

Controversies in Development Research

Lecturer: Björn Vollan, Michael Kirk

Room: t.b.a.

Time & Date: Presentations probably in January 2018

The aim of this seminar is to get an understanding of current debates in development research. Each topic will be presented by two students where the aim is to take a position and make an argument (although this position may not correspond to your opinion). You present a one-sided view as member of a panel discussion and discuss with a proponent of a different view and the audience. Your aim is to convince the audience. Your seminar paper, however, should give a balanced overview about the controversial topic - Weighing pros and cons/different views and where you develop your own opinion. MAIN OBJECTIVE: Use your analytical – both theoretical and empirical – knowledge and skills to make your argument!

Students are required to (a) hand in an essay (4 ECTS) and (b) present this essay and discuss their topic (2 ECTS). For each topic two students will present their essay in a ten minutes presentation followed by a panel discussion (including questions from the audience).

Participants can choose from the topics below or develop an own research topic after consultation with us. Each topic should be discussed by two students.

T1: INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE AND LAND: LAND GRAB OR DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY? [2 PEOPLE] [Kirk]

- Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R., Keeley, J. (2009). Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural Investment and International Land Deals In Africa, IIED/FAO/IFAD, London/Rome.

T2: RANDOMISTAS VERSUS POOR DEVELOPMENT ECONOMISTS: RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIALS AS THE GOLD STANDARD OF DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS OR MISGUIDED CERTAINTY? [2 People] [Vollan]

- Banerjee A., Duflo E. (2009) The Experimental Approach to Development Economics. Annual Review of Economics, 1:151-178.
- Ravallion M. (2009) Should the Randomistas Rule?. The Economists' Voice, 6, February 2009:1-5T3:

T3: THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: MARKET-LED DEVELOPMENT OR INTERVENTIONIST MODELS? [2 people] [Kirk]

- Rodrik, D. (2004) Industrial Policy for the 21st Century. <https://www.sss.ias.edu/files/pdfs/Rodrik/Research/industrial-policy-twenty-first-century.pdf>
- Pack, H. and Saggi, K. (2016) Is There a Case for Industrial Policy? A Critical Survey. World Bank Research Observer 21(2): 267 - 297

T4: NATURAL RESOURCES: CURSE OR BLESSING? [2 people] [Vollan]

- van der Ploeg, F. (2011) Natural Resources: Curse or Blessing? Journal of Economic Literature, Vol. 49, No.2, pp. 366-420

T5: MICROCREDITS: A PANACEA FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION OR YET ANOTHER INEFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT? [2 people] [Vollan]

- Khandker, S. and Samad, H. (2014) Dynamic effects of Microcredit in Bangladesh. Policy Research Working Paper 6821. The World Bank.
- Banerjee, A., Duflo, E., Glennerster, R. and Kinnan, C. (2015) The Miracle of Microfinance? Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation. American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 7(1): 22-532

T6: DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS: GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS OR ELITE CAPTURE? [2 people] [Kirk]

- Bardhan, P. and Mookherjee, D. (2005) Decentralization, Corruption and Government Accountability: An Overview. Chapter 6 In “International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption” (Editor: Susan Rose-Ackerman), Edward Elgar Publishers. pages: 161-188. http://www.lcis.com.tw/paper_store/paper_store/Edward%20Elgar%20-%20Inter_T-2014124212462-201412443258515.pdf#page=2007

T7: HOW TO DELIVER AID: (A) SEARCHERS OR (B) PLANNERS? [2 people] [Vollan]

- Easterly, W (2006) Planners vs. Searchers in Foreign Aid, Asian Development Review 23(1):1-35.
- Sachs, J. (2007) Breaking the Poverty Trap. Targeted Investments can Trump a Region’s Geographic Disadvantages. Scientific American, September 2007: 40-41

T8: CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (A) TRADE-OFF OR (B) WIN-WIN SITUATION? [2 people] [Vollan]

- Dercon, S. (2012) Is Green Growth Good for The Poor? Policy Research Working Paper 6231. The World Bank, Washington DC, United States.
- Hallegatte, Stéphane; Heal, Geoffrey M.; Fay, Marianne; Treguer, David (2011): From Growth to Green Growth- A Framework. Policy Research Working Paper 5872. The World Bank, Washington Dc, United States.

T9: CAPITAL MARKET LIBERALIZATION: FIGHTING POVERTY OR CREATING POVERTY? [2 people] [Kirk]

- Arestis, P., Caner, A. (2010). Capital account liberalisation and poverty: how close is the link?. Cambridge Journal of Economics, 34(2): 295-323.
- Kose, M. A., Prasad, E. et al. (2009). Financial globalization: a reappraisal. IMF Staff Papers, 56(1): 8-62.

T10: FAIR TRADE: AN ALTERNATIVE FOR EXPORT-LED DEVELOPMENT OR (B) MISSING THE TARGET? [2 people] [Kirk]

- de Janvry, A., McIntosh, C., Sadoulet, E. (2015). Fair Trade and Free Entry: Can a Disequilibrium Market Serve as a Development Tool?. Forthcoming in Review of Economics and Statistics.
- Leclair, M.S. (2002). Fighting the Tide: Alternative Trade Organizations in the Era of Global Free Trade. World Development, 30(6): 949-58. Sachs, Jeffrey D. "From millennium development goals to sustainable development goals." The Lancet 379.9832 (2012): 2206-2211

After being eligible for the course you can send me an email (bjoern.vollan@wiwi.uni-marburg.de) with your preferred two topics. Allocation of topics will be done according to "first come first served" criteria. The kick-off meeting will be at the 5th of July at 10:00. The seminar will be held on two days in January 2017. The exact date can be discussed during the kick off seminar.