Long neglected by development economists, ethnicity has emerged in the past several decades an important variable in accounts of why some people, communities, and countries are rich and some people, communities, and countries are poor. Yet the way in which “ethnicity” enters analyses of development varies considerably from study to study. Drawing on disparate research in political science, economics, anthropology, history and social psychology, this advanced seminar seeks to highlight these differences with the goal of providing a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the ways in which ethnicity may affect people’s income and wellbeing.

REQUIREMENTS

There are three principal requirements for the course. First, students are required to attend all class meetings, come to seminar having read and thought about the assigned materials for the week, and participate actively in class discussions. To help achieve this goal, all students are required to prepare by the Monday evening before our weekly meeting two thoughtful and analytical questions relevant to the week’s readings. The questions should be emailed to me. I will grade each set of questions as “adequate” or “not adequate,” and the student’s performance on this assignment will be factored into his/her overall participation grade. As a way of opening up discussion, students will be asked to volunteer to raise issues contained in their individual questions.

As part of their general participation grade, students will also each sign up to be a “resource” for one of the Vox summaries that we will read during the quarter. Vox is a web site that provides short digests of cutting edge research in economics. To allow us to cover a larger number of topics and issues, I have assigned several of these summaries in lieu of the full papers on which they are based. Being a “resource” means reading the full paper and being in a position to answer questions about the details of the arguments and analysis that underlie the Vox summary.

The second and third requirements are a pair of 5-6 page paper/exams that respond to a prompt that will be distributed in class. The prompt for the first paper/exam will be distributed at the end of class on May 15 and will be due at 5pm on May 18. The prompt for the second paper/exam will be distributed at the end of our last class on June 5 and will be due at 5pm on June 11.

The weight accorded these three assignments will be as follows: participation in seminar discussions (including analytical questions and your role as a Vox “resource”) (40%), short papers/exams (30% each).
READINGS

The readings for each week are challenging. Students will not be responsible for understanding all of the economic modeling and econometrics. But they will be responsible for grasping the intuitions behind the arguments that are presented and the methodologies that are employed to test them. Doing the reading for each week’s seminar will take time, and students should allocate plenty of time to completing them.

Copies of all seminar readings have been posted to the course website. Copyright rules permit you to download, print and use the materials that have been posted to the course website for your own educational use only.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

April 3: Logistics and Overview of the Course; the Sources of Economic Development

Part I: Ethnic Diversity

April 10: Ethnic Diversity at the Country Level


April 17: Ethnic Diversity at the Community Level


April 24: Ethnic Diversity at the Firm Level


Part II: Beyond Diversity

May 1: Ethnicity and Trade


May 8: Ethnicity, Credit, Investment and Insurance


May 15: Ethnicity and Conflict


May 22: The Content of Ethnicity: Beliefs, Practices and Cultural Prohibitions


May 29: Migration, Diversity and Development


June 5: Miscellaneous Papers on Ethnicity and Development


