

EC327 Development Economics

Seminar Leader: Stephan Müller
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

A central objective of this course is to foster a student's ability to understand contemporary economic challenges of developing countries and to reach independent and informed judgements and policy conclusions about their possible resolution. It introduces classical and contemporary theories of economic growth and development. The course covers specific challenges and potential solutions, including absolute poverty, extreme inequalities, coordination failures, credit constraints, rapid population growth, impacts of very rapid urbanisation, persistent public health challenges, and environmental degradation. In-depth case studies and comparative case studies will reflect and illustrate specific issues in the context of national development or specific policies.

Requirements

Prerequisite: Macroeconomics

Textbook

For this course, we will use the textbook "Economic Development" by Todaro & Smith (13th edition) and required readings will mostly be from this book.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Accommodations

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, (accommodations@berlin.bard.edu) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement.

If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to

supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or a replacement assignment because of an extenuating circumstance is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors if possible. If further support is needed, please visit the [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker (j.harker@berlin.bard.edu) or Maria Anderson-Long (m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu).

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Assessment

Assessment will be based on attendance, preparation for classes, regular and active participation, professionalism, presentations as well as a midterm (60 minutes) and final examination (90 minutes).

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Seminar preparation, professionalism and participation 30%

Presentations 20%

Midterm examination 20%

Final examination 30%

Schedule

The Fall semester runs from Monday, September 1 and runs until Friday, December 19, with the Fall break planned from Monday, October 20, - Sunday, October 26, 2025.

- Normal course sessions end on Friday, December 12.
- Completion week is from Monday, December 15 through Friday, December 19.
 - Make-up classes and final exams can take place in completion week.
 - Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/search/?semester=fall-2025>

Please ensure that your course schedule takes account of federal holidays, which may be found listed here:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/for-students/academic-calendars/>

Classes missed due to federal holidays will not be rescheduled. Classes missed due to conferences or due to illness (of the professor) are rescheduled.

Wednesday and Friday, 14:00-15:30

	Topic	Reading (Ch. in Textbook)
Week 1	Introducing Economic Development	1
Week 2	Comparative Economic Development	2
Week 3	Classic Theories of Economic Growth and Development I	3
Week 5	Classic Theories of Economic Growth and Development II	3
Week 6	Contemporary Models of Development and Underdevelopment I	4
Week 7	Contemporary Models of Development and Underdevelopment II	4
	<i>Fall Break</i>	
Week 8	Poverty, Inequality, and Development	5
Week 9	Population Growth and Economic Development	6
Week 10	Urbanization and Rural-Urban Migration	7
Week 11	Human Capital: Education and Health in Economic Development	8
Week 12	Agricultural Transformation and Rural Development	9
Week 13	The Environment and Development	10
Week 14	Development Policymaking and the Roles of Market, State, and Civil Society	11
	<i>Completion Week</i>	
Final Exam	TBA	