

Development Economics - ECON 3943
Department Economics
Acadia University
Fall 2023

Professor Information

Name: Dr. Barry Watson

Email: barry.watson@acadiau.ca

Office Location: BAC 343

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11am-1pm (or by appointment). I am in my office most days, and so long as my door is open (which it normally is), I am available for drop-in consultations.

Course Information

Course Title: Development Economics

Course Number: ECON 3943

Location: CAR207

Meeting Times: Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30-10:50am

Course Description

Among the most important questions asked in economics: “why are some countries rich, and why are some countries poor”? By extension, we can further examine potential strategies upon which poor countries may transition into rich countries. Likewise, given the inequality that is often pervasive throughout rich (and poor) countries, it inevitably leads us to also question the distribution of societal resources - i.e., can economic growth help ‘level the playing field’; or is it merely, pro-rich?

The above questions, while important, are broad and lack precision. Before we can reasonably expect to address these concerns, we must first ask ‘what are we developing’? Perhaps the most simple answer to this question is the pursuit of upward income trajectories (typically measured in terms of GDP per capita). However, this assumes that development through monetary gains is the societal primary preference. While to suggest otherwise would be somewhat naive, a fulsome understanding of development must also question the opportunity set among individuals - i.e., do individuals have the capability to pursue what they feel is most important to them?

Once we begin to understand what it is that we wish to develop, the question becomes, how do we effectively pursue such strategies? Improvements to education? Health? Perhaps, mobility, where the stock of resources is not necessarily increased, but valued differently, can be effective? Although there is a consensus that there are macroeconomic gains from trade (particularly global trade), what are the development implications? Finally, is foreign aid effective for nations that are in most dire need of development?

The dynamics of development need also be considered. Can we sustainably pursue development, while minimizing - or perhaps improving upon - the environmental effects? Otherwise, development is merely a short-term solution that will inevitably lead to future concerns, particularly with respect to inequitable levels of degradation (which will have discriminatory implications). Further, it brings us back to a question of what is it that we are developing. Is income sufficient? Otherwise, are we willing to substitute income gains for non-pecuniary development (e.g., a cleaner environment and/or more cohesive society).

Textbook

Janvry, A. & Sadoulet, E. (2021). *Development Economics: Theory and Practice, 2nd Edition*. Routledge.

The textbook is available at the campus bookstore. Additionally, the first edition will suffice (should you find an earlier copy).

Grading

Participation	10%	
Assignments (2)	20%	(10% each)
Midterm	20%	
Presentation	10%	
Final Exam	40%	

The midterm will be held during class hours and will consist of a series of short-answer questions. Assignments will require that you to access public-use data and interpret (no advanced statistical analytics are required). You will also be asked to provide a 20 minute presentation on one of a series of development-related questions that will be posted to ACORN. The final exam will be cumulative, with the exact date set by the Registrar's Office. Like the midterm, questions will be in short-answer format. Finally, given we are a small class, participation is important, and you are encouraged to voice your thoughts during lectures.

Grading Scale

Grades for individual course components may fall between 0 and 4.33. Final grades will be reported as a letter grade. The letter grading system is provided below.

Grade	GPA	%	Performance
A+	4.33	90-100	
A	4.00	85-90	Excellent
A-	3.67	80-84	
B+	3.33	77-79	
B	3.00	73-76	Good
B-	2.67	70-72	
C+	2.33	67-69	
C	2.00	63-66	Satisfactory
C-	1.67	60-62	
D+	1.33	57-59	
D	1.00	53-56	
D-	0.67	50-52	Pass
F	0.00	0-49	Failure

Course Topics

Topics	Chapter(s)
Introduction: What is Development	1
Poverty and Vulnerability	5
Inequality and Inequity	6
International Trade	7
Sustainable Development	15
Education, Health, Mobility	12 & 17
Is Foreign Aid Effective?	19

Accessibility

The Accessibility Learning Office is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students, including those with disabilities. Their office strives to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities and resources. Students who require accommodations to complete coursework, or fully participate in class, are encouraged to contact them directly. Please visit the Accessible Learning Services website (<https://www2.acadiau.ca/student-life/accessiblelearning.html>) or email them at Accessible.learning@acadiau.ca for more information.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Acadia University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive community. This can only be achieved where there are simultaneous efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment from our campus community, including the elimination of all discrimination, harassment and violence based on one's identity, including but not limited to, gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, gender expression, and Indigeneity.

The Equity Office serves to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment from occurring. For more information, as well as resources for those who have experienced (or witnessed) the above, please contact Polly Leonard at equity@acadiau.ca.

Health & Well-being

Acadia provides a host of services for student health, well-being, and safety. The university's physicians provide services for: medical diagnosis and treatment of health concerns, reproductive health (pap tests, birth control, pregnancy tests), sexual health (confidential testing for all sexually transmitted infections and HIV), and emergency contraception. For more information, please contact studenthealth@acadiau.ca, or go to <https://www2.acadiau.ca/student-life/health-wellness/clinic.html>

The Counselling Centre offers a confidential, safe, and caring place for students to access mental health support. To book an appointment, please go to <https://www2.acadiau.ca/student-life/health-wellness/mental-health.html>, or contact counselling@acadiau.ca.

Academic Ethics

Students should familiarize themselves with the Acadia's policy on academic ethics. Plagiarism and other academic offences are not tolerated. Penalties are severe and may result in suspension or expulsion. A complete list of regulations can be found in the student handbook at <https://www2.acadiau.ca/elc/current-student.html>.

Important Dates

- Sept 15 Last day to add/change fall courses
Last day to withdraw from fall courses without receiving a "W"
- Sept 29 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation observed – No classes
- Oct 9 Thanksgiving - No classes
- October 30 - November 3: Reading Week - No classes**
- Nov 10 Remembrance Day observed- No classes
- Nov 17 Last day to withdraw and receive a "W"; withdrawals thereafter receive an "F"
- Dec 5 Last day of classes
- Dec 8 First day of exams
- Dec 19 Last day of exams