

UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA



Degree in International Studies - LM-52

Title of the course: Economic Development

Name of the Chair of the course: MAURO SYLOS LABINI

Compulsory/optional course: COMPULSORY

Year of the course and semester: First Term

ECTS credit: 6

Number of hours: 42

General information and objective of the course

This is a course for students who are interested in the challenge posed by world poverty with a special focus on policy evaluation. At the end, students should have a good sense of the main questions asked by scholars interested in fighting poverty, and (hopefully) a few answers as well.

The objective of the course is to enable students to:

- Understand some of the deep causes of persistent poverty using economics principles.
- Disentangle descriptive pieces of evidence from causal ones.
- Assess and evaluate policy interventions aimed at reducing extreme poverty.

Material and structure of the course

The program is made up of the following topics:

- Introduction and basic tools: the poverty trap and randomized controlled trials
- Food and nutrition
- Health
- Education
- Demography and family
- Risk
- Credit

- Saving
- Entrepreneurship
- Institutions

Main text book

- Duflo, E. and A. Banerjee, “Poor economics: a radical rethinking of the way to fight global poverty”. Public Affairs, 2011.

Further readings will be provided during the course (downloadable from e-learning Moodle).

Pre-requisites, exams and assessment

- Students are advised to have a basic knowledge of the main microeconomic concepts but they will be nevertheless discussed during lectures.
- To verify knowledge, students attending classes may take a written mid-term exam that consists in multiple choice questions. To be admitted to the final written exam students must have obtained a grade equal or higher than 15 in the mid-term exam. The final grade will be supplemented by the evaluation of short oral presentations that will be done in class. Oral examination is optional and may be taken provided that the grade in the written exam is equal or higher than 18. The final grade can increase or decrease by 3 points.
- Upon request, Italian students may sit the exam in Italian.

Office hours

Wednesday 16:30-18:30.