

**Syllabus – Economic Development – ECON 4331W**  
**University of Minnesota**

**Instructor 1:** Hasan Tosun

**Office Hours:** Thursday, 1 – 3 PM

**Email:** [tosun007@umn.edu](mailto:tosun007@umn.edu)

**Instructor 2:** Jacob Strauss

**Office Hours:** Thursdays from 10 am - 12 pm

**Email:** [strau345@umn.edu](mailto:strau345@umn.edu)

**Writing Assistant:** Entian Zhang

**Office Hours:** TBA

**E-mail:** [zhan6300@umn.edu](mailto:zhan6300@umn.edu)

**Semester:** Summer 2020

**Section:** 1

**Lecture:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 3:35 - 5:35 PM

**Course Credits:** 3

**Mode of Instruction:** Fully Online, Synchronous

**Midterm exam:** Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Final exam:** Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Textbook:**

The main textbooks for this course are *The Great Escape* by Angus Deaton and *R for Data Science* by Hadley Wickham, which is available free online at <http://r4ds.had.co.nz/>. It is recommended to own *Socio-Economic Development* by Adam Szirmai. You are also encouraged to read *Mastering Metrics: The Path from Cause to Effect* by Joshua Angrist and Jörn-Steffen Pischke.

**Course description:**

Historically, almost all people have lived in poverty, in the countryside, with short lifespans, limited education, and large families. However, during the last 200 years, the world has been changing rapidly. Material well-being has increased, life spans have lengthened, populations have urbanized, widespread illiteracy has given way to almost universal education, and women have much fewer children. These trends have transformed the life for billions of people, but they have also been uneven across different places, leading to the highly unequal world we see today.

This course is about these large development trends. We will discuss how they have happened across different places, why they have happened, and why they have not happened everywhere.

The first half of the course documents the processes of economic growth, health improvements, urbanization, mass education, and the demographic transition. The second half of the course discusses what we know about the causes of economic and social development, and what type of policies that are most likely to help or hurt development.

The course is a writing-intensive course, and throughout the course, there will be a strong focus on measurement, data, and empirics. You will learn to independently download and visualize data on development using the R statistical language. You will also conduct some basic data and economic analysis of development data, and write up the results in a research paper (no previous knowledge required).

### **Topics Covered**

The aim of the course is to cover the following topics:

- The evolution of living standards over time
- Data sources in development
- Health and development
- Education and development
- Agriculture and urbanization
- The demographic transition
- Environmental sustainability
- Technology and development
- Institutions
- International policy and development
- Foreign aid

### **Prerequisites**

Students must have completed the Intermediate Theory sequence (ECON 3101-3102).

### **Assignments and Exams:**

There will be four mini data assignments, one writing project, one midterm exam, and a final exam. You are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as for the assigned readings. Class attendance is not mandatory but highly recommended.

**Data assignments:** Four data assignments will be given during the first half of the course. They are intended to illustrate the facts discussed in lectures, as well as to introduce you to the R statistical programming language. Any missed data assignment will result in a zero for that assignment.

**Writing project:** Students are required to work individually for an empirical research project. The project will have four parts: topic selection, data description, a first draft, and a final draft. Information about the assignment will be provided during the course.

The writing project can be used as a Capstone project for BA degree. To use it as a Capstone project, you need 90/100 on the final draft.

By University policy, in order to pass a writing intensive class, you will need a grade of at least 70 on the writing assignment, otherwise you will fail the course.

**Exams:** There will be one mid-term exam and one final exam. Exams will be take-home.

## Grading

	Due Date	Grade
<b>Data Assignments:</b>		Total = 20%
A1	June 14	5%
A2	June 21	5%
A3	June 28	5%
A4	July 5	5%
<b>Writing Project:</b>		Total = 40%
Topic Selection	June 21	5 %
Data Description	June 28	5 %
First Draft	July 12	10%
Final Draft	July 26	20%
<b>Exams:</b>		Total = 40%
Midterm	July 6	10%
Final Exam	July 29	30%

### The following apply to the grading:

- The Topic and Data Section assignments account for a combined 10% of the final grade. The grade is calculated by picking the best score of the two.
- If the Final Exam grade is higher than the midterm grade, the Final Exam will account for 40% of the final grade, while the midterm will be dropped (0%). Otherwise, the current scheme of 10 and 30% applies.

### Makeup and late assignment policy:

There is a makeup exam for the final, but not for the midterm exam. If you miss the midterm the final exam will take over the grade of both exams. In case of a documented medical emergency for missing the midterm, there will be no discounting for missing the midterm. The final exam will then account for 40% of the grade. In other cases, the final exam result will be discounted to account for 30% of the final grade.

It is your responsibility to submit the assignments on time, which includes making allowance for the risk of technical failure. If you fail to submit it to Canvas, you should submit the assignment by email, and then at Canvas at the earliest possible time. Late submission for any reason will be discounted by 10 points (out of 100) every 4 hours it is late. If you are 40 hours or more late, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

### Re-grading:

If you disagree with the grading of a problem set or a test, you may submit it for review. You must have a written argument for why you should be awarded more points. Also, you must submit these disputes within one week of the problem set or exam being returned, or the grade is final.

**Final grade:**

The Economics Department official policy for the final grades is:

<b>Grade</b>	
A	92-100 %
A-	90-91 %
B+	88-89 %
B	82-87 %
B-	80-81 %
C+	78-89 %
C	72-77 %
C-	70-71 %
D+	68-69 %
D	60-67 %
F	00-59 %

The Instructor reserves the right to lower these cut-off points (i.e., increase the letter grades for percentages), but will not raise the cut-offs (i.e., make it harder to get good grades).

**Students with disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for all students with documented disabilities (by the OSD). This information will be kept confidential.

**Student mental health and student counselling services**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns.

Information about confidential mental health services is available on campus at:

<http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/>. Student Counseling Services website:

<http://www.uccs.umn.edu/index.html>

**Dropping a class**

Termination of attendance alone is not sufficient to drop a class. You must notify the Registrar's office. Please contact your academic (college) adviser for details on this process and pay attention to University deadlines for add/drop.

**Incomplete grade**

Low class standing is not a valid reason for an Incomplete grade. An I is given only in exceptional circumstances like family emergencies or hospitalization; arrangements must be worked out between the student and instructor before the final exam. We require written proof of emergencies. Details about I grades and how to make it up are found in the Economics Undergraduate Handbook.

### **Scholastic dishonesty**

"The College of Liberal Arts defines scholastic dishonesty broadly as any act by a student that misrepresents the student's own academic work or that compromises the academic work of another. Examples include cheating on assignments or exams, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another), unauthorized collaboration on assignments or exams, or sabotaging another student's work".

The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as "Submission of false records of academic achievement; cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; taking, acquiring, or using text materials without faculty permission; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement."

Penalties for scholastic dishonesty of any kind in any course will entail an "F" for the particular assignment/exam or the course.

Website for information on Student Academic Misconduct -- <http://oscai.umn.edu/avoid-violations/avoiding-scholastic-dishonesty>

### **Student conduct and classroom behavior**

Students are expected to contribute to a calm, productive, and learning environment. Information on student classroom behavior issues is at: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/studentconductcode-proc01>. Check the [Student Conduct Code](#) to find out what is expected of you.

### **Study abroad in economics**

The Department encourages you to undertake Study Abroad. There are many courses in foreign countries that can satisfy some economics major, minor, or Liberal Education requirements. For more information, please contact our Undergraduate Advisers, Ms. Annie Bigley and Ms.

Tiffany Kroeze Murphy, or the University's Learning Abroad Center at <http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/>

### **Undergraduate adviser**

Contact the Undergraduate Advisers if you wish to sign up for an Economics major or minor or to get information about institutions of higher study. Your APAS form will list your progress toward an Economics degree.

Adviser: Ms. Tiffany Kroeze Murphy and Ms. Annie Bigley ([econadv@umn.edu](mailto:econadv@umn.edu)); Sign up for appointments at [econ.appointments.umn.edu](http://econ.appointments.umn.edu). Office: 4-100 Hanson Hall, Phone: 612-625-5893.

### **Undergraduate program information**

Available on the Internet at: <https://cla.umn.edu/economics/undergraduate>. Registration policies are listed in the University Course Schedules and College Bulletins.

### **Complaints or concerns about courses:**

All course grades are subject to department review. Please contact your instructor or TA if you have any complaints/concerns about the course. If your concerns are not resolved after talking with your instructor, you can contact: Professor Simran Sahi, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Phone: 612-625-6353 and E-mail: [ssahi@umn.edu](mailto:ssahi@umn.edu).