
BLOCK SEMINAR

CONTROVERSIES IN DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS

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**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS
CAREFULLY! THEY SHOULD ANSWER ALL YOUR
QUESTIONS!**

Preliminary discussion: April 10, 2017, 10-12 h (Room VG 1.101)

Block course: May 5, 10-18 h (Room VG 3.105), May 8, 10-18 h (Waldweg 26, Room 0.701)

Please contact Tabea Lakemann directly under the above email-address for the selection of the seminar paper's topic indicating your preferences (max. three topics from the list below).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The seminar addresses controversial issues in development economics. Such issues may be more topical (for example: Investments in agriculture and land: Land grab or development opportunity?) or more analytical (for example: The role of the state in economic development: Market-led development or interventionist models?). Based on the seminar papers, which will take a balanced stance toward a specific controversy, students will prepare a presentation that assumes a one-sided position during the seminar. Moderated discussions between two positions will be preceded and followed by a vote of the entire group to assess how convincing the respective presenter has made his or her argument. The seminar topics are subject to change every term.

Language of instruction: English, but seminar papers may be written in German.

Compulsory meeting I: You should be present at the preliminary discussion. It may be that slots are already limited at the meeting.

Compulsory meeting II: You should meet your supervisor (either Tabea Lakemann or Jann Lay) at least once to discuss the table of contents of your paper. This meeting is compulsory. Appointments can be made via email.

TIME SCHEDULE

March 6, 2017	Application for seminar papers starts, topics are allocated on a “first-come-first-served” basis
April 10, 2017	Compulsory preliminary discussion and announcement of participants
May 2, 2017	Deadline for seminar papers. An electronic version should be sent in at 12:00 am latest. The printed paper should be handed in on the same day.
May 5 and 8, 2017	Seminar

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To acquire 6 credit points students will have to write a seminar paper (50%), prepare a presentation and participate in the discussions (which together accounts for the other 50%).

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

The seminar is open to MA students in economics or one of the three business MA programs. Ideally (but not necessarily), you have previously participated in development economics classes.

SEMINAR PAPERS

The seminar papers should be written in English or German, comprising no more than 10 pages (Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spaced, margins: left 2.5 cm, right 3.5; top/bottom 2.5, 10 pages excluding title page, table of content, bibliography and exhibits, max. 15 pages total). In addition, a short abstract of about 200 words has to be composed. The papers should be analytical and critical, develop a coherent argument, draw own conclusions, and go beyond a pure summary of existing literature. Guidelines on well-written papers can be found on the webpage of Prof. Klasen.

Students should hand in an electronic (pdf) as well as one printed copy of their seminar papers. The electronic version will then be made available to all other students for reading.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

We will have two presentations on each topic. Before the presentation, the “audience” will vote on the controversial issues (for example, “Do you think that states should play a more active role in promoting economic development than they currently do?”). In the presentations, each presenter will then take one of the possible views on the issue and make an attempt to convince fellow students of that view. The students will be facing the audience and seated in front of their fellow students as in a panel discussion format. The speakers can use any visual device for their presentations (e.g. handouts, transparencies) and should be able to answer short questions during the presentation. Note that the one-sided view will only be required in the presentation. The seminar paper will be more balanced.

After the presentations the audience can ask questions and let the presenters defend their positions, before there is another vote on the same issue. It is expected that all other students have briefly gone through the papers of the other participants before the seminar, so that a good discussion after the presentations can take place.

TOPICS

You can choose one of the below topics, but are also welcome to suggest alternative ones!

TOPIC 1: A NEW WTO AGREEMENT: (A) NEEDED OR (B) ARE WE FINE WITH MORE BI- AND MULTILATERALISM?

<http://www.globalexchange.org/resources/wto/oppose>

Froman, M., (2015). We are at the End of the Line on the Doha Round of Trade Talks. Financial Times, December 13, 2015.

TOPIC 2: INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE AND LAND: (A) LAND GRAB OR (B) DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?

Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R., Keeley, J., (2009). Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural Investment and International Land Deals in Africa. IIED.

TOPIC 3: RANDOMISTAS VERSUS POOR DEVELOPMENT ECONOMISTS: (A) RCTS AS THE GOLD STANDARD OF THE ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR (B) MISGUIDED CERTAINTY?

Ravallion, M., (2009). Should the randomistas rule?. The Economists' Voice 6(2): 1553-3832.

TOPIC 4: THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (A) MARKET-LED DEVELOPMENT OR (B) INTERVENTIONIST MODELS?

Rodrik, D., (2004). Industrial Policy for the Twenty-First Century. KSG Faculty Research Working Paper Series, RWP04-047. John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Pack, H., Saggi, K., (2006). Is There a Case for Industrial Policy? A Critical Survey. World Bank Research Observer 21: 267-297.

TOPIC 5: CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (A) TRADE-OFF OR (B) WIN-WIN SITUATION?

Dercon, S. (2012). Is green growth good for the poor?. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 6231.

Jakob, M., Steckel, J.C., Klasen, S., Lay, J., Grunewald, N. Martínez-Zarzoso, I., Renner, S. Edenhofer, O. (2014). Feasible Mitigation Actions in Developing Countries. Nature Climate Change 4(11): 961-968.

TOPIC 6: HOW TO DELIVER AID: (A) SEARCHERS OR (B) PLANNERS?

Easterly, W., (2006). "Planners vs. searchers in foreign aid." Asian Development Review, 23 (2):1-35.

Sachs, J. D., McArthur, J.W. (2005). The millennium project: a plan for meeting the millennium development goals. *The Lancet*, 365(January 2005): 347-353.

TOPIC 7: THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: (A) A STEP FORWARD OR (B) BACKWARDS AS COMPARED TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

<http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/>

Institute of Development Studies' (IDS) Hot Topic site

(<http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsresearch/millennium-development-goals-mdgs-and-post-2015-agenda>).

TOPIC 8: DE-GROWTH: (A) ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM OR (B) A CONCEPT FOR THE VERY RICH?

Martínez-Alier, J., Pascual, U., Vivien, F.-D., Zaccai, E., (2010). Sustainable de-growth: Mapping the context, criticisms and future prospects of an emergent paradigm. *Ecological Economics*, 69(9): 1741-1747.

TOPIC 9: FAIR TRADE: (A) AN ALTERNATIVE FOR EXPORT-LED DEVELOPMENT OR (B) MISSING THE TARGET?

de Janvry, A., McIntosh, C., Sadoulet, E., (2015). Fair Trade and Free Entry: Can a Disequilibrium Market Serve as a Development Tool? *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 97(3): 567-573.

Leclair, M.S., (2002). Fighting the Tide: Alternative Trade Organizations in the Era of Global Free Trade. *World Development*, 30(6): 949-58.

TOPIC 10: INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL FLOWS: (A) EASY ACCESS TO CAPITAL OR (B) BEYOND THE POOR?

Arestis, P., Caner, A., (2010). Capital account liberalisation and poverty: how close is the link?. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 34(2): 295-323.

Kose, M. A., Prasad, E. et al., (2009). Financial globalization: a reappraisal. *IMF Staff Papers*, 56(1): 8-62.

TOPIC 11: MICROCREDITS: (A) A PANACEA FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION OR (B) YET ANOTHER INEFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT?

Khandker, S. and Samad, H., (2014). Dynamic effects of Microcredit in Bangladesh. Policy Research Working Paper 6821. The World Bank.

Banerjee, A., Duflo, E., Glennerster, R. and Kinnan, C., (2015) The Miracle of Microfinance? Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 7(1): 22-532.

TOPIC 12: DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS: (A) GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS OR (B) ELITE CAPTURE?

Bardhan, P. and Mookherjee, D., (2006). Decentralization, Corruption and Government Accountability: An Overview. In: Rose-Ackerman, S., (ed.), *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption*. Cheltenham/Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishers, pp: 161-188.