

Economic Growth

Summer term 2026

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Bitzer

Course meeting time and place:

Lecture: Tuesday 10.15-11.45 o'clock in room A05 0-055.
Starts: 7th April 2026, ends: 7th July 2026.

Seminar (block course): Discussion of topics and date: Tuesday, 8th April 2025, during the first lecture.

Content of the module:

The module consists of a lecture and a seminar. "Why are we so rich and they so poor?" In the module the theoretical models, the empirical evidence and the strategies applied or discussed by politics to reach sustainable economic growth are introduced and discussed.

Structure of the course and prerequisites

The lecture is mainly devoted to the basic theories of economic growth and follows largely the book of Charles Jones (2024) in which they are presented. In the seminar the empirical findings on a broad range of determinants of economic growth are discussed. Each student has to present an essay on one indicator that either determines or is determined by economic growth. The indicators are distributed during the first lecture. Some examples can be found below. The course covers theoretical models and empirical analysis, for which a basic knowledge of mathematics and econometrics is required.

Grading

The grade of the course is based on a portfolio exam. This consists of three parts: An essay (30%), a short presentation (30%) and a short test (40%). Each mark

of these three parts add to the final mark, with the share given in the parentheses. Please note that you have to pass each part of the portfolio to pass the course!

Literature

Jones, Charles I. and Dietrich Vollrath (2024): Introduction to Economic Growth. Fourth Edition. W. W. Norton, New York/London.

Further literature on economic growth

Acemoglu, Daron (2009): Introduction to Modern Economic Growth. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Aghion, Philippe, and Peter W. Howitt (1998): Endogenous Growth Theory. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Barro, Robert J., Xavier Sala I. Martin (2004): Economic Growth: Second Edition. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Easterly, William (2006): The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and so Little Good. Oxford University Press.

Landes, David S. (1999): The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor. W. W. Norton, New York/London.

Helpman, Elhanan (2010): The Mystery of Economic Growth. Belknap Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Warsh, David (2006): Knowledge and the Wealth of Nations: A Story of Economic Discovery. Norton, New York, N.Y.

Weil, David N. (2013): Economic Growth. Third revised edition. Pearson/Addison Wesley, Boston et al.

Literature on the mathematical background

Chiang, Alpha C. and Kevin Wainwright (2005): Fundamental Methods of Mathematical Economics, 4th edition, McGraw-Hill: New York.

Sydsaeter, Knut and Peter Hammond (2016): Essential Mathematics for Economic Analysis, 5th revised edition, Prentice Hall: Harlow.

Sydsaeter, Knut, Peter Hammond, Atle Seierstand und Arne Strøm (2008): Further Mathematics for Economic Analysis, 2nd edition, Prentice Hall: Harlow.

Tietze, Jürgen (2013): Einführung in die angewandte Wirtschaftsmathematik, 17. Auflage, Springer Spektrum.

Possible indicators:

1. Foreign Aid
2. Human Capital
3. Birth Control
4. Public Debt
5. Corruption
6. Culture
7. Ethnic Diversity
8. Ecological Devastation
9. Domestic Income Distribution
10. Income Distribution
11. Poverty
12. Green Growth
13. Subjective Wellbeing
14. Demography
15. Sustainability
16. Institutions
17. Democracy

18. Climate Change

19. Conflict

20. International Trade

I am open to proposals of further indicators.