

YORK UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts
Department of Economics

Economic Growth ECON5750
Winter 2006

This version from 19 December 2005 – may be updated

Instructor: Nils-Petter (Nippe) Lagerlöf

E-mail: lagerlof@econ.yorku.ca

Office: Vari Hall 1056

Home page: <http://www.arts.yorku.ca/econ/lagerloef/HP/>

Lecture hours: Mondays 14:30-17.30 in SSB S124

General course description: See slides on the course Web site.

Teaching Assistants: None

Office hours: There are no regular office hours for this course. To make an appointment to see me send an e-mail (address above) and state clearly and in detail what the problem is. If you need to ask something short and practical you may ask me in class.

Textbook: There is a recommended, but not required, textbook: Weil, D., 2005, Economic Growth, Pearson Addison-Wesley. This is a great starting point to come up with ideas on what to write about, and also to find references for further readings.

Exams: There are no exams; this is a 100% paper course.

Group work: You may write a paper jointly with other students. A reasonable limit is maybe 4 students, or less. If you work in groups all group members will be given the same grade.

Grading: The details will be announced in class and/or in other documentation on my Web site in due time.

Both the paper and other material handed in (such as computer code) is evaluated. What constitutes a good paper is measured not only by how well it is written but also by (among many other things) how you set up the model (if any); what word processing software you use; what other software you use (e.g., to run regressions); and how well you write tables and create graphics.

I practice a “compressed” grading scheme, so that it is very hard to get an A+ but much easier to reach the lower A regions; I expect no one to fail, at least if handing in something readable.

It is also very important to note that you are being tested on your *ability to write your paper independently*. That is, you are rewarded for being able to solve the problems that you encounter on the way. If you ask for help too much your grade may suffer even if the end result (that is, the paper) is good. However, the feedback and the answers you may get by presenting your preliminary work in class does not count as asking for help, and neither is the input you may get from your peers. Also, short and clarifying questions right before, during, or after class are OK. What I am trying to avoid is the type of double-teaching I had to do last year, when I had long sessions after the regular class in my office for individual students.

Class presentations: There will be no assignments, but there is an opportunity to present your preliminary work in class. No one will be forced to do this but it is a great opportunity to get feedback on your work, and it is also terribly good practice.

Time plan: The first half of this course I will go through the slides from previous years, and then I may present some of my own ongoing work. Along the way I will suggest ideas for papers. In the last class before the second half of the course I will give a set of hands-on tips on what to think about when writing a paper in economics. In the second half of the course you get to present your own preliminary work.

Seminars: Whenever there are Monday seminars these replace the class. I also recommend that you attend other seminars – they give you an idea of what format papers and presentations usually take.

Note on academic integrity: Conduct that violates the ethical or legal standards of the University community or of one’s program or specialization may result in serious consequences. You should look at the SENATE POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY found in the following locations: The New Students’ Handbook (pp. 93-102) and on the Web:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhonesty.html>