COURSE OUTLINE

Class schedule: Wednesday, 2:30 to 5:30
Room FSS 4014

Professor’s office hours: Monday, 4:00 to 6:00
Office FSS 9008
Phone (613) 562-5800 ext. 4897

E-mail: paul.makdissi@uottawa.ca

Homepage: https://sites.google.com/site/pmakdissi/home

Any questions sent by email should receive a response within two business days or during the following class if taken place within the 48 hours following receipt of the email. Note that the professor reserves the right not to answer an email if the level of language used is inadequate.

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Major domestic problems of economic development. Topics may include employment, income distribution, choice of technology, sectoral allocation of resources, human resources development, and domestic environment issues.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

Introduce students to the empirical measurement of wellbeing in both income and non-income dimensions. Some methodologies of incidence analysis of public policies on wellbeing as well as regression modeling of inequality measures will also be presented.

TEACHING METHODS

The course has two parts. In the first part of the semester, the course will take the form of lectures. In the second part, students will play a more active role in presenting papers on distributional topics.
ASSESSMENT METHODS

Midterm in-class exam

The material of this exam will cover the theoretical concepts presented in the lectures. The exam consists of 3 sections. A student wishing to use the washroom during the first hour of the exam has to hand back section 1. A student wishing to use the washroom during the second hour of the exam has to hand back section 1 and 2. A student cannot hand back section 3 before the end of the second hour. It is forbidden to use the washroom during the third hour of the exam. The exams takes place on March 13. Grades will be available on March 15 to allow one week prior to the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty.

An important portion (60%) of the evaluation, including the final exam, will be on the research component of this course.

Oral presentation

The student should present a published paper in class. These oral presentations will take place from March 20 to April 3. The student has to submit the slides of the presentation by email 24 hours before the presentation. Marking will be based on the oral presentation, the quality of the slides and the ability to answer question that the professor will ask on the paper.

Short reports on papers

The student is responsible for reading each paper before the oral presentation in class. The student has to write a one-pager summarizing and criticizing the findings of one of the papers to be presented during the next lecture (except for the lecture where she or he is presenting). Each of these one-pagers is due at the beginning of the lecture, before the oral presentation of the paper.

Final exam (take-home):

Part 1: Empirical application

The empirical application will be based on a subset of the Malawi Integrated Household Survey 2010-2011. This data set and the exams questions will be made available to the students on March 13. The student will have to apply some of the tools presented in class to the data set. The presentation of the results should take the form of properly built tables (not just the Stata output) and discussion. The student should send by email the results of the empirical application AND the Stata do file before April 26 at midnight.

Part 2: Literature review and research proposal

The student should write a literature review and a research proposal. The idea is to extend the paper chosen for the oral presentation and frame this extension into the economics literature. This research proposal is also due on April 26 before midnight and should also be submitted by email.
Components of Final Mark

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation format</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm in-class exam</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>March 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
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<td>Short reports on papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final take-home exam</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>April 26</td>
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COURSE OUTLINE

PART 1: BACKGROUND

1. What is social justice?
   1. Introduction
   2. Procedural justice
   3. Utilitarianism and welfare economics
   4. Rawl's *Theory of Justice*
   5. Post-Rawlsian political philosophy

2. Introduction to the empirical measurement of well-being
   1. Survey issues
   2. Income versus consumption
   3. Price variability
   4. Household heterogeneity
   5. Continuous distributions
   6. Discrete distributions
   7. Cardinal versus ordinal comparisons

3. Measuring social welfare, inequality and poverty
   1. The Lorenz curve and the Gini index
   2. Social welfare and inequality
   3. Poverty indices
   4. Poverty and inequality

4. Stochastic dominance for inequality, poverty and welfare
   1. Ordering distributions
   2. Ethical judgments
   3. Stochastic dominance and poverty
   4. Stochastic dominance and social welfare
   5. Lorenz dominance
   6. An illustration: Poverty in Lebanon
5. Statistical inference for distributional analysis
   1. Why statistical methods?
   2. Inference for indices
   3. Stochastic dominance

PART 2: TOPICS FROM THE LITERATURE

6. Poverty and inequality measurement in non-income dimensions

7. Regression methods
   1. Some econometric background

8. Marginal approach to policy reforms

9. Causality in a distributional framework
   1. Some background on Rubin’s causality model


Policy on language quality and late submissions

Class attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course.

You will also be judged on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes such as spelling, syntax, punctuation, inappropriate use of terms, etc. You may be penalized up to 15%, to the professor’s discretion.

Late submissions are not tolerated. Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. There will be a penalty for late submissions. University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate.

Students who are excused for missing an exam will be required to write a deferred exam, except where the professor offers a re-weighting scheme which applies to the student’s case. Professors may decline to offer a deferred exam and instead re-weight the remaining pieces of work only if (i) the re-weighted scheme is indicated on the syllabus and (ii) it respects both the 25 percent rule and the final exam rule.

DFR forms must be completed for both midterms and final exams. The form can be obtained at https://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/students/undergraduate-forms. Once completed, the form with supporting documentation (ex. medical certificate) will automatically be sent to the academic unit which offers the course. The request must be completed within five working days of the exam and must respect all the conditions of Academic Regulation 19.5 (https://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-9-evaluation-of-student-learning).

The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Reasons such as travel, jobs, or any misreading of the examination timetable are not acceptable.

A penalty of 5% will be given for each subsequent day following the due date (weekends not included). This goes for assignments submitted through e-mail as well, and, in this case, the time that the e-mail was received will be counted as the time of submission of the document.

We suggest that you advise your professor as early as possible if a religious holiday or a religious event will force you to be absent during an evaluation.

The University of Ottawa does not tolerate any form of sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to any act of a sexual nature committed without consent, such as rape, sexual harassment or online harassment. The University, as well as student and employee associations, offers a full range of resources and services allowing members of our community to receive information and confidential assistance and providing for a procedure to report an incident or make a complaint. For more information, visit www.uOttawa.ca/sexual-violence-support-and-prevention
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**Resources for you**

**FACULTY MENTORING CENTRE** - [http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/mentoring](http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/mentoring)

The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well-being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the Mentoring Centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Mentoring Centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older students may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students are able to voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

**ACADEMIC WRITING HELP CENTRE** - [http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/](http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/)
At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- Master the written language of your choice
- Expand your critical thinking abilities
- Develop your argumentation skills
- Learn what the expectations are for academic writing


There are many reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Study skills counselling

**HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE** - [https://www.uottawa.ca/respect/en](https://www.uottawa.ca/respect/en)

**Mandate:**
To provide leadership in the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies, procedures and practices on diversity, inclusion, equity, accessibility and the prevention of harassment and discrimination.

**Contact information:**
1 Stewart St. (Main Floor – Room 121) - Tel.: 613-562-5222 / Email: respect@uOttawa.ca

**ACCESS SERVICE** - [http:// sass.uottawa.ca/en/access](http://sass.uottawa.ca/en/access)

The University has always strived to meet the needs of individuals with learning disabilities or with other temporary or permanent functional disabilities (hearing/visual impairments, sustained health issues, mental health problems), and the campus community works collaboratively so that you can develop and maintain your autonomy, as well as reach your full potential throughout your studies. You can call on a wide range of services and resources, all provided with expertise, professionalism and confidentiality.

If barriers are preventing you from integrating into university life and you need adaptive measures to progress (physical setting, arrangements for exams, learning strategies, etc.), contact the Access Service right away:

- in person at the University Centre, Room 339
- online
- by phone at 613-562-5976

**Deadlines for submitting requests for adaptive measures during exams**

- midterms, tests, deferred exams: seven business days before the exam, test or other written evaluation (excluding the day of the exam itself
- final exams:
  - November 15 for the fall session
  - March 15 for the winter session
  - Seven business days before the date of the exam for the spring/summer session (excluding the day of the exam itself).

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE** - [http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/](http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/)

Career Development Centre offers various services and resources in career development to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of
**Beware of Academic Fraud!**

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. Anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to severe academic sanctions.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

- engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
- presenting falsified research data;
- handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
- submitting the same assignment in more than one course, without the written consent of the professors concerned.

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

In cases where students are unsure whether they are at fault, it is their responsibility to consult the “Writing and Style Guide for University Papers and Assignments.” It can be found at: [http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/writing-style-guide](http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/writing-style-guide)

Persons who have committed or attempted to commit (or have been accomplices to) academic fraud will be penalized. Here are some examples of the academic sanctions, which can be imposed:

- a grade of “F” for the assignment or course in question;
- an additional program requirement of between 3 and 30 credits;
- suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.


and Academic Integrity Website (Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost) [http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/home.php](http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/home.php)