



Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) International Summer Semester (ISS) 2019

Poverty, Inequality and Economic Growth

Prof. Thomas Bishop, Korea University

SHORT COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will discuss issues related to poverty, inequality and economic growth around the world. We first consider what economic growth means and how to measure it, and factors allow an economy to grow. Factors that promote growth in economic production and productivity arguably include investments in education, health, infrastructure, structures and business equipment, as well as in scientific innovations. Scientific innovations appear to be important for rich countries, while investments in basic education and health also can have a big impact in poor countries. On the other hand, low investment of various types appears to hinder growth in economic production and to contribute to poverty. More seriously, government institutions can hinder growth and can contribute to poverty by expropriating resources from citizens and failing to interpret and to enforce laws fairly and consistently. When laws are not fairly and consistently enforced, crime and civil conflict often erupt, causing the population to suffer from violence, as well as poverty and inequality

READING MATERIALS

- Abhijit Banerjee and Ester Duflo, (2012), Poor Economics, chapters 3, 4 and 7. If desired, the entire book (not required) can be purchased at https://www.amazon.com/Poor-Economics-Radical-Rethinking-Poverty/dp/1610390938/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1456251856&sr=8-1&keywords=poor+economics
- Ian Morris (2015), Foragers, Farmers and Fossil Fuels: How Human Values Evolve, chapter 4, pp. 93-138. If desired, the entire book (not required) can be purchased at https://www.amazon.com/Foragers-Farmers-Fossil-Fuels-University/dp/0691175896/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1516841176&sr=8-1&keywords=foragers+farmers+and+fossil+fuels+how+human+values+evolve
- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, (2012), Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty, pp. 335-388. If desired, the entire book (not required) can be purchased at http://www.amazon.com/Why-Nations-Fail-Origins-Prosperity/dp/0307719227/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1456251775&sr=8-1&keywords=why+nations+fail

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Grades will be based on a group presentation in class and written paper about an issue in poverty, inequality and economic growth that students choose. Students will write a 600-1250 word (2.5-5 page) report and give a 10 minute presentation summarizing the topic of the report. Reports and presentations can be on one of two topics:

Topic 1:

- review one of the readings and explain how it helps or does not help you understand poverty or economic development. Analyze the arguments in the reading to explain why it is useful or not useful for you to understand poverty or economic development.

Topic 2:

- design a project that could be used in a poor country (you may choose any poor country) in health, education, finance or retail business. Domestic citizens in the poor country must be able to run the project, and it should be a for-profit business, which means that poor consumers in the poor country must be able to afford the product, among other things.

Students will also give a 10 minute presentation that explains and analyzes the material that you will use for your report. The presentation should be a summary of and preparation for the report.

I will grade your paper and presentation each on clarity (25%), coherence (25%) and logical analysis

(50%). The presentation is worth 30% of your final grade; the written paper is worth the remaining 70%. A weighted score of 60% from the presentation and paper is needed to pass the course.

In addition, the ISS office requires that students attend at least 80% of the classes to pass the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

– WEEK I –

Thursday (27 June)

Topics and issues in economic growth: what is “economic growth” and how is it measured?

Friday (28 June)

Topics and issues in economic growth: what is “economic growth” and how is it measured?

– WEEK II –

Monday (1 July)

Poor Economics, “Low-Hanging Fruit for Better Health?”

Tuesday (2 July)

Poor Economics, “Low-Hanging Fruit for Better Health?”

Wednesday (3 July)

Poor Economics, “Top of the Class”

Thursday (4 July)

Poor Economics, “Top of the Class”

– WEEK III –

Monday (8 July)

Foragers, Farmers and Fossil Fuels: How rich countries succeeded and failed: UK and France

Tuesday (9 July)

Foragers, Farmers and Fossil Fuels: How rich countries succeeded and failed: UK and France

Wednesday (10 July)

Foragers, Farmers and Fossil Fuels: How rich countries succeeded and failed: US and Russia

Thursday (11 July)

Why Nations Fail: How poor countries failed (and succeeded): Sierra Leone and Guatemala

– WEEK IV –

Monday (15 July)

Why Nations Fail: How poor countries failed (and succeeded): Sierra Leone and Guatemala

Tuesday (16 July)

Why Nations Fail: How poor countries failed (and succeeded): Zimbabwe and Ethiopia

Wednesday (17 July)

Why Nations Fail: How poor countries failed (and succeeded): Colombia and Argentina

Thursday (18 July)

Student presentations

Friday (19 July)

Student presentations

Papers are due by 5:00 p.m. in my inbox at twbishop@korea.ac.kr

Or, you may turn in the papers at the end of class.