area Studies and Comparative Development

Preliminary Syllabus (this version: October 12th, 2021)

S2: Monday, 2pm-4pm (Dr. Christian Ambrosius, email: christian.ambrosius@fu-berlin.de)

S1: Monday, 1pm-2pm (Ali Rahimi, email: ali.reza.rahimi@fu-berlin.de)

This course is offered a spart of the following courses and modules:

M.Sc. Economics/Public Economics: Aktuelle Forschungsfragen der internationalen

Makroökonomie

M.A. Latin American Studies: Vertiefungsseminar

M.A. Osteuropastudien: Modul Komparative Wirtschaftssysteme

Description

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the diversity as well as with the practical challenges of empirical research in international economics, area studies and comparative development. The overarching theme of this class is *context* – the country or region-specific conditions related to time or space – as a relevant variable in economics and other social sciences. We dedicate the first weeks to the broader questions and debates on the role of context-specific variables. On the one hand, this includes theoretical and conceptual questions: Are differences in institutions, geography or culture a relevant category to explain economic trajectories? On the other hand, context also provides methodological challenges: (How) should variation in context enter research designs? And how should we evaluate external validity of empirical studies? In the second (larger) part of the course, we invite guests to present research that fits into the field of international economics, area studies or comparative development using a variety of perspectives and methodological tools. In the accompanying sessions (S1, 1h), students prepare papers that are thematically or methodologically related to the topic of each week. Since the course is offered to students in economics as well as to students in interdisciplinary area studies, we take into account the heterogenous background of students in reading assignments and class discussions.

Rules and Grading

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to participate actively. This includes reading and preparing one and sometimes two papers per week. During weeks of guest lectures, this usually includes the presented paper, which we may complement with other thematically related papers.

In addition to smaller tasks, students have to hand in two comments on papers that have been presented in the seminar.

To receive a grade, students will have to write comments on two papers of their choice presented by guest lectures. The first comment – considered the test run - counts 30% of the final grade. Students will receive feedback on this first task on January 3rd. The second comment counts 60 % of the final grade. Participation and other tasks assigned during the course count up to 10%.

Important Dates

Hand-in of first comment: 20.12.

Hand-in of second comment: 15.3.

Overview and Dates

1. Introduction (25.10.)
2. Invited Lecture 1 (1.11.): Kati Krähnert (PIK, Potsdam)
3. Institutions, Geography and Culture in the Study of Economic Development (8.11.)
4. Methodological Debates I (15.11.)
5. Methodological Debates II (15.11.)
6. Discussing Scientific Papers (22.11.)
7. Invited Lecture 2 (29.11.): Sarah Langlotz (Göttingen University)
8. Invited Lecture 3 (06.12.): Jasper Dag Tjaden (Potsdam University)
9. Invited Lecture 4 (13.12.): Sulin Sardoschau (HU Berlin)
10. Return of first task paper and evaluation (03.01.)
11. Invited Lecture 5 (10.1.): Toman Barsbai (University of Bristol, tbc)
12. Invited Lecture 6 (17.1.): Barbara Fritz (FU Berlin, tbc)
13. Invited Lecture 7 (24.01.): Raymundo Campos (Colegio de México, tbc)
14. Invited Lecture 9 (31.01.): Theocharis Grigoriadis (FU Berlin)
15. Invited Lecture 10 (07.02.): Shahrzad Shahmohammadi (FU Berlin)
16. Open questions, closure, evaluation (14.2.)

Sessions and Literature

Compulsory lectures will be confirmed 1-2 weeks before each session.

Guest lectures (in particular the second part) will be updated over the course of the seminar-

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL DEBATES

1. Introduction: The Relevance of Area in Economics (25.10.)

Literature:

- Hirschman, Albert O. (1981): The Rise and Decline of Development Economics. In: Essays in Trespassing.
- Ranis, Gustav (2009): Economics, Area Studies and Human Development
- Rodrik, Dani (2008). One economics, many recipes. Princeton university press.

2. Invited Lecture 1 (1.11) Kati Krähnert (PIK): Sitting in the same boat: Subjective well-being and social comparison after an extreme weather event (with Svenja Fluhrer)

3. Institutions, Geography and Culture in the Study of Economic Development (8.11.)

Literature:

- Sachs, Jeffrey D., Andrew D. Mellinger, and John L. Gallup. "The geography of poverty and wealth." *Scientific American* 284.3 (2001): 70-75.
- Presbitero, Andrea F. "Institutions and geography as sources of economic development." *Journal of international development* 18.3 (2006): 351-378.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. "The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation." *American economic review* 91.5 (2001): 1369-1401.
- Rodrik, D., Subramanian, A., & Trebbi, F. (2004). Institutions rule: the primacy of institutions over geography and integration in economic development. *Journal of economic growth*, 9(2), 131-165.

4. Methodological Debates I (15.11.)

Literature:

- Banerjee, Abhijit, and Esther Duflo. 2012. *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. Introduction. PublicAffairs.
- Pomeranz, Dina (2017). Impact evaluation methods in public economics: A brief introduction to randomized evaluations and comparison with other methods. *Public Finance Review*, 45(1), 10-43.
- Deaton, Angus (2010). "Instruments, Randomization, and Learning about Development." *Journal of Economic Literature*, 48 (2): 424-55.
- Pritchett, Lant (2021).: Let's Take the Con Out of Randomized Control Trials in Development: The Puzzles and Paradoxes of External Validity, Empirically Illustrated. Manuscript.

5. Methodological Debates II (15.11.)

Literature:

- Rodrik, D. (2008). The new development economics: we shall experiment, but how shall we learn?
- Mahoney, J., & Goertz, G. (2006). A tale of two cultures: Contrasting quantitative and qualitative research. *Political analysis*, 227-249.
- Falleti, T. G., & Lynch, J. F. (2009). Context and causal mechanisms in political analysis. *Comparative political studies*, 42(9), 1143-1166.

6. Discussing and Reviewing Scientific Papers (22.11.)

In this class we provide guidelines on how to comment on a research article.

Literature (examples of review papers):

- Easterly, William (2006): The big push deja vu: a review of Jeffrey Sachs's the end of poverty: economic possibilities for our time." *Journal of economic literature* 44.1: 96-105.
- Sen, A. (2006). The Man without a Plan-Can Foreign Aid Work. *Foreign Aff.*, 85, 171.
- Reddy, Sanjay G (2012). "Randomise This! On Poor Economics." *Review of Agrarian Studies* 2 (2): 60–73.
- Sachs, J. D. (2012). Government, Geography, and Growth: The True Drivers of Economic Development. *Foreign Aff.*, 91, 142.

GUEST LECTURES BLOCK ONE

7. Invited Lecture 2 (29.11.) **Sarah Langlotz (Göttingen University): Foreign Interventions and Community Cohesion in Times of Conflict**
8. Invited Lecture 3 (6.12.) **Jasper Dag Tjaden (Potsdam University): Does welcoming refugees attract more migrants? The myth of the "Merkel Effect"** (with Tobias Heidland)
9. Invited Lecture 4 (13.12.) **Sulin Sardoschau (HU Berlin): Migration and Cultural Change** (with Hillel Rapoport and Arthur Silve)
10. Return of first task paper and evaluation (3.1.)

GUEST LECTURES BLOCK TWO

We will update guest lectures for this part of the course over the semester.

11. Invited Lecture 5 (10.1.)
12. Invited Lecture 6 (17.1.)
13. Invited Lecture 7 (24.1.)

14. Invited Lecture 8 **Theocharis Grigoriadis (FU Berlin): Financing Late Industrialization: Evidence from the Imperial Russian State Bank (31.1.):**
15. Invited Lecture 9 **Shahrzad Shahmohammadi (FU Berlin) Crisis and Revolution, Fuzzy Logic and Political Economy of Pahlavi Iran (7.2.)**
16. Open questions, closure, evaluation (14.2.)