Syllabus: Perspectives on Economic Development

Description: This syllabus is intended to provide reading lists to those who want to expand their knowledge in the field of economic development, going beyond the mainstream training, reaching a broad perspective, and being enlightened by decolonized and diverse viewpoints upon the topic.

Week 1: Introduction, Contextualization and Epistemology

This introductory session aims to provoke the student to reflect about the situatedness of knowledge, and each person’s subjectivity. This will allow acknowledging the historiography behind economic development school of thoughts as well as awareness of different realities.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:


Week 2: The Political Economy of Development

The second session provides a general overview of various perspectives on development, the policies that arise from them and their consequences. We will explore what types of questions are being asked and how different theories of development answer them.

Required readings:

Suggested readings:


**Week 3: The Classical Perspective**

We will explore the common understanding of economic development that is used amongst scholars and practitioners across the globe and how this perception influences the discipline of development economics.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:


**Week 4: Shortcomings of the Classical Perspective**

Contrasting the previous session, this week aims to present criticisms of the classical economic development approach. This will serve as the common-ground to expand our comprehension of the multiple (alternative) perspectives discussed in the following weeks.

Required readings:

Suggested readings:


Week 5: Contributions from the Global South

According to Santos (1995: 508), we should “learn that the South exists; learn to go to the South; learn from and with the South”. Thus, this session aims to introduce some “Epistemologies from the South”, and the subsequent three sections will focus on voices from the different regions of the Global South.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:


Week 6: Latin American Perspectives on Economic Development

Coming to the consideration of contributions from the Global South, we begin with Latin American viewpoints on the discipline of economic development.

Required readings:

Suggested readings:


**Week 7: African Perspectives on Economic Development**

This week, the readings encompass various African Perspectives on Economic Development.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:

- **“missing”**

**Week 8: Asian Perspectives on Economic Development**

Finishing off the section on regional contributions to the theory and practice of economic development, this week’s session evolves around the Asian perspective.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:

Week 9: Perspectives Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy

After exploring the often neglected contributions from the Global South to the field of economic development, we return to the debate between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, especially focusing on theories that fluctuate between both. This can lead to a discussion regarding the notion of dominant ideology.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:


Week 10: Scales of Development

This session aims to initiate the debate regarding the different levels in which development can be placed: national, regional, local, urban, etc. Including this dimension allows us to expand our understanding of development above the diverse schools of thought.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:

Week 11: The Role of Technology and Structural Transformations

In order to continue expanding our understanding about development over and above the diverse schools of thought, we discuss one recurrent argument about economic development; namely the role of technology and structural transformations.

Required readings:


Suggested readings:


Week 12: Discussion

The closing session of this course aims to challenge the concept of development itself, delving into a “more radical” decolonized approach.

Required readings:

Suggested readings: