University of Oklahoma  
Economics 6653: Development Economics II (PhD Level)  
Spring 2018 Syllabus

**Professor:** Joan Hicks  
**Office:** Room 332 Cate Center 1  
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**Class Times:** Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:45a  
**Classroom:** Room 145 Cate Center 1  
**Office Hours:** Thursday 12-2pm

**Description:** This course is the second in the two-part PhD Development Economics sequence. The aim of this sequence is to equip students with the resources necessary to produce interesting and important research in the field. This process involves (a) becoming familiar with the current frontier of research, as well as (b) becoming familiar with the methodological tools necessary to draw useful and credible inferences about the world.

Development is a very broad field. In some sense, it encompasses all fields of economics, applied to the setting of low income economies. The PhD Development Economics sequence will provide an overview of the main areas of research, and where possible, the course will focus more heavily on topics where your instructors do research. We will generally study papers examining low and middle income countries, with some studies drawing lessons on the historical process of development in modern day rich economies.

This is a graduate, seminar style course. Each class will include a mixture of lecture and discussion. It is expected that students will read the papers being covered prior to each class, and actively participate in class discussions.

**Prerequisites:** Graduate coursework in economic theory and econometrics.

**Assessment:** The three key aims of this class are: (1) to get students up to speed on the latest research in development economics, (2) to get students started on a research agenda for their PhD, and (3) to hone their skills in presenting and discussing research. To that end, students will be assessed on the following:

1. **One in-class presentation of a paper from the reading list** (20%): This presentation should present the research question, background and motivation, methodology, and results of the paper to the class. The presentation should last approximately 20 minutes (not including discussion time), and may involve PowerPoint. I will provide a signup list for these presentations, as well as more detailed guidance on what they should include.

2. **Two problem sets** (30%): Students will complete two empirical problem sets, applying methods we have discussed in class.
   a. **Problem Set #1:** due Thursday, March 1, in class
   b. **Problem Set #2:** due Thursday, April 5, in class

3. **Research Proposal or Research Paper** (30%): Students can choose whether to extend the research proposal written for Development I into a full research paper (with permission of both instructors), or to write a brand new research proposal. Either way, you should plan to come to my office hours over the course of the semester to discuss progress and stumbling blocks.
a. **Research Proposal:** This should include a well-defined research question, a literature review, and a detailed research plan. The proposal should not exceed 10 pages double spaced. It must be a new project (not your proposal for another class, or for Development I) and it must focus on a developing country context. **Deadlines:**
  - **March 15:** Topic approved by instructor
  - **April 17:** Draft of proposal emailed to instructor
  - **May 8:** Final proposal emailed to the instructor (jhamoryhicks@ou.edu) by 11:59pm.

b. **Research Paper:** With permission of both instructors, a student can expand the research proposal written for Development I into a full paper. **Deadlines for Paper:**
  - **February 6:** Permission of instructors (Prof Daniel Hicks AND Prof Joan Hicks) to proceed with research paper
  - **February 20:** Writeup of research topic (question, methodology)
  - **March 15:** Lit review and detailed description of data source
  - **April 17:** Summary statistics, empirical results in tables/figures
  - **May 8:** Full paper emailed to the instructor (jhamoryhicks@ou.edu) by 11:59pm.

4. **In-class presentation of Research Proposal/Paper (10%):** Students will present their papers/proposals during one of the last three classes of the semester (April 26, May 1, May 3). Signups for these presentations will be posted towards the end of the semester. These presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes, and will be followed by class discussion.

5. **Class Participation (10%):** The papers indicated by stars will be covered in class. Students are expected to read these papers prior to class, and to participate actively in class discussion.

**Department Seminar:** Students should try to attend the OU Economics Seminar series (Fridays 3-4:15pm) when possible, and especially for talks related to development. These seminars provide good exposure to research techniques as well as crucial presentation skills. February 23 will likely be a development talk this semester.

**University Policies:**

1. **Academic Integrity:** As a member of the OU academic community, students are expected to adhere to OU’s guidelines on academic integrity. If you are unfamiliar with these guidelines, you can find them here: http://integrity.ou.edu/students.html.
2. **Reasonable Accommodation:** Any student with a disability that may prevent him/her from fully participating in the course and meeting course milestones should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss any necessary accommodations.