Economics 365: Issues in Comparative Economics  
Spring 2006  

Maria Muniagurria  
e-mail: munia@ssc.wisc.edu  
7424 Social Science  
Office Hours:  
Tuesday 2.30 - 3.30 pm  
Thursday 11 am- 12 noon  

Phone: 263-3865  
Web Page : http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~munia/365/  

Course Description:  
The course will focus on the study of the growth and development experiences of a selected group of countries. We will start with a general introduction to the issue of development and economic growth and a brief study of the East Asian economies. The core part of course will be devoted to the experiences of several countries from Latin America, and Central and Eastern Europe.  

Approach:  

We will be using economic theory to examine the experience of these countries. My goal is to teach you to use the tools provided by the theory to analyze economic data and to interpret particular events. A typical topic will then combine the study of the relevant economic theory with the examination of the data.  

I will use geometric analysis and elementary algebra to develop the economic theory points. Calculus is not required but you must be willing to understand and work with arguments based on formal economic reasoning and basic quantitative analysis. Throughout the course we will be using microeconomic theory, international trade theory and macroeconomic theory. Understanding them is an important prerequisite to be able to understand the material presented in the course.  

Because a significant part of the readings do not develop the theory with enough detail or assume that you have additional knowledge on the specific topic, it is important that you attend lectures. I expect you to do a first reading of the material before class. This first reading should be a quick run-through that should give you an idea of the main points. After the class, it will become clear what are the points that I chose to emphasize and the aspects you should concentrate on.  

Required Reading:  
2- Reading Packet 1 (RP 1) (available as Electronic Reserve at the Social Science Reference Library, access from MyUW).  
3- Reading Packet 2 (RP 2) (available as Electronic Reserve at the Social Science Reference Library, access from MyUW).  
4- Handouts distributed in class or electronically and articles available from the Web (linked to the course Web Page).
Grading/Important Dates/Other

1. Grading will be on the basis of two exams (none of them cumulative), and a paper on one of the countries of Latin America, East Asia, Eastern Europe or Former Soviet States. There will be a few short homework assignments to help you practice some concepts (they will have no formal weight in your grade).

The schedule and weights are as follows:
- 33 % Exam 1: Thursday March 2
- 33 % Exam 2: Thursday May 4 (last class).
- 34 % Paper: Final version due Thursday April 28.

2. Students are responsible for announcements made in class and via E-mail.

3. As a general rule, I do not give make up exams. However, if there are exceptional circumstances that make it impossible for you to take an exam at the scheduled time you should contact me before the exam.

Paper:

I would like you to write a "country report" on a country from either Latin America, East Asia, Eastern Europe or Former Soviet States. I will talk in more detail in class about my expectations but the general guidelines are spelled out below. A sample of a country report will be on Reserve at the Social Science Research Library.

Important dates:
- Choice of country: Due Tuesday February 7.
- Bibliography: Due Thursday March 9.
- Outline and tables or diagrams of economic indicators to be used: Due Tuesday April 11.
- Final Version: Due Thursday April 27.

1. Choice of Country:
   Since there are some countries that may present specific problems with the availability of data I would like you to submit your choice to be approved.

2. Bibliography, Outline, Data Sources:
   Search first widely (International Organizations, Periodicals, WWW, etc) and then narrow your focus. Make copies of the Data (Xerox Tables, etc) or download it from the specific database or web site. I will provide additional information on data sources in class. You will need to use data from the World Development Indicators (WDI) (World Bank) available from Madcat, (more instructions will be provided).

3. Writing:
   You need to describe the general characteristics of the country and the main social indicators (income distribution, literacy, average years of schooling, some poverty index, etc.). Next you need to analyze the evolution of the basic economic indicators over time (ideally data going back 20/30 years) and the economic conditions over the last 2/4 years. Basic indicators are GNP, GNP per capita, GNP growth, inflation, government deficit, some foreign trade indicator, real wage (if available). You then may choose to address some issue of particular importance for the specific country. You must provide citations for material that is not your own and full references for all your sources.

   Length: About 6-9 written pages (at 12 pt. font) plus the relevant tables (average 10-12 tables). This of course will vary according to the availability of data.

E-mail and WEB Page
The class will be put on an electronic mailing list. This allows distribution of announcements and class related information to everyone. Please activate your account and check your E-mail regularly (this is mandatory).

Course Outline

I. Introduction and Strategies for Economic Development. (January 17)


II. Economic Growth (January 19, 24, 26, 31, February 2)


III. East Asia (February 2, 7, 9, 14)

"Measuring Income Inequality," from "Miscellaneous technical Notes", (RP1, 10).
Additional readings may be added.

Latin America.

IV. Overview and Historical Legacies (February 16,21)

Franko: Chapters 1 and 2.
V. Import Substitution (February 23, 28, Exam 1 : Thursday March 2).

Franko: Chapter 3.
"Three Phases of Argentine Economic Growth" by Alan M. Taylor, NBER Historical Paper # 60, 1994 (selected pages),(RP1, 7).

VI. Debt, Inflation and Stabilization (March 7, 9, 21).

Franko: Chapters 4 and 5 (up to page 135).
"Sources of Inflation", and "How Important Has Seigniorage Been?," from "Miscellaneous Technical Notes," (RP1, 10).

VII. Opening , Reform, Crisis (March 23, 28, 30, April 4, 6).

Franko: Chapters 5 (136-145), 7, 8 and 9.
Selected pages from Growth, Employment and Equity: The Impact of Reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean, by Barbara Stallings and Wilson Peres, ECLAC (UN), Brookings Institution Press, 2000, (RP1, 9).
Argentine Crisis , December 2001 (readings to be announced).

VIII. Poverty and Inequality (April 11 )
Franko: Chapter 11.

Eastern Europe and Former Soviet States.

IX. Economic Growth in Selected Countries (April 13, 18).

Additional readings may be added.
X. Transition, Reform and Outcomes: Former Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic (April 20, 25, 27, May 2; Exam 2: Thursday May 4).


GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
The Department of Economics has developed a grievance procedure through which you may register comments or complaints about a course, an instructor, or a teaching assistant. The Department continues to provide a course evaluation each semester in every class. If you wish to make anonymous complaints to an instructor or teaching assistant, the appropriate vehicle is the course evaluation. If you have a disagreement with an instructor or a teaching assistant, we strongly encourage you to try to resolve the dispute with him or her directly. The grievance procedure is designed for situations where neither of these channels is appropriate. If you wish to file a grievance, you should go to room 7238 Social Science and request a Course Comment Sheet. When completing the comment sheet, you will need to provide a detailed statement that describes what aspects of the course you find unsatisfactory. You will need to sign the sheet and provide your student identification number, your address, and a phone where you can be reached. The Department plans to investigate comments fully and will respond in writing to complaints. Your name, address, phone number, and student ID number will not be revealed to the instructor or teaching assistant involved and will be treated as confidential. The Department needs this information, because it may become necessary for a commenting student to have a meeting with the department chair or a nominee to gather additional information. A name and address are necessary for providing a written response.