



ECON336

Economic Development

S1 Day 2018

Dept of Economics

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| <u>General Information</u> | 2 |
| <u>Learning Outcomes</u> | 2 |
| <u>General Assessment Information</u> | 3 |
| <u>Assessment Tasks</u> | 3 |
| <u>Delivery and Resources</u> | 5 |
| <u>Unit Schedule</u> | 6 |
| <u>Learning and Teaching Activities</u> | 7 |
| <u>Policies and Procedures</u> | 8 |
| <u>Graduate Capabilities</u> | 10 |

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Contact via Via iLearn

E4A437

TBA

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

(PSY122 or STAT150 or STAT170) and 6cp at 200 level including (ECON200 or ECON201 or ECON203 or ECON204 or ECON214 or ECON215)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Despite robust economic growth across the globe in the last decades, around one billion people in the world still suffer from the effects of underdevelopment and poverty. This unit will give students a critical understanding of the inherent problems facing underdeveloped and developing countries. It will provide an in-depth analysis of the different explanations and measures that may be taken to foster economic development and to relax the constraints that slow it down. An integral component of the unit is discussion of the most recent research by economists who work in the field, testing and devising cheap and feasible policy solutions to improve outcomes for the global poor. Focusing on specific examples, such as the prevalence of diseases such as malaria or the schooling outcomes of children in poor households, we will investigate and critically evaluate the effectiveness of existing policy measures and discuss ways to improve our policy response to enduring development challenges.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Appraise the reasons the very poor can remain trapped in poverty

Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.

Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.

Evaluate the success (and failures) of policy interventions designed to improve the wellbeing of the poor.

Critique popularist narratives on poverty in low-income countries

General Assessment Information

Course Rules

1. All individual assessment tasks are to be submitted electronically via the ECON336 ilearn site.
2. No extensions will be granted for any of the assessment tasks. There will be a deduction of 10% of the total available marks for each 24 hour period or part thereof that the submission is late (for example, 25 hours late = 20% penalty). This penalty does not apply, for cases in which an application for special consideration is made and approved.
4. You must complete all pieces of assessment to pass the course.

Special Consideration Policy

If you have a problem fulfilling the requirements of the course, see the following:

<https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|---|-----------|--------|---------------|
| Lessons on iLearn | 0% | Yes | Most Weeks |
| Design and Evaluate a Project | 60% | No | Various Weeks |
| Critiquing Foolish Ideas | 40% | No | Final Week |

Lessons on iLearn

Due: **Most Weeks**

Weighting: **0%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Most weeks you will be expected to complete a multimedia Lesson, which you can access in the

relevant folder on iLearn. These Lessons include reading the relevant chapter from the 'textbook', reading short articles, watching some videos and answering some simple questions.

- You are expected to complete the Lesson before coming to class each week.
- There are no marks attached to the Lessons, but you must complete all the Lessons to pass the course.
- You must complete the Lessons in the allotted time frame. You will typically have 6 days to complete each lesson.
- The Lessons will take between 1 hour and 2 hours to complete.
- The Lessons will assist you with the assessment tasks.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appraise the reasons the very poor can remain trapped in poverty
- Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.
- Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.

Design and Evaluate a Project

Due: **Various Weeks**

Weighting: **60%**

Some of the literature addressed in the course examines the impact of small relatively cheap projects intended to improve the lives of the poor. This assessment asks you to use this literature to design and evaluate your own small policy intervention. There are a number of components to the assessment task including a component for peer assessment that builds to your final submission. You will be provided with additional information about these tasks and the due dates in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.
- Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.
- Evaluate the success (and failures) of policy interventions designed to improve the wellbeing of the poor.

Critiquing Foolish Ideas

Due: **Final Week**

Weighting: **40%**

Watch the following video that purports to explore what it means to live on one dollar a day in a low-income country.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=on-0PYf-m9s>

Critique the authors' views using the ideas presented in the course. This assessment involves participating in an online discussion forum, where you will be graded on your capacity to present your ideas and respond to the critiques of others in the class. The discussion forum will be open for a limited time period. More information will be provided in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Appraise the reasons the very poor can remain trapped in poverty
- Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.
- Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.
- Critique popularist narratives on poverty in low-income countries

Delivery and Resources

1. Class Attendance

There will be one three-hour session each week. Students are advised to attend all classes as important components of the assessment will be addressed in class. If you can not participate in classes, you should not enrol in this course as you will not be able to complete all of the assessment tasks.

2. Time and Location for Face-to-Face Contact

Time: Friday 9 am - 12 pm

Location: 11 Wally's Walk 110 Tutorial Room

3. Online Lessons (ilearn)

For most topics, there will be an online lesson which you must complete before coming to class.

These Lessons will be available in the relevant topic folder. The lessons are designed to guide through some of the course content for the week. Embedded in the lessons will be a series of simple questions to assist you with the learning process. You must complete all of the Lessons.

3. The Book to Purchase for the Unit

Abhijit Banerjee & Esther Duflo (2012) "Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty," USA, Perseus Books Group.

This book is available in hard copy from the coop bookshop.

This book is also available as an ebook and in audible format.

This book is written by two well-known development economists from MIT, one of the world's best universities for economics. It is a great read, summarising the latest research on the lives of the poor, their problems, how they make decisions, and the environment in which these decisions are made.

The book introduces you to some of the more recent ideas and approaches in economics. The aim of much of the research is to assist in the design of policy to improve the lives of the poor.

Many of the findings are surprising and the book offers no grand solutions or answers to poverty or other problems associated with development. It instead argues that the research provides information on how to improve the lives of the poor one small well thought out policy intervention after another. Most of these policy interventions are small and not particularly glamorous.

You may also wish to avail yourself of the relevant resources available at the following website

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

It is a good resource designed to assist students and educators.

4. ECON336 iLearn Site

Additional important materials including the readings, Lessons and assessment tasks will be placed on the ilearn site. In addition to attending classes, it is your responsibility to access the website each week to ensure you keep up with the requirements of the course.

Unit Schedule

| | TOPIC | Required Reading Prior to Lecture |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| PART 1: PRIVATE LIVES | | |
| 1 | Introduction: The Aid Debate & the Poverty Trap | Poor Economics, pp.1-16, pp20-22 |
| 2 | Malnourished People: Not Taking Care of Nutrition | Poor Economics, pp.19-40 |
| 3 | The Easy Health Problems have not been Fixed. Are there any New Solutions to an Old Problem? | Poor Economics, pp.41-70 |
| 4 | Why Poor School Students Learn so Little? Are there any Cheap Solutions? | Poor Economics, pp.71-102 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 5 | Fertility, Gender Discrimination: How do families really make decisions about these issues? | Poor Economics, pp.103-132 |
| PART 2: INSTITUTIONS | | |
| 6 | More Risk, Little Insurance Cause Catastrophic Outcomes for the Poor | Poor Economics, pp.133-156 |
| 7 | The Poor and Getting Access to Credit | Poor Economics, pp.157-182 |
| 8 | Do the Poor find it Harder to Save? | Poor Economics, pp.183-204 |
| 9 | A Billion Unhappy Poor Entrepreneurs | Poor Economics, pp.205-234 |
| 10 | What About the Lousy Institutions and the Awful Politics? | Poor Economics, pp.235-265 |

Learning and Teaching Activities

Online Multimedia Lessons

These online lessons are designed to introduce you to the course content for the week.

Embedded in the Lessons will be a series of short mostly multiple choice questions to assist you with the learning process. There are no marks associated with this activity, but you must complete the Lesson to pass the course. There are three main reasons for the Lessons. 1. To provide an introduction to each of the topics. 2. To engage with the material before coming to class so you can contribute to your team discussions and tasks. 3. To assist you in completing the graded components of your assessment.

Team Decisions: Project Parameters and Budget

Regular team discussions (some of which will occur in class). These discussions must lead to the completion of two activities. 1. Deciding on the parameters for the project design and intervention; 2. Devising the outline of a budget for the project. The main reason for these activities is to provide guidance in preparing your individual project submissions.

Peer Assessment

Another component of your teamwork is peer assessment. There are two components to the feedback your team will provide your peers. 1. Rank the budgets from each team and defend your decisions in the class; 2. Provide a written critique and allocate grades for the initial project submissions from the members of another team. There are two main reasons for these activities: 1. To provide feedback to your peers so they can improve their final individual project submissions. 2. To enhance your understanding so you can improve your final individual project submission.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Academic Honesty

The nature of scholarly endeavour, dependent as it is on the work of others, binds all members of the University community to abide by the principles of academic honesty. Its fundamental principle is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information. This means that:

- all academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim
- all academic collaborations are acknowledged

- academic work is not falsified in any way
- when the ideas of others are used, these ideas are acknowledged appropriately.

Further information on the academic honesty can be found in the Macquarie University Academic Honesty Policy at http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Grades

Macquarie University uses the following grades in coursework units of study:

- HD - High Distinction
- D - Distinction
- CR - Credit
- P - Pass
- F - Fail

Grade descriptors and other information concerning grading are contained in the Macquarie University Grading Policy which is available at:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grading Appeals and Final Examination Script Viewing

If, at the conclusion of the unit, you have performed below expectations, and are considering lodging an appeal of grade and/or viewing your final exam script please refer to the following website which provides information about these processes and the cut off dates in the first instance. Please read the instructions provided concerning what constitutes a valid grounds for appeal before appealing your grade.

http://www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/new_and_current_students/undergraduate_current_students/how_do_i/grade_appeals/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Appraise the reasons the very poor can remain trapped in poverty
- Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.
- Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.

Assessment tasks

- Lessons on iLearn
- Design and Evaluate a Project
- Critiquing Foolish Ideas

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate

and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Appraise the reasons the very poor can remain trapped in poverty
- Understand the evidence that shows us how the poor (and economic agents in general) make decisions about such things as educating their children, healthcare and developing their businesses and the impact this has on their wellbeing.
- Understand the impact on the wellbeing of the poor arising from the institutions (or lack thereof) that govern their lives.
- Evaluate the success (and failures) of policy interventions designed to improve the wellbeing of the poor.
- Critique popularist narratives on poverty in low-income countries

Assessment tasks

- Lessons on iLearn
- Design and Evaluate a Project
- Critiquing Foolish Ideas

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate the success (and failures) of policy interventions designed to improve the wellbeing of the poor.
- Critique popularist narratives on poverty in low-income countries

Assessment tasks

- Design and Evaluate a Project
- Critiquing Foolish Ideas

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate the success (and failures) of policy interventions designed to improve the well-being of the poor.
- Critique popularist narratives on poverty in low-income countries

Assessment tasks

- Design and Evaluate a Project
- Critiquing Foolish Ideas