Economic Development in Brazil

University of California, Riverside
Economics 189

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4102 Sproul Hall
Tel.: 827-1572
Office Hours: Tuesday 10am-12pm

Course Description:
This course analyzes the economic development of Brazil. Brazil is the largest country in Latin America, accounting for approximately one third of its population and income. It has become an important international actor, participating actively in the World Trade Organization, the G-20 (a group of 20 large countries that promotes policy coordination for economic stability and growth), and is one of the so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). Topics covered in the course include historical legacies, import substitution industrialization, the debt crisis and hyperinflation, the persistence of poverty and inequality, the agricultural sector and land reform, and the environmental impact of development. The course places current problems in an historical perspective and uses economic analysis to understand the choices as well as the constraints that Brazilian policy makers face.

Requirements and Grading:
• Daily clicker questions based on assigned readings 10%
• Section attendance (5%) and presentations (5%) 10%
• One 5 page paper (to be done in groups of 2, due on March 7) 20%
• Mid-term exam 25%
• Final exam 35%

Readings: Students are expected to read one chapter or article per class, and to come to class prepared to discuss the material.

Daily clicker questions: I will ask at least one multiple choice question in each class related to the assigned reading for the day. Your two lowest scores will be dropped.

Paper (to be done in groups of two): The paper will address a particular policy in a given period. It should review the evidence on that policy, and make an argument for how the policy could be (or could have been) improved. Examples include the Real stabilization plan, inflation targeting, state-run enterprises during the ISI period, trade policy, social security policy, education policies, anti-poverty policies, land reform policy, etc. Topics must be approved in advance.

Discussion section: I will run a discussion section so that we can have an opportunity to discuss the material. I will not lecture. Student presentations will sometimes be made. Attendance is required, and you must bring a question with your name and student I.D. on it.

Exams: The mid-term exam is tentatively scheduled for February 11 (Tue of week 6). The final exam will be cumulative, and will be held on Saturday, March 15 at 3pm. Note that this is immediately after classes end.
**Academic Honesty:** We will discuss appropriate ways for referencing the material used to write the paper. Any student found committing plagiarism, not handing in original work of his/her own, or cheating, will be given an F in the course and will be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

**Laptops and cells phones:** My experience is that students overestimate their ability to multi-task, e.g. surf the net and pay attention in class. For this reason I will enforce the following policy: No laptops, cells phones, or texting in class.

**Readings:**

*Required:*

*Suggested:*
Course Outline and Reading List
(Required =*)

1. Introduction to Brazil: “The Land of the Future”
Suggested:

2. The Colonial Period and the Nineteenth Century
Suggested:

3 and 4. Import Substitution Industrialization in the 20th Century
Suggested:

5 and 6. The Debt Crisis of the 1980s and Runaway Inflation
Suggested:

*Suggested:

9 and 10. Brazil Under Lula (2003-10): Economic Orthodoxy vs. Social Development

*Suggested:

Mid-term exam: Tentatively scheduled for Feb. 11.

11 and 12. The Recent Decline in Poverty and Inequality


*Suggested:


13. Conditional Cash Transfers: Bolsa familia

*Suggested:

14. The Informal Sector

Suggested:

15. Education

Suggested:

16 and 17. Agriculture, Rural Poverty and Land Reform
*Helfand and Pereira, “Determinants of Rural Poverty and Implications for Public Policy in Brazil”

Suggested:

18. Energy and Development

Suggested:

19. The Environmental Impact of Development

Suggested:
20. Reflections on a Century of Economic Development in Brazil

*Suggested: