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PS 167D
Spring 2008
T/Th 9:30-10:45
Public Affairs 2250

Political Institutions and Economic Development <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/08S/polisci167d-1/>

Why are some countries rich and others poor? This course examines some aspects of the wealth and poverty of nations, with particular attention to how governments and political institutions may affect economic development.

The course is aimed especially at juniors and seniors majoring in political science who have taken an introductory statistics course. Students from economics (as well as other majors) are also welcome in the course.

Much of the course is devoted to data analysis and interpretation. Using data sets provided by the instructor, students will be asked to analyze data to respond to some important questions about political institutions and economic growth and development. All data analysis for the course will be carried out using Stata. Familiarity with Stata is helpful but not essential. Sections will provide the opportunity for you to learn to work in Stata.

Prerequisites

If you have not taken an introductory statistics course and are not familiar with multiple regression analysis, *you will not be able to do the work in this course*. Any introductory statistics course that included multiple regression analysis should be adequate. In addition, although it is not essential, it would be helpful for you to have taken an introductory course in comparative politics.

Format

The course is a mix of lecture and discussion. In addition, it involves extensive hands-on computer analysis of data. For the latter, each student is required to enroll in and attend a weekly lab section of one hour. Sections are oriented towards helping students be able to complete the homework assignments accurately and on time.

The teaching assistant and grader for the course is Mr. Matthew Spence (mspence@ucla.edu). His office is 3273 Bunche Hall. The three sections for the course are scheduled as follows:

Section 1a	Thursday	11:00-11:50	Public Policy 2035H
Section 1b	Thursday	12:00-12:50	Public Policy 2035H
Section 1c	Friday	1:00-1:50	Public Policy 2035H

Reading Assignments

Students should have completed assigned readings prior to class. Lectures will not repeat the readings, but will instead place them in a larger context and will guide you to use them to think about “the big questions.” In addition, readings will be used to structure the data analysis you do in homework assignments. Although the reading assignments appear relatively short, you may find that it takes longer than expected because the material is somewhat technical. Please allow adequate time. Please write down and bring to class any questions you have regarding specific readings.

Written Requirements

All the assignments for the course involve data analysis. Students are required to hand in four homework assignments and also a mid-term and final paper. The mid-term and final papers are similar in format to the homework assignments, but require greater thought and deeper analysis of data.

Please hand in your homework on time. Late assignments will be penalized with a drop of half a grade for every 24 hours.

Grading

Your final course grade will be comprised as follows:

Section participation	10 percent
Each homework (4)	10 percent
Mid-term	20 percent
Final	30 percent

Readings

The course uses a single textbook, David N. Weil’s *Economic Growth* (2nd ed.), which is available for purchase in the university bookstore. Copies are also on reserve in the undergraduate library.

Syllabus

Week One: The Social Scientific Method

April 1 and 3 No assigned reading

Week Two: Rich and Poor Nations in the World Today

April 8 and 10 Weil, chs. 1-2

First homework assigned Thursday

Week Three: The Growth of the West

April 15 and 17 Weil, chs. 3-4

First homework due Thursday; second homework assigned Thursday

Week Four: Inequality between and within Nations

April 22 and 24 Weil, ch. 13

Second homework due Thursday; third homework assigned

Week Five: India: The Importance of Good Policies

April 29 and May 1 Weil, chs. 7-9

Third homework due Thursday; mid-term papers assigned

Week Six: Africa: Tragedy and Miracles

May 6 and 8 Weil, chs. 10-11

Week Seven: Corruption, Rent-Seeking and Kleptocracy

May 13 and 15 Weil, ch. 12

Mid-term papers due Thursday

Week Eight: Education and Human Capital

May 20 and 22 Weil, ch. 6

No class May 20; instructor out of town

Fourth homework assigned Thursday

Week Nine: Health, Longevity and Growth

May 27 and 29 Weil, chs. 14-15

Fourth homework due Thursday; take-home final examinations distributed

Week Ten: Democracy and Development

June 3 and 5 Weil, chs. 16-17

Take-home final due Tuesday, June 10 no later than 11:00 am at TA's office