

Development Microeconomics Syllabus

Department of Economics

ECON 5000, Fall 2023

Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.

Course Instructor(s)

Name	Email	Office Hours
<i>Daniel Rosenblum</i>	<i>Daniel.Rosenblum@dal.ca</i>	Fridays 11AM-noon or by appointment, C22, 6220 University Ave (Economics Department)
<i>TA: Carlos Arango</i>	<i>carlos.arango@dal.ca</i>	Wednesdays, 5-6PM, McCain 2130

Course Description

This course is one of the core courses of the Master of Development Economics (MDE) degree. This course introduces students to microeconomic models particularly relevant to understanding economics in a developing country context. These models help us to understand some of the difficulties for firms in a developing country and the challenges for individuals and households to emerge from poverty, as well as solutions. Topics may include: theories of the household and fertility, labor market models in a developing country context, the environment and development, land markets, credit markets, human capital, technology, and political economy models.

Course Prerequisites

None

Course Exclusions

None

Student Resources

Please see the course Brightspace page for a list of Faculty of Science Student Resources and Support. Your professor will be available during the semester for office hours. If you are unable to meet your professor during regular office hours, please e-mail him to schedule an appointment. Your professor will only respond to e-mails during normal working hours (8:30AM-4:30PM) on weekdays. Your professor will generally respond to e-mails within 1-2 business days.

Course Structure

Course Delivery

The course will be in-person. Lectures will not be recorded, however previously recorded lectures from last year will be posted to Brightspace.

Lectures

TR 2:35PM - 3:55PM; LSC-C338

Laboratories

None

Tutorials

None

Course Materials

The required textbook is Bardhan, P., & Udry, C. (1999). *Development microeconomics*. OUP Oxford. (Available for purchase at the bookstore, also available at the library). I also recommend *Optimization in Economic Theory* by A.K. Dixit as a general reference for tools in micro theory.

Assessment

Course Assessment:

Component	Weight (% of final grade)	Date
4 Assignments	Each worth 12.5% (50% total)	Sept 22, Oct 6, Oct 20, Nov 20
Paper (3 stages)	The first two stages are worth 10% each, last stage is worth 20% (40% total)	Stage 1: Sept 29 Stage 2: Oct 26 Stage 3: Dec 8
Presentation of Paper (dates may be added, depending on class size)	10%	Nov 21, 23, 28, and 30

Conversion of numerical grades to Final Letter Grades follows the [Dalhousie Grade Scale](#)

A+ (90-100) **B+** (77-79) **F** (<70)
A (85-89) **B** (73-76)
A- (80-84) **B-** (70-72)

Assignments:

There will be 4 mathematical micro theory assignments over the semester. Submit assignments online via Brightspace.

You are allowed to work on the assignments in groups of **up to three** people including yourself. However, you must submit your own individual assignment, which should not be a direct copy of someone else's assignment. Make sure to list the group members you worked with on the assignment. The paper must be completed **individually**.

Paper:

You must write a paper in which you describe your own economic model of individual, household, firm, or government behavior to help explain a topic of interest in economic development. The paper is completed in three stages over the semester so that students receive timely feedback to revise their paper. **Stage 1** is the paper topic (2-3 pages), where students explain their economic topic of interest, its importance, and provide a brief overview of current relevant microeconomic models with a reference list (helpful library resources can be found here: <https://dal.ca.libguides.com/economics>). If relevant, you can include how the topic relates to empirical research as well (e.g. is it trying to help solve a debate/puzzle that has been found empirically?). **Stage 2** is a draft microeconomic model of the economic topic of interest. This may be an extension of an existing model or a completely new model. If the model is an extension of another model, this stage should make it clear what is from the old model and what

is the new contribution. **Stage 3** is the final paper (8-10 pages) explaining the topic, the existing theoretical work, the proposed new model, and its implications/predictions. Stage 3 should also discuss if the model's predictions are empirically testable and any limitations to the model. The three stages of the paper will be graded based on the Paper Grading Rubric. Submit the paper stages online via Brightspace.

Presentation:

During the last few classes, students will give a short presentation of their paper. The presentation should explain the topic, its importance, and how it relates to other microeconomic models or other economic literature, the model, and its implications/predictions. Feedback from the presentations is intended to improve the Final Paper. Presentations will be graded based on the Oral Presentation Grading Rubric.

Course Policies on Missed or Late Academic Requirements

Unless an extension is approved **ahead of time** or there is an emergency, **late work will be given a grade of zero**. Medical notes are **NOT** required for absences and will not be accepted. You also do not need to submit a Student Declaration of Absence form. If you are unable to complete your coursework on time, contact your professor immediately to ask for an extension.

Course Policies related to Academic Integrity

Collaboration Policy

You are allowed to work in groups of up to 3 people for your assignments. However, all assignments must be submitted **individually and should not be a copy of another student's work**. Students should never submit an assignment that is a copy of another student's work.

Plagiarism Detection Software

Assignments containing essay components may be checked for plagiarism with the Urkund software program on Brightspace.

Academic Integrity: Dalhousie University defines plagiarism as “the submission or presentation of the work of another as if it were one's own.” All of the content of your assignments and final exam is expected to be your own thoughts and words unless that content is cited appropriately. You are expected to have completed the Writing Centre Academic Integrity Module (link on Brightspace). If you have any questions about whether you may or may not be violating the university's academic integrity policy, contact your professor before submitting your assignments/paper parts.

AI/ Large Language Models (LLM): Unless you are told to use an AI/LLM program, such as ChatGPT, as part of the instructions of an assignment, **you are not allowed to use AI/LLM programs to assist you in writing your assignments**.

Learning Objectives

Understand, analyze, and evaluate a range of microeconomic models of development through readings, lectures, and assignments.

Apply microeconomic theory by designing your own economic model

Course Content

Tentative Course Content and Outline (subject to change by the professor)

Week 1:

September 5: Introduction

September 7: Micro-Theory Tools Part 1

Week 2:

September 12: Micro-Theory Tools Part 2

September 14: Micro-Theory Tools Part 3 and opportunity to discuss your paper topics.

Week 3: (Assignment #1 Due by 11:59PM, Friday Sept 22)

September 19, 21: Chapter 2: Theory of the household and intra-household bargaining. Unitary vs collective household models.

Week 4: (Paper Stage #1 Due by 11:59PM, Friday Sept 29)

September 26, 28: Chapter 3: Models of fertility and the demographic transition.

Week 5: (Assignment #2 Due by 11:59PM, Friday Oct 6)

October 3, 5: Chapter 4: Labor market models

Week 6:

October 10, 12: Chapter 6: Rural land markets

Week 7: (Assignment #3 Due by 11:59PM, Friday Oct 20)

October 17, 19: Chapter 7: Credit markets

Week 8: (Paper Stage #2 Due by 11:59PM, Friday Oct 26)

October 24, 26: Chapter 8: Risk and insurance

Week 9:

October 31, November 2: Chapter 11: Efficiency/Equity Tradeoffs in Poverty Alleviation

Week 10:**November 7, 9: Chapter 12: Technological Adoption and Learning****No classes November 14, 16 (Fall Study Break)****Week 11: (Assignment #4 Due by 11:59PM, MONDAY Nov 20)****November 21, 23: Paper presentations****Week 12:****November 28, 30: Paper presentations****Final Paper Due by 11:59PM, December 8th.**

University Policies and Statements

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or elders@dal.ca. Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre (https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Fair Dealing Policy

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html

Originality Checking Software

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html

Student Use of Course Materials

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.