

AAE/Econ 473

Economic growth and development in Southeast Asia

Syllabus

Last update: 8/26/16

Instructor:	Ian Coxhead, 434 Taylor Hall, ian.coxhead@wisc.edu
Offered:	Fall 2016
Schedule:	TR 9:30-10:45
Location:	224 Ingraham Hall
Credits:	3
Prerequisite:	1-2 courses in economics or cons. instr.

Introduction

Southeast Asia is a group of 11 countries identifiable as “Asia east of India, south of China.” The region’s population of more than 600m people are living through an amazing transition from widespread poverty to comparative wealth. The average regional long-run GDP growth rate is far ahead of other developing areas and exceeded only by China. This differential has persisted in spite of considerable internal instability as well as exposure to global market shocks. Tens of millions have been lifted out of poverty as a result.

Due to this experience, SE Asia is a great “laboratory” in which to ask some of the truly big questions of economics: what causes growth, and how is growth sustained? How do economies change as they grow? Do the benefits of growth reach the poor, and if so how? Is trade good, and are trade agreements beneficial? Can government policy influence development?

In this course we focus on issues of greatest relevance to the Southeast Asian experience, but we also use that experience as a lens to study problems of development in a more general way.

There are many possible approaches to this topic. Responding to the particular circumstances of this region, we will focus on the role of historical and geographical conditions, resource endowments, international trade and the global economy, and government policies. We trace their effects on indicators of human welfare including economic growth, poverty alleviation and income distribution. Empirically, we spend most time on the biggest economies (Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam); however we also trace implications for the smaller ones: Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Brunei and East Timor.

To understand economic growth and development requires formal economic models as well as careful scrutiny of relevant data. Theoretical material is woven into the course content and readings, and we derive empirical and policy insights by using relevant theory to analyze data and key events.

Texts, references and sources

The core text is I. Coxhead (ed), [Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Economics](#). However, the price of this hardback book is unreasonable for students, and a paperback edition will not be available until (probably) spring 2017. Meanwhile, an editor's proof version is available for download at no cost via the class Learn@UW page.

Economic concepts and theory will be covered in class notes and/or in electronic resources that I will post. The [New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics](#) (eds. Durlauf and Blume) is a great one-stop source for standard concepts and models. The content is all freely available if you go in through the [UW Library online catalog](#). I'll also use some chapters from D. Weil, *Economic Growth* (Pearson). This is an excellent textbook on economic growth. It's on reserve in College Library.

If you haven't studied development economics before, it will be a good idea to equip yourself with at least one standard text to cover basic stuff. I recommend: D. H. Perkins, S. Radelet and D. Lindauer, 2006: *Economics of Development* (Norton; 6th edition). This is a generic textbook on the economics of development. There's a copy on library reserve.

Current information and analysis about SE Asian economies is available from a variety of internet sources. [East Asia Forum](#) has great coverage, by country and by topic. [EABER](#) is an equally good site with mostly full-length research papers; it's also searchable by country and topic. The [Asian Development Bank](#) offers a rich trove of data, as does the [World Bank](#), whose *World Development Indicators Online* is a standard source for a wide range of economic data.

I will assign or recommend readings, websites or resources in connection with specific topics. Check the [class schedule](#) for these. The [reading list](#) has links to a broader list of publications. I'll supply other materials in electronic format.

Expectations

This is an elective course, so I assume that you will naturally want to invest time in reading, thinking and discussing the issues we address. As a learning experience, what you get out of the course will be proportional to what you put into it. I expect you to complete assigned readings before class and to participate actively in in-class discussions. I hope that you'll be motivated to read more broadly with the help of reliable news sources, bibliographic search engines and other online resources. Almost all assignments are designed to reward independent reading and thinking. There will be a moderate emphasis on small-group work.

Assessment

- 30%: Short assignments, in-class quizzes and exercises, participation
- 40%: Two midterms (1= 15%, 2=25%)
- 30%: Research exercise and presentation

The research presentation and paper is in lieu of a final exam. I'll work with you on the design and drafting of the research paper. But you should also take your draft to [The Writing Center](#). Their advising is free, and the benefits last a lifetime so that's a pretty sweet deal.

Office hours and consultations

My office is 433 Taylor Hall, and my official office hours are Thursday 1:30-3pm. I'll normally be available for brief consultations after each class. Other times are possible by arrangement—email me at ian.coxhead@wisc.edu

PoliciesConcerns and complaints

If you have a concern or complaint specific to an experience in this course should first talk with me (the instructor). Often there's just a misunderstanding and we can resolve it. If you take that step and you're still not happy, you should follow the [CALs grievance procedures](#).

Plagiarism

We all make mistakes but plagiarism—the deliberate appropriation of another's work without due citation and acknowledgment—is never a mistake. It's also really dumb, mainly because when you copy the work of others you deprive yourself of a learning opportunity. Because plagiarism is an act of laziness, it is almost always super-easy to detect. Of course, with more time and effort you could conceal it better, but in that case why not spend the time doing original work instead?

If you read all that and you still want to do it, then you also need to know that plagiarism counts as a punishable form of [academic misconduct](#).

Disabilities or special needs

The [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#), 263-6393, provides academic support services to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation should contact the center and request assistance as early as possible, preferably at least eight weeks prior to the date of anticipated need. If you are a McBurney client then I will do all I can to ensure that your needs are met. However, it is your responsibility to inform me in a timely manner of any request for accommodation.