Course Syllabus

✎ **Edit**

Instructor

Dr. Melissa Knox

Email: Message me via Canvas (preferred) or knoxm@uw.edu

Class Meetings: T/Th 10:30am -12:20pm Raitt 121

Office Hours: Monday 1-3pm on Zoom, or by appointment

Course Meetings

In ECON 448, lectures will be offered in-person. Most will be not be recorded, but pre-recorded lectures are available for remote viewing, as needed. Office hours will be offered on Zoom. Assignments must be submitted via Canvas. There are no in-person exams.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the subject of international economic development, with a focus on population issues. Since I am an economist, we will be focusing on the topics and tools of economics, and the body of knowledge so far, as created by economists. Topics include demography, poverty and income inequality, fertility choice, sex selection, marriage choice and the role of women, parental investments in child health and education, including discrimination against girls.

Learning Objectives

- Students should be able to apply economic theory to identify and discuss the issues surrounding the topics listed above, and apply economic models to answer questions about these topics.
- Students should be able to comment on articles in the popular press and review articles in economic journals dealing with population and development, explaining and expanding upon the economic analysis they contain.
- Students should be able to apply data and data science methods to pose and address questions and problems that are relevant to these topics.
- Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to execute the life-cycle of an empirical project in population economics, including problem formulation, data collection or generation, data manipulation, analysis, and communication.

Course Organization

This course will combine lecturing on traditional microeconomic theory with in-depth discussion of real-world issues. This is not an easy course in terms of the reading and writing required. Please be prepared to spend a lot of time reading, and writing about, difficult material.

Text

There is no text for this topic. Lectures will be based on textbook excerpts, journal and newspaper and magazine articles, and my own knowledge of the subject. All readings will be available as PDFs in Canvas or for free online. If you need

more accessible options, please let me know. It's a goal of mine to make all course readings accessible, but I'm not there yet, unfortunately.

Prerequisites

The explicit prerequisite for this course is a grade of 2.0 or higher in Econ 300. However, we will be reading papers from economic journals, and while we will be reviewing the concepts of regression analysis and interpretation, some familiarity with data analysis at the level of Econ 382 is strongly recommended. Please discuss your background with me if you are not sure about your preparation.

Note: I am re-designing this course to be part of the CAS data science minor and as such, we will have assignments that use the R statistical programming language (specifically RStudio) this quarter. You do not need to be familiar with R or RStudio, but you should be prepared to do a little extra work at the start of the quarter to begin using this software.

Evaluation

You will be graded on your class participation assignments, 4 problem sets (which are a hybrid of data analysis and traditional modeling and calculation problems), a 5-page theory paper, and one 10-page group research paper and its associated preliminary assignments. All students who pass the course will receive W credit.

Class grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation - 5%

Problem sets (4 + first week assignment) – 30%

Midterm Paper - 25%

Final Paper (includes all intermediate steps for full credit) – 40%

I expect the class median to be approximately 3.3 and will curve grades as needed.

Problem Sets

It's nearly impossible to learn the tools of economics without working problems. I will assign a problem set for each of the four modules. They will be due about a week after we complete the module. You may work with other students, but please submit your own work. Some parts of the assignment may be graded for completion rather than accuracy.

Papers/Projects

We will discuss the paper requirements in depth in the second week of classes. Each person must submit their own midterm paper. However, your final papers can be written with one other person.

Due Dates

I will post due dates for problem sets and papers for the sake of timely grading, but I intend to be flexible given the challenges we are all facing this quarter. I am trying out a new method of granting extensions. You may reequest a due date extension of up to one week for any assignment except the final paper, and all extension requests are automatically granted. Please fill out **this form** **(https://forms.gle/yJ6eWQXasTB7NvBk6)** while logged in to google with your UW NetId to request an extension. Extension requests for the final paper must receive approval, due to the potential impact on submission of final grades.

Accommodations

Students receiving accommodations from Disability Resources for Students (DRS) should contact me about any needed disability accommodations as soon as possible. Students with a disability who do not yet have a DRS plan should contact them immediately at disability.uw.edu.

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at **Religious Accommodations Policy (https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/)** (https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/) . Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the **Religious Accommodations Request form (https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/)** (https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) .

Please stay home if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 and check these links frequently to find the most up to date guidance

CDC Guidelines for Quarantine and Isolation: **https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html)

UW Face Covering Policy: **https://www.ehs.washington.edu/covid-19-prevention-and-response/face-covering-requirements** (https://www.ehs.washington.edu/covid-19-prevention-and-response/face-covering-requirements)

UW Quarantine and Isolation Guidance: **https://ehs.washington.edu/covid-19-prevention-and-response/quarantine-and-isolation-guidance** (https://ehs.washington.edu/covid-19-prevention-and-response/quarantine-and-isolation-guidance)

Course Outline

1. Introduction to Population (Weeks 1-2)
    1. Population growth and development
    2. Poverty
    3. Empirical tools
2. Fertility (Week 3-4)
    1. Development and fertility
    2. Contraception & sex selection
3. Family Formation (Weeks 4-6)
    1. The economics of marriage
    2. Intra-household decision-making
4. Mortality and Health (Week 6-7)
    1. The decline of mortality
    2. Hunger, health and productivity
5. Investing in Children (Week 8-10)
    1. Parents and child health
    2. Child health, schooling, and future outcomes
    3. Child labor

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Thu Oct 6, 2022	📝 **Goal Setting** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718219)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Tue Nov 1, 2022	📝 **Midterm Evaluation** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718225)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Dec 8, 2022	📝 **Final Evaluation** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718213)	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **Brainstorm Assignment** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7728113)	
	📝 **Data Statement** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718212)	
	📝 **Final Paper** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718214)	
	📝 **Final Paper** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7728125)	
	📝 **First Draft** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718215)	
	📝 **First Week Data Assignment (Must Be Submitted)** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718216)	
	📝 **Problem Set 1** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718232)	
	📝 **Problem Set 2** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718233)	
	📝 **Problem Set 3** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718234)	
	📝 **Problem Set 4** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718235)	
	📝 **Theory Statement** (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1579387/assignments/7718242)	