ECG784
Topics in Economic Growth and Development

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursday, 1:00-2:30pm, or by appointment
Class time and place: 10:15-11:30am, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4163 Nelson Hall

Course Description

This course will examine the transition from underdevelopment to development. There are two distinct aspects to that topic: (1) the original transition of a few leader countries around the year 1800 and (2) subsequent transitions by follower countries up to today. I have chosen a variety of readings on both aspects: historical and cross-country facts, the industrial revolution, examinations of the nature of technical progress, the interaction of demographic and economic transition, and theories that attempt to combine the foregoing elements into coherent unified models. We may not have time to cover everything on the reading list.

The course will be conducted as a reading course. Everybody is expected to read each assignment before we get to it, and then the entire class will engage in a round-table discussion of that reading, going through it page by page, or at least section by section or chapter by chapter. Some readings will take less than a day to discuss, and others will take several days. I will lead the first discussion on Clark's *A Farewell to Alms*. After that, students will be responsible for leading the discussion. The idea of the discussion is for you to raise questions and make comments, not to sit like bumps on logs. (See the section on Grading below for more discussion of bumps on logs.)

Readings

There are three books you should buy (see the attached Reading List for details):

Clark's *A Farewell to Alms*
Maddison's *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*
Livi-Bacci’s *A Concise History of World Population, 2nd or later edition*

I have not bothered to order them through the university bookstore because you can get better prices on the internet. For example, all three are available through Amazon at reasonable prices.

The rest of the readings are published papers and working papers. Most are available online. I will email you those that are not readily available. Some readings are listed as “Handbook” in the Schedule of Topics and Readings below. Those are in the *Handbook of*
*Economic Growth.* We will use the pre-publication copies of all the assigned chapters because they are available online in pdf format for free. A list of readings with full citations is included at the end of this syllabus.

In the very unlikely event that we exhaust the reading list before the end of the semester, we will add material to fill the time remaining in the course. There are lots of things we could add. If there is something you are interested in covering that is not on the reading list, mention it in class so we can discuss whether to include it.

**Grading**

Your course grade will be based on entirely on your class participation and understanding of the material. If you sit in a corner like a bump on a log, I will presume you don't know what is going on and grade you accordingly.

The guideline for letter grades for the course is:

- **A+ or A**: complete mastery of the material with original ideas and insights
- **A-**: complete mastery of the material but few original ideas or insights
- **B-, B, B+**: combinations of incomplete mastery of the material and some original insights
- **less than B-**: less complete mastery and fewer original contributions than for B grades

For all grades less than A+, there is a trade-off between mastery of the material and original insights. Less of one can be offset by more of the other. Note that trivial, logically incorrect, or factually incorrect insights do not count as “original insights” no matter how original they may be.
Schedule of Topics and Readings

1. Facts
   a. Clark: *Farewell* - do about 100 pages a day, so 4 days (2 weeks)
      Critiques of Clark: (1 day for all)
      Allen: JEL 2008
      McCloskey: EREH 2008
      Voth: EREH 2008
      Grantham: EREH 2008
      Persson: EREH 2008
      Clark: EREH 2008
   b. Maddison: *Millennial Perspective* - 140 pages, do 70 a day (1 week)
      Maddison: WE 2008 (1/2 day)

2. Industrial Revolution
   Clark: WP 2001 (1 day)
   Allen: Vox 2009 (do with Clark)

3. Cross-Country Differences
   Caselli: Handbook - 64 pages, (1 day)
   Caselli & Feyrer: QJE 2007 (1/2 day)

4. Natural Resources and Sustainability
   Peretto: JDevEcon 2012 (1 day)
   Peretto & Valente: working paper 2011 (1 day)

5. Trade, Growth, and Development
   Ji & Seater: working paper 2012
   Ji & Seater: working paper 2013
   Possibly other recent work

6. Demography (tentative list)
   Livi-Bacci: *World Population* - do about 100 pages a day (1 week)
   Lee: JEP 2003 (1/4 day)
   Connolly & Peretto: JEG 2003 (1 day)
   Malthusian Model (time allotment uncertain)
   Weir: JEH 1984
   Lee & Anderson: JPopEcon 2002
   Nicollini: EREH 2007
   Moeller & Sharp: working paper 2008
   Crafts & Mills: JMacro 2009
   Craig: JMacro 2009
7. Unified Growth Theory (tentative list)
   Galor & Weil: AER 1996 (1/2 day)
   Galor & Weil: AER 2000 - (1 week)
   Galor: Handbook
   Galor: JMacro 2007
   Galor: Notes 2007
   Birchenall: JEG 2007 (1/2 day)
   Strulik & Weisdorf: JEG 2008 (1 day)
   Greenwood & Shesadri: Handbook
Reading List

Note: Pre-publication versions of all articles from the Handbook of Economic Growth are available in pdf format on Charles Jones's website at no cost:


Other material comprises books you should buy, material available online, or material I will email to you during the semester.


