Latin America is very fond of the word “hope”. We like to be called the “continent of hope”. Candidates for deputy, senator, president, call themselves “candidates of hope”. This hope is really something like a promise of heaven, an IOU whose payment is always being put off. It is put off until the next legislative campaign, until next year, until the next century.

Pablo Neruda

1 Overview of the seminar

This seminar aims to give Master Students an overview of relevant issues of economic development in Latin America. The topics which are to be covered are categorized in these two broad sections: (i) Economic history and development paradigms and (ii) Social policies.

2 Format

- This course is designed as a “block seminar”. Students have to write a term-paper and present its main content in a final presentation.

- Students have to choose a topic in agreement with the Lecturer. They can decide on a subject from the list below or propose an alternative issue which meets his or her own interests.
• The paper must have maximum 25 pages and contain two main sections: (i) deep overview of the particular topic, including a general literature review; and (ii) in-depth analysis of one technical paper or technical literature. For the latter, the related “state of the art” econometric analysis or theoretical modeling must be explained and described for the particular context of the topic.

• While producing new results in the term-paper with data and/or models is not required, it would be highly appreciated.

3 Requirements

It is assumed that students have prior knowledge of econometrics at the level of “Fundamentals of Econometrics”.

4 Evaluation

• Students successfully finishing the seminar will be awarded with 6 credit points.

• Grading will be based on the term-paper and the final presentation.

• Active participation in the presentation of other students will also be considered in the final grade.

• There will be no final exam.

5 Topics and readings

5.1 General readings

An updated general overview of the topics covered in the seminar can be found in:


5.2 Topics

SECTION I: ECONOMIC HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT PARADIGMS IN LATIN AMERICA

TOPIC 1 - Colonial institutions and development


TOPIC 2 - Import-Substituting Industrialization (ISI) in Latin America


TOPIC 3 - The big debt crisis in 1980s


**TOPIC 4 - Structural reforms**


**Other topics**

● Monetary policy and inflation control.

● Economic policies after independence.

● Effects of North American interventionism.

● Long term economic analysis (large time series).

● The effect of civil wars on economic outcomes.
SECTION II: SOCIAL POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICA

TOPIC 5 - Education Policy

TOPIC 6 - Health-care Policy

TOPIC 7 - Conditional cash transfer programs
TOPIC 8 - Environmental policy and natural resources


Other topics

- Rural development policies.
- Trade policy.
- R&D policies.
- Pension systems.
- Social policies towards indigenous people.