

AAE 477
Syllabus

University of Wisconsin-Madison

1. Preliminaries

Course Title: Agricultural & Economic Development of Africa, Spring 2023

Course number: AAE 477

Meeting Dates/ Times: Tues/Thurs 11 – 12:15

Meeting Location: 1163 Mechanical Engineering

Instructor: Jeremy Foltz (jdfoltz@wisc.edu)

Canvas Site:

Student hours: Wednesdays 9 - 11 in person 421 Taylor Hall
or same times on Zoom at Jeremy Foltz's personal meeting room.

2. Course description

Official course description:

Composition, organization, and techniques of agricultural production; economic change and development of agriculture, economic policies, special problems of developing African agriculture.

Official Prerequisites: AAE 215, ECON 101, or 111, or graduate/professional standing.

This version: January 20, 2023

Introduction:

In this course, we will analyze African countries' economic challenges, opportunities, and development strategies. Together, we will explore major current issues in development economics with a special emphasis on how they relate to Sub-Saharan Africa. We will analyze several types of explanations for the various levels of economic growth in the region: macroeconomic (e.g., growth determinants, the role of foreign aid), microeconomic (e.g., health and nutrition, human capital, poverty dynamics), and institutional explanations (corruption, business climate). Understanding these topics will help us better understand and evaluate policymaking in the region.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the semester, the hope is that you will be able to:

1. Apply the tools of economic analysis (both theoretical and empirical) to evaluate specific policy proposals, especially as they relate to contemporary issues in African development.
2. Understand how to use empirical evidence to evaluate an economic argument, including interpreting and explaining economic data.
3. Communicate effectively in written and graphical forms about issues in African development.
4. Explain the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of the sustainability challenges of development of African nations.

Method of instruction: The course will achieve its learning objectives by deploying a combination of lectures, readings, videos, debates, and active learning.

Canvas: The course page can be found at the top of the syllabus. My goal is to manage our assignments, readings, and projects online. The Canvas schedule will link to topic pages, which will outline what you are expected to read/listen to / complete before coming to class. In addition, I will post course announcements through Canvas. Please check all your Canvas settings to ensure you receive my notifications. **Do you have general questions about the course?** Please post them in the [Course questions](#) discussion on Canvas. Others might have the same question, and this way, we save everyone extra emails! If you have individual-specific emails, you can, of course, address them to me by email or in person.

Course credits:

This course will be face-to-face, and we will interact both in class and outside of class via student office hours and consultations on projects. We will meet for two 75-minute class periods each week over the spring semester. In addition, the course carries the expectation that you will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, researching, problem sets, studying) for about 3 hours out of the classroom for every class period.

3. Semester Outline:

| Wk | Date | Theme | Topic | Assignment Due |
|----|----------------|--|---|---|
| 1 | Jan 24-26 | Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course overview Economic History of Africa Stylized Facts about Africa | Readings |
| 2 | Jan 31-Feb 2 | Theories of Economic growth & development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition “<i>why do we care?</i>” Measurement “<i>How do we model it?</i>” Solow growth model | Map Test Jan 31 |
| 3 | Feb 7- 9 | Poverty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty Traps Poverty and Inequality | Homework 1: Narrated Country Profile(individual) Due Feb 9 |
| 4 | Feb14-16 | Economic growth in Africa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Why are there more poor people in Africa in 2021 versus 1960?</i> | Research paper proposal due: February 17 |
| 5 | Feb 21-23 | Agriculture and Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural transformation The role of agriculture in growth | |
| 6 | Feb 28-March 2 | Africa in the Global Food System | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African farming <i>systems</i> Value Chains: “<i>Business of Agriculture in Africa</i>” Food Trade: <i>Can Africa feed itself? Should it?</i> | Reading reflection(individual) |
| 7 | March 7-9 | Midterm Exam | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review class Midterm Exam in Class | Midterm Exam March 9 |
| | March 11-19 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPRING BREAK | |
| 8 | March 21-25 | Human Capital (Guest lectures: Osas Olurotimi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Nutrition Education | |
| 9 | Mar 28- 30 | Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Private Sector Development | Research paper outline, literature review and bibliography due: April 1 |
| 10 | April 4-6 | Foreign Aid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign aid aka Aid versus trade “<i>Is Dambisa Moyo right?</i>” | Homework 2: Human Capital |
| 11 | April 11-13 | Institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is stealing Corruption? Business Climate | Research paper: methodology and results & analysis due: April 14 |
| 12 | April 18-20 | Made in Africa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Islands of Excellence “<i>Can it scale?</i>” Measuring Development Impact (RCT) “<i>What should we scale?</i>” | |
| 13 | April 25-27 | Global Shocks and Africa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing world and Africa (Covid19, Climate Change) | |
| 14 | May 2- 4 | Putting it all Together | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of what we learned and new directions Research paper discussions | Research paper due May 4 |
| 15 | May8-13 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finals’ week: Exam May 11, 10:05 – 12:15am | Final Exam May 11 |

4. Assessment

Students will be assessed in the following way:

1. **Class participation (3%):**

Class sessions will mix lectures, discussion, case studies, and problem-solving to explore the themes of the course. I expect you to participate in class actively and to diligently complete assigned exercises and readings. Class discussions will only be productive if you all do the assigned readings before class, show up, and participate in the discussions.

Class participation will be measured by attendance and occasional group discussions or class debates

2. **Map quiz (2% of your grade)**

All students must pass a map test to receive a passing grade in this class. The test requires students to correctly identify the location of countries in Africa. A practice version is available at <http://www.jetpunk.com/quizzes/map-quiz-africa.php>. You need to get 51 out of 54 countries right to pass. We will complete this test in the second week. If you fail you can take it again.

3. **Homework (20%):** We will have two homework assignments one a report on an African country and a second a report education related interventions.

4. **Midterm Exam- 25%:** An in-class midterm exam will give you a chance to demonstrate what you have learned so far.

5. **Final Research Paper-25% DUE May 4**

A research paper ~15 pages on an economic topic relevant to the African continent is due at the end of the semester. You have to hand in: a topic (2/17); an outline and literature review (4/1); a methodology and results and analysis (4/17). The lit review, methodology, and results and analysis handed in early can set about half your final grade before you finish the full paper.

6. **Final Exam – 25%: May 11, 10:05 – 12:15am** A final exam (partially cumulative) that will cover the materials covered during the second half of the course and summary ideas that integrate ideas from the first half.

Some Thoughts on Assessment

*Note all assignments must be submitted on the due date **with no exceptions**, except for communicated difficulties (at least one week) or a life emergency (e.g., death of a loved one or health crisis). Canvas will be programmed to deduct 10% automatically for each day of late submission.*

All requests for regrades must be made in writing with a no more than 1-page written explanation of why the student thinks they deserve a regrade and the grade they think they deserve. In that case, a review can be done, but instructor grading decisions after regrades are final.

Grading Scheme: A: 92-100; AB: 85-92; B: 78-85; BC:71-78; C:64-71; D:57-64.

5. Values

Nuance

One of the goals of this class is to encourage scholarly attitudes of inquiry, curiosity, debate, thoughtfulness, and nuance. Hence, the best written and verbal communication in assignments shows that **careful and respectful consideration** has been given to viewpoints, theories, or perspectives that one may not initially possess or do not necessarily agree with. Before class starts, please watch this [Ted talk](#) on the danger of a single story, by Chimamanda Adichie.

Diversity and inclusion

I endorse the UW-Madison statement on diversity. Diversity constitutes a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for the university and for the country. I value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich our community.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.” <http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

Academic integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. In addition, I will forward substantial or repeated cases of misconduct to the Dean of Students Office for additional review. For more information, or if you have any doubts about how the above terms are defined, please refer to [this](#). The UW Writing Center has a handout on acknowledging, paraphrasing, and quoting sources. Many borderline plagiarism cases could have been avoided if the students had a clearer sense of the rules of how to cite sources.

Religious observances

If a religious observance requires that you miss class time, please notify me of the specific days or dates on which you request relief within the first two weeks of class. If the date you will miss is an exam, we will schedule a make-up exam time either before or after the regularly scheduled Exam.

Electronics

Technology use: Please use technology in class sparingly and judiciously. Learning requires attention and focus. When students use technologies (phones, laptops, tablets) during class, they often distract their fellow students. The best available evidence shows that personal technological aids lead to poor performance in courses and negative externalities for other students' ability to learn. This Brookings [report](#), “*For better learning in college lectures, lay down the laptop and pick up a pen*,” details the compelling evidence and links to detailed research papers.

6. Readings List

Primary Readings:

1. Taylor, J. Edward and Travis J. Lybbert *Essentials of Development Economics* 3rd Edition. Oakland: University of California Press. 2020. (\$49.95) (“TL” in the reading list). <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520343580/essentials-of-development-economics-third-edition> I will post the chapters on Canvas.
2. Select chapters from: Frankema, Ewout; Ellen Hillbom, Ushehweu Kufakurinani and Felix Meier zu Selhausen (eds.), *The History of African Development: An Online Textbook for a New Generation of African Students and Teachers*. African Economic History Network. <https://www.aehnetwork.org/textbook/> Chapters online and on Canvas.
3. Other course readings include briefs, news articles, and research papers, podcasts available as links on the syllabus or in the Canvas module page

Week 1: Introduction to development and Africa

1. Frankema, Ewout. “Why Africa is not that poor” Discussion paper, DP 16036. CEPR. 2021.
2. **TL Chapter 1** “What is Development Economics all about?”
3. Binyavanga Wainaina (2005). [How to write about Africa](#). Granta 92
4. “Africa’s population will double by 2050.” March 28, 2020. [Link](#)
5. Cilliers Jakkie (2021). Challenges and Opportunities. The future of Africa. Chapter 2: Africa’s Current Path.

Week 2: Economic growth & development

1. **TL Chapter 3** “Income”
2. **TL Chapter 6** “Human Development”. Read only the portion on the Human Development Index.
3. Easterly, William. 2002. [“The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists’ Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics.”](#) MIT press. Chapter 3.

Recommended

4. Dani Rodrik. 2013. [The Past, Present, and Future of Economic Growth](#). Copy at <https://j.mp/2nzKGdc>

Week 3: Poverty, Inequality and Poverty Traps

1. **TL, Chapter 4** “Poverty”
2. **TL, Chapter 5** “Inequality”
3. Human Development Report (2019) Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today. *I extracted a portion from the full report for you.*
4. Banerjee, Abhijit V., and Esther Duflo. 2007. [“The Economic Lives of the Poor.”](#) Journal of Economic Perspectives 21, no. 1: 141–68.

Week 4: Economic growth in Africa

1. **TL, Chapter 7** “Growth”
2. Nyandaro and Dube. [Poverty in Africa since independence](#), in Frankema, Ewout, Hillbom, Ellen, Kufakurinani, Ushehweu and Meier zu Selhausen, Felix (Eds.) (ongoing). *The History of African Development. An Online Textbook for a New Generation of African Students and Teachers*. African Economic History Network

3. “Why Africa’s Development Model Puzzles Economists.” August 17, 2017.
4. African Development Bank “Tracking Africa’s Progress in Figures.” AfDB 2014

Week 5: Agriculture and Growth

1. [TL, Chapter 10](#) “Structural Transformation”
2. Gollin, D. 2015. “[Agriculture as an Engine of Growth and Poverty Reduction: Lessons for Africa](#)” in A. McKay and E. Thorbecke eds. *Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa: Current and Emerging Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Recommended
3. W. Gyude Moore (2021). *Lagos to Mombasa: Can Agriculture Drive Economic Growth in Africa?*
[Podcast link](#)
4. [World Bank Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development](#), p. 1-45.

Week 6: Africa in the Global food System

1. Gollin 2014. *Small Holder Agriculture in Africa*
2. Alliance for a Green revolution in Africa (2016) *Africa Agriculture Status Report*. Read Chapter 1.
3. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (2020). [A different approach to strengthening African food systems](#).
4. Celia Dugger (2007) [Ending Famine, Simply by Ignoring the Experts](#), New York Times, December 2, 2007:
Recommended
5. OECD. (2021). [Food system Transformations in the Sahel and West Africa](#).

Week 7: Midterm Week

Week 8: Growth explainers & levers (Micro): Human Capital

1. [TL, Chapter 6](#) “Human Development” *Health*
2. Bleakley, Hoyt. 2010. “[Health, Human Capital, and Development](#).” *Annual Review of Economics* 2, no. 1: 283–310. *There’s a bit of advanced math in here. However, you don’t have to comprehend all of it. The text is rich enough without the math.*
3. Burke, Marshall, Erick Gong, and Kelly Jones. 2015. “[Income Shocks and HIV in Africa](#).” *The Economic Journal* 125, no. 585: 1157–89. *Human capital*
4. Lucas, Adrienne M., and Isaac M. Mbiti. 2014. “Effects of School Quality on Student Achievement: Discontinuity Evidence from Kenya.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 6, no. 3: 234–63.
5. Leonard Wantchekon, Natalija Novta, and Marko Klasnja (2012). “[Education and Human Capital Externalities: Evidence from Colonial Benin](#).” Working Paper.

Week 9: Growth explainers& levers (Macro): Capital. The role of Business and Private Sector in Development

1. Barret Christopher (2018) . [Overcoming Persistent Poverty in Africa. How businesses can help](#)
2. African Development Report (2011). Chapter 1. “The role of the Private Sector in Africa’s Economic Development”

3. Yaduma, Natina and Wasiq N. Khan (2019). "[Intra-regional Trade and African Economic Integration](#)", In Ewout Frankema, Ellen Hillbom, Ushehwedu Kufakurinani and Felix Meier zu Selhausen (eds.), *The History of African Development: An Online Textbook for a New Generation of African Students and Teachers*. African Economic History Network.

Week 10: Growth explainers& levers (Macro): Trade and Foreign Aid

1. TL, Chapter 13 "International Trade"
2. Courtney Martin, January 11, 2016. "[The Reductive Seduction of Other People's Problems](#)," *The Development Set*, Medium.com
3. Dambisa Moyo (2009). *Dead Aid*. Chapters 1, 2 and 3
4. Qian, Nancy. 2015. "[Making Progress on Foreign Aid](#)." *Annual Review of Economics* 7, no. 1: 277–308.

Recommended

5. AEI (2021) You can watch this podcast. [The US international emergency food aid program: Time for change?](#)
6. There are a series of TED talks arguing about the damage of foreign aid. Examples include [Abhishek Parajuli](#), [Efosa Ejomo](#) and [Andrew Mwenda](#). Hear one defending foreign aid here by [Joe Cerell](#)

Week 11: Growth explainers& levers (Institutions): Public goods& Corruption

1. TL, Chapter 8 "Institutions"
2. Ricart-Huguet, Joan (2019). "[Democracy and Development in Africa since 1960s](#)", In Ewout Frankema, Ellen Hillbom, Ushehwedu Kufakurinani and Felix Meier zu Selhausen (eds.), *The History of African Development: An Online Textbook for a New Generation of African Students and Teachers*. African Economic History Network.
3. Okonjo-Iweala, Ngozi. *Reforming the Unreformable: Lessons from Nigeria*, MIT Press, 2012. Chapter 5: Fighting Corruption.
4. Fisman, Ray, and Edward Miguel. *Economic Gangsters: Corruption, Violence, and the Poverty of Nations*. Princeton University Press, 2010. Chapter 5
5. Sections 1 to 4 of Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson. (2005). "[Institutions as a fundamental cause of long-run growth](#)." *Handbook of Economic Growth* 1: 385-472.

Recommended

6. Burgess, Robin, Remi Jedwab, Edward Miguel, Ameet Morjaria, and Gerard Padró i Miquel. 2015. "[The Value of Democracy: Evidence from Road Building in Kenya](#)." *American Economic Review* 105, no. 6: 1817–51.
7. World Justice Project. "[Rule of Law Index](#)," 2021

Week 12: Made in Africa

1. Coulibaly, Brahim. 2017. "[In Defense of the 'Africa Rising' Narrative](#)." *Brookings* (blog post).
2. Aker and Blumenstock(2016). "Economic Impacts of New technologies in Africa" in Monga, C., & Lin, J. (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Africa and economics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer (2016) “[The Influence of Randomized Controlled Trials on Development Economics Research and Development Policy](#)” The State of Economics, the State of The World Conference at the World Bank.

Week 13: Global Shocks and Africa: COVID-19 and Climate Change

1. Laborde Debucquet, David; Martin, Will; and Vos, Rob. 2020. Poverty and food insecurity could grow dramatically as COVID-19 spreads. In COVID-19 and global food security, eds. Johan Swinnen and John McDermott. Part One: Food security, poverty, and inequality, Chapter 2, Pp. 16-19. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). https://doi.org/10.2499/p15738coll2.133762_02
2. Köhler, H. (2021). Lockdown economics in South Africa: [Social assistance and the Ramaphosa stimulus package](#). Retrieved December 6, 2021
3. Soludo, C. (2021). [Can Africa Afford COVID-19 Lockdowns?](#) - Chukwuma Soludo. Retrieved December 6, 2021

Recommended

4. World Bank 2021. [COVID-19 Household Monitoring Dashboard](#)

Week 14: Summing up

Belinda Archibong, Brahim Coulibaly, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. 2021. Washington Consensus reforms and economic performance in sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from the past four decades. Brookings Institute, AGI Working Paper No. 27.