Syllabus for Ec721a

Fall 2014 Boston University

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DEVELOPMENT

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Course website: http://people.bu.edu/dilipm/ec721/721hmpg.html

This is the first part of Ec721, which will focus on analytical approaches to the political economy of development. Topics included are theories of political competition, interest groups, corruption, clientelism and dynamics of political institutions. The focus is mainly on theoretical models but some applications will be described. The second half of this course to be taught by Professor Newman will deal with the role of market frictions in development. Ec721 serves as a prelude to Ec 722, which will focus on empirical analysis of development.


Office Hours: M 2-3.30, W 330-5 (Room 500a, 264 Bay State Road).

Prerequisites: First Year PhD courses in micro and macro (Ec701-704) or equivalent

Exams and Grading: There will be a midterm exam sometime after Oct 16.

Problem Set Sessions: We will have some problem set sessions outside class hours (most likely on W630-730), where I will ask you to work out the problems on the board.

You are expected to know and understand the provisions of the CAS Academic Conduct Code. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean’s Office.

Papers marked * are core readings which will be covered in detail in the lectures. Non-starred articles are supplementary.

TOPICS AND READINGS

Political Competition (Sept 2,4,9,11,16)

Median Voter Theory
*T Persson and G Tabellini, Political Economics, Chapter 3.


Citizen Candidate Theory

*T Besley and S Coate, “An Economic Model of Representative Democracy,” QJE (1997), 112(1), 85-114; and “Sources of Inefficiency in a Representative Democracy”, AER 1998

Probabilistic Voting and Interest Groups


Clientelism and Vote-Buying (Sept 18,23)


Corruption, Ethnicity and Politics (Sep 25,30)


*K Munshi and M Rosenzweig, “Networks, Commitment and Competence: Caste in Indian Politics,” working paper, Brown University Department of Economics.

Institutional Path-Dependence and Persistence (Oct 2,7,9,16)


