

# Econ 544: Economics of Poverty

## Syllabus

### Module 4, 2014-2015

Instructor: Qing Wang (Email: [qingwang@phbs.pku.edu.cn](mailto:qingwang@phbs.pku.edu.cn))

Lecture time: 3:30-5:20pm, Tuesday & Friday, PHBS Building 229

Office hour: 2:20-3:20pm Friday or by appointment, PHBS Building 731

Course website: <http://cms.pkusz.edu.cn>

### Course Description

This is an elective course designed for graduate students in Economics and related fields. In this course, we will explore theory, empirical practices, and public policy in development economics at the micro level. This course examines the causes and consequences of development and poverty in the developing world. Students will learn to apply economic theory to practices and understand the behavior of households and firms. Analysis of selected topics in economic development include human capital, health, inequality, savings and credit, globalization and technological change, and others. Emphasis is placed on empirical analysis given available data.

- Topic 1: Empirical methods in studying economic development
- Topic 2: Human capital investment and productivity
- Topic 3: Health and nutrition
- Topic 4: Entrepreneurship, innovation and technological change
- Topic 5: Migration and rural development
- Topic 6: Inequality
- Topic 7: Financial market in developing countries
- Topic 8: Fertility, population growth and economic development
- Topic 9: Policy intervention

## Prerequisites

Students are expected to have completed undergraduate or master level courses of Microeconomics. This includes the decision making procedure of individuals and firms, and market equilibrium and failure. Please see me if you are unsure about your background to take this course.

## Course Management System

We will use CMS (<http://cms.pkusz.edu.cn>) to manage the course. The course website will appear as Econ 544: Economics of Poverty in your CMS Course List. I will send email announcements through CMS and post all related course materials there. Please check the course website every week.

## Class Materials

There is no required textbook for the course. I will use the course website to distribute all announcements, handouts, readings and homework assignments. The following textbooks are a good source of references.

- Ray, Debraj. 1998. Development Economics. Princeton University Press.
- Banerjee, Abhijit V., and Esther Duflo. 2012. Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty. PublicAffairs.
- Khandker, Shahidur R., Gayatri B. Koolwal, and Hussain A. Samad. 2010. Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices. The World Bank.

## Grading

Students are expected to attend all lectures, participate in class discussions, read the required class materials and complete homework and projects. The course grade will be determined by:

- (10%) Attendance and class participation.  
Attendance to all lectures is mandatory.
- (20%) Midterm exam.  
The midterm exam will be given in class on June 12 (Friday). This will be an individual open-book exam including problem solving and essay questions.
- (30%) Homework assignments.  
There will be three homework assignments. The assignments will contain computer exercises using statistical packages. Students are encouraged to form groups to finish the homework. Send me a copy by email and submit a hard copy in class. Attached the code with your answer. Homework will be presented by a random selected group at the beginning of course when the assignment is due. Late homework will not be accepted.

- (40%) Class presentation and written summary.  
Each group of students will be responsible for presenting one or two papers or articles from the reading list depending on the class size. Each student will write summaries of another five papers that are listed in the references and presented by other groups. Send me a copy by email and bring me a hard copy in class. Late submission will not be accepted.

### **Homework and Exam Schedule**

- Lecture 5 (May 22): Homework 1 due.
- Lecture 9 (June 5): Homework 2 due.
- Lecture 11 (June 12): Midterm exam.
- Lecture 18 (July 16): Homework 3 due.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are responsible for keeping academic integrity standards for this course. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit the school website: [http://dean.pku.edu.cn/2011xssc/kswgclff\\_jyb.htm](http://dean.pku.edu.cn/2011xssc/kswgclff_jyb.htm).