

**IP631: Economic Policy & Human Security**  
Sara Rose Taylor (staylor@balsillieschool.ca)  
Spring 2017

**Class hours:** Wednesday 2:30pm – 5:20pm

**Class location:** BSIA 1-32

**Office hours:** Wednesday 5:30pm – 6:30pm

**Office location:** TBA

**Course description**

This course focuses on the use of economic analysis in understanding key issues in human security, including conflict, critical goods, and food security.

**Learning objectives**

1. Define key policy issues with a focus on quantifiable outcome measures.
2. Apply economic theory in the development of policy design and evaluation.
3. Critically assess existing policy options and develop policy alternatives that incorporate an understanding of issues of evaluation.
4. Effectively incorporate empirical evidence to support a policy argument.
5. Apply and interpret regression analysis in international policy analysis.
6. Write effectively on economic issues for a policy audience.
7. Present comfortably and with authority on key policy issues.

**Assessment**

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Civil conflict	Article review – presentation	5%	May 24
	Article review – written	10%	May 26
Provision of critical goods	Issue review – presentation	10%	June 14
	Issue review – written	15%	June 16
Guest speaker	1 page write up of possibilities & challenges	10%	July 17
Food security	Policy brief – presentation	15%	July 26
	Policy brief – written	25%	July 28
Participation		10%	

Please see page 4 for assignment descriptions. Further instructions will be posted on My Learning Space.

## Course plan

### Civil conflict

May 3: Economic approaches to civil conflict

- Blattman & Miguel (2010). "Civil war" *Journal of Economic Literature*
- Collier et al (2009) "Beyond greed and grievance" *Oxford Economic Papers*

May 10: Statistical analysis of conflict

- Miguel et al (2004) "Economic shocks and civil conflict" *Journal of Political Economy*
- Page Fortna (2004) "Does peacekeeping keep peace?" *International Studies Quarterly*
- Ward et al (2010) "The perils of policy by p-values" *Journal of Peace Research*

*May 17: no class due to international law summer school*

May 24: New research in the economics of civil conflict

#### Presentations

### Provision of critical goods

May 31: Measurement and policy design

- Gertler et al (2011) "Impact evaluation in practice" chapters 1-3
- Easterly (2009) "How the MDGs are unfair to Africa" *World Development*
- Fukuda-Parr et al (2014) "The power of numbers" *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*
- Miguel & Kremer (2004) "Worms" *Econometrica*

June 7: Government provision of critical goods

- Bardhan (2002) "Decentralization of governance and development" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*
- Devarajan & Reinikka (2002) "Making services work for poor people" *Journal of African Economies*
- Jackson (2013) "Diversity and the distribution of public goods in sub-Saharan Africa" *Journal of African Economies*

June 14: Critical issues in human security

#### Presentations

*June 21: no class due to Ottawa trip*

### Food security and foreign aid

June 28: Measuring malnutrition

- Barrett (2010) "Measuring food insecurity" *Science*
- Black et al (2008) "Maternal and child undernutrition" *The Lancet*

- de Onis et al (2011) “Prevalence and trends of stunting among pre-school children, 1990-2020” *Public Health Nutrition*
- FAO (2015) “The state of food insecurity in the world”

July 5: Foreign aid policy

- Burnside & Dollar (2000) “Aid, policies and growth” *American Economic Review*
- Easterly (2003) “Can foreign aid buy growth?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*
- Global Affairs Canada’s [Aid Effectiveness Agenda](#) (read this webpage and linked documentation on Canada’s priorities)
- Qian (2015) “Making progress on foreign aid” *Annual Review of Economics*

July 12: guest speaker

July 19: International food policy and aid

- Headey & Fan (2008) “Anatomy of a crisis” *Journal of Agricultural Economics*
- Hoddinott et al (2013) “Impact evaluation of cash and food transfer in Zinder, Niger” *World Food Programme report*
- Kirwan & McMillan (2007) “Food aid and poverty” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*
- Gentilini (2016) “Revisiting the ‘cash versus food’ debate: New evidence for an old puzzle?” *World Bank Research Observer*

July 26: Foreign aid and malnutrition

**Presentations**

## **Assignment descriptions**

*Article review:* Students will work in groups to present a review of a recent empirical paper analyzing civil conflict. Groups will be assigned during the first class (May 3). Article choice will be available from May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>. A written component is also required.

*Issue review:* Students will present an analysis of the key measurement and evaluation issues associated with policy design in the provision of a good critical to addressing human insecurity (other than food). Again, a written component is also required.

*Challenges and possibilities:* Following the guest speaker presentation on July 12, students will submit a brief 1-page analysis of the challenges and possibilities for an economic/quantitative approach to the issue presented by the guest speaker. This will assess the ability to create linkages with the course.

*Policy brief:* Each student will complete a statistical analysis of child malnutrition in a different country, and then use the findings from that analysis to develop a policy brief on how Canadian foreign aid could be directed to the issue. Country selection will occur in late June. In addition to a written brief, students will also present their work.

*Participation:* Students are expected to arrive in class on time, have completed the assigned readings, and actively participate in the class discussion.

## **Selected course policies**

*Electronic devices:* Mobile devices, specifically laptops and tablets, may be used in this course for educational purposes only (i.e., directly related to the course). At times, I may ask that all devices be set aside for all or part of the class/course.

*Late assignments:* For presentations, students are expected to be ready to present at the beginning of the relevant class period. Students that are not ready to present without an acceptable reason will receive a 0 for the assignment. For written submissions, assignments are due at the end of the day listed on the syllabus and are to be submitted via the My Learning Space DropBox. Late submissions of written assignments will be penalized at a rate of 25% per day.

*Regrade requests:* Regrade requests on any item of assessment will only be considered if submitted within one week of receipt of the mark for that item, and accompanied by a written explanation of the substantive grounds for the request. The entire assignment will be regraded and the final mark could increase or decrease.

*Academic misconduct:* You are reminded that the University will levy sanctions on students who are found to have committed, or have attempted to commit, acts of academic or research misconduct. You are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing such offenses, and to take responsibility for your academic actions. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalty, please consult the relevant section of the Undergraduate Academic Calendar. If you need clarification of aspects of University policy on Academic and Research Misconduct, please consult your instructor. Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.

*Accessible learning:* Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact WLU's Accessible Learning Centre for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.