Syllabus INTA 4740 A
Seminar in International Political Economy
Georgia Tech, Fall Semester 2015

Thomas D. Boston, Professor of Economics and International Affairs
Class Location: Habersham Building Room G – 17
Class hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 9:35 – 10:55 AM

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Office hours: 1:00 – 2:30 TTH and by apt.

This is a senior seminar for majors in Economics and International Affairs (EIA). The course is designed to encapsulate the three primary learning objectives of the EIA major:

1. Reinforce understanding of economic theory and practice in the contemporary world.
2. Reinforce understanding of the global, interdependent, and multicultural environment in which we live.
3. Provide quantitative and qualitative analytical skills for evaluating policy-oriented issue that are critical to the present and future economic and international environments.

I. General Learning Outcomes

A fundamental learning objective is to reinforce in students the skills and knowledge they have acquired in previous classes regarding how to interpret domestic and international economic and political events and actions.

The class is also intended to build student confidence and wherewithal to conduct quantitative research that evaluates the impact of economic and political policies, programs and strategies. As a result, the following will be emphasized:

1. The analytical skills needed to conduct research and evaluate the impact of public policies, projects and programs and economic activities.
2. The ability to lead informed discussions on seminar topics
3. The ability to conduct research and write reports
4. The ability to present research results persuasively
A second objective is to help prepare students to pursue graduate and professional education and/or employment in public and private sector organizations that have internationally oriented positions.

As part of the teaching and learning process, students will demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Knowledge learned in his or her major area of study
- Ability to write a research paper and present the findings before peers
- Opportunity to receive guidance from a faculty in conducting quantitative research on a defined topic

**Seminar Method**

The seminar method of teaching and learning will be used. This approach emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge through active student discussion and faculty interaction. In this regard, students will participate in presenting and discussing material, under the guided direction of the instructor.

Guest lecturers will make presentations throughout the semester.

Material to be covered in each class will be assigned ahead of time, along with the student who is designated to lead the discussion. All students are expected to read the material and come to class prepared to actively engage in discussions.

In all cases, the instructor will, and students must, give full respect and consideration to differences of opinion, beliefs philosophical and political outlooks.

**II. Specific Learning Outcomes:**

**Social Science Learning Objectives**

- Be able to compare and contrast the leading theories and ideas about how national and international economies work
- Understand the historic context within which modern states, economies and international relations evolved
- Understand the relationship between economic policies, public policies and social outcomes
- Understand the current state of low income and middle income developing countries
- Understand the historic and institutional factors that contribute to the current state of underdevelopment
- Understand the key challenges confronting low-income developing countries
Global Perspective Learning Outcomes

- Develop an in-depth knowledge of world development; in particular, be knowledgeable of human, social and economic challenges faced by a large percentage of the world’s population.
- Understand the historic origin and contemporary status of the Millennium Development Goals.
- Understand why the current world agenda is to promote more sustainable and equitable development.
- Gain a better appreciation of how economic and political policies affect human development in low income countries.

INTA and Economic Group Outcomes

- Develop problem solving skills in economic policy and international affairs. Students will be able to use their knowledge of economic theory and international relations as a framework for proposing practical solutions to world development issues. They will gain knowledge of how certain governance policies have impeded or contributed to solutions for unemployment, price stability, political stabilization and sustainable development.
- Cultural and ethical awareness. Students will become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world and how history has conditioned current views and outcomes regarding world development and underdevelopment.
- Develop skills at monitoring and evaluating the impact of economic, social and public policies and programs.

Class Specific Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of various macroeconomic theories and paradigms in the historical and contemporary context.
- Understand the political and institutional context within which current international relations evolved.
- Be able to interpret and measure the state of world development and underdevelopment.
- Be able to collect, code and analyze data for the purpose of model construction.
- Be able to confidently use economic models to evaluate policies, programs and impacts.
- Be able to write a research paper or report.
- Be able to present research findings in a professional and persuasive manner.

Specific Quantitative Skills Based Learning Objectives

- Use data and models to evaluate the impact of policies and projects.
• Collect and organize data for the purpose of conducting evaluations
• Formulate metrics for base lines, targets and outcomes
• Know how to select the appropriate impact evaluation models
• Conduct econometric research on experimental and quasi-experimental data
• Use IBM/SPSS statistical software
• Write and present a proposal for an impact evaluation research paper
• Write an impact evaluation research paper

III. Class Reference Sources

Library resource links: http://libguides.gatech.edu/inta4740

Required books:


Supplemental Books (not required)


IV. Grading

Grades will be based the following activities (1) one examination; (2) participation in seminar discussions (3) Leading seminar topics (4) Research proposal (5) final research paper and presentation
a. Georgia Tech Honor Code will be enforced at all times.

Since many assignments require writing, it is particularly important that you observe MLA guidelines in writing. This is important in regards to quoting, paraphrasing, or copying and pasting from material written by others, including “word”. “For any questions involving these or any other Academic Honor Code issues, please consult me, my teaching assistants, or www.honor.gatech.edu.” Unless informed otherwise, all assignments, examinations and presentations are to be accomplished independently

b. Basis for calculating final grade:

- Examination-30%
- Leading Seminar Discussions – 25%
- Class Participation - 5%
- Practical exercise assignments 5%
- Research proposal – 10%
- Final Research Paper – 25%

c. Grading Scale

The grading scale is as follows: A = 90% to 100%; B = 80% to 89.9%; C = 70% to 79.9%; D = 60% to 69.9%.

d. A presentation grading matrix will be used as a guide to evaluate student seminar presentations and provide feedback to students. Students will be given a copy of this matrix.

V. Important Dates and Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 17</td>
<td>First Day of Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Labor Day, School Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Select research paper topic</td>
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<td>November 5</td>
<td>Submit literature review</td>
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<td>November 10</td>
<td>Identify data set</td>
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<td>November 12</td>
<td>Design research methodology</td>
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<td>November 17</td>
<td>Present research proposals</td>
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<td>November 19</td>
<td>Present research proposals</td>
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<td>November 26 - 27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7 – 11</td>
<td>Present research paper, final examination hours</td>
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VI. Lectures Topics:

1. Topic #1 Introduction to the Course, Student Introductions, discussion of course objectives, overview of course material.

   An Overview of Concepts, Methods and Topics: **August 17 Boston**

   Guest lecture: Dr. Catherine Ross, Director, Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development: **August 19 Ross**

**Part I: Review of Political Economy**


   **Assignment of Student Discussion Topics: August 25 Boston**

   **Seminar Discussion Topics:**


   Youth Unemployment: Deon Filmer, Louise Fox . 2014. Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. The World Bank African Development Forum **September 3**


3. **Topic #3: History and Institutions in Economic Development: from mercantilism to the present: Merchant Capitalism, Slavery and colonialism, industrial revolution through globalism**

   **Seminar Discussion Topics:**


   **Supplemental Reading**


4. **Topic #4: History of Economic Thought, from classical political economy through modern economic thought.**

   **Seminar Discussion Topics:**


   Chapter 4. Socialists Economic Thought and Marx. **September 15**

   Chapter 5. The Triumph of Utilitarianism in the Marginalist Revolution. **September 17**

   Chapter 7. John Maynard Keynes. **September 17**

   **Supplemental Reading**


5. **Institutions, History and the Political Economy**

   **Seminar Discussion Topics:**

   Nathan Nunn. 2009. The Importance of History for Economic Development. NBER working paper series, working paper 14899. **September 22**


The class will separate into two teams that will present and discuss the book.

September 24: Team 1 (first half of book)

September 29: Team 2: (second half of book)


The class will separate into two teams that will present and discuss the book.

October 1: Team 1 (first half of book)

October 6: Team 2: (second half of book)

6. Understanding the Contemporary World Economy


EXAMINATION October 13

PART II: DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING APPLIED EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND BUILDING REPORT WRITING SKILLS

7. Topic #6. Overview of techniques and methods for conducting applied empirical research:
Topics will be covered successively between October 16 – November 22 - Boston

Introduction to Specific Evaluation Techniques to be Learned

A. Ordinary Least Squares Regression
   Analysis of Random Experimental Designs
   Double Difference Methods
B. Logistic Regression Analysis
   Propensity Score Matching Methods
   Cox Survival Regression Models
   Generalized Estimating Equations
C. Instrumental Variables & Two Stage Least Squares

Reading Material:
https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13949
Supplemental Text for IBM/SPSS (any IBM/SPSS reference manual for advanced statistical analysis. Many are available on-line)

9. Preparing a Research Proposal and Writing the Research Paper

   Be sure to make use of Library resource link to review the following topics:
   http://libguides.gatech.edu/inta4740
   Writing the Literature Review November 3 (team of two)
   Reference Sources November 5 (team of two or three)
   Data Sets November 5 (team of two or three)

Final Seminar Discussion Topics

   Morra-Imas 2009 The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations: Chapter 1, Introducing Impact Evaluation: November 3 - Boston
   Chapter 2, Understanding the Issues Driving Evaluations; November 5 - Boston
   Chapter 4, Understanding the Context of Evaluation November 10 - Boston
   Chapter 7, Selecting Designs for Cause and Effect Evaluations November 12 - Boston