



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

EHA126 The Great Divergence: Historical patterns of modern economic growth, 7.5 credits

The Great Divergence: Historiska mönster av modern ekonomisk tillväxt, 7,5
högskolepoäng
Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Economy and Society on 2019-05-14 and was last revised on 2022-11-08 to be valid from 2023-01-16, spring semester of 2023.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Economy and Society

Position in the educational system

Main field of studies

Economic History

Specialization

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

Eligible for admission is the person who meets the requirements for a bachelor's degree of 180 credits, including a bachelor's thesis of 15 credits Furthermore is required

language proficiencies are required equivalent to English 6/English B or a corresponding result in an internationally accepted test, for example TOEFL, IELTS.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

Be able to summarise the most relevant literature regarding deviant growth pattern

and living standard all over the world.

Compare pattern of socio-economic and demographic development in the higher and lower income countries of today from a historical perspective.

Competence and skills

Be able to understand the issues around measurement and timing of phenomena that concern "The Great Divergence"

Show the possibilities and the limitations for different measurements that are used in the literature to compare living standard and their divergence over time and space.

Evaluate the pros and cons of different sources that are used in the literature to examine the debate about "The Great Divergence"

Judgement and approach

- Being able to understand and reflect upon the issues brought forth by diverging income distribution and living standards both in the past and nowadays

The course is sustainability-related, which means that at least one of the learning outcomes clearly shows that the course content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria.

Course content

The course centres around the widening gap in income per capita between today's higher and lower income countries throughout history. This phenomenon has become widely known as "The Great Divergence" and has kick-started an important debate consisting on how we measure divergence, when it started, and why it happened among other issues.

The aim of this course is to employ a historical lens to examine these diverging patterns of economic and demographic development across the world and over time.

Furthermore, the course intends to discuss the diverging strands of literature that have emerged on the topic.

Throughout the course students will confront a range of theoretical and empirical perspectives on the causes and consequences of modern economic growth from an economic historical perspective. The course will delve in questions as: what is the Great Divergence debate about? How do we measure divergence across countries? When did divergence occur and, more importantly, why? We will examine in detail how the idea about "The Great Divergence" has been evolved over time, the problems encountered when measuring historical living standards, as well as the debate on when exactly the phenomenon began. The course will then proceed by examining the causes most often put forth to explain the Great Divergence; institutions (including colonialism), culture, geography, ecology.

Form of teaching

The structure of the course consists of seminars, lectures and recorded lectures. During the course, the students work with written assignments to be discussed at seminars. Seminars have compulsory attendance.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

The intended learning outcomes of the course will be assessed through written assignments, case studies and seminars. Active participation in the seminars is a requirement in the course.

If a student has failed the same examined element on two occasions and wishes to change examiner before the next examination session, such a request must be submitted to the department in writing, and it will be granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of Higher Education Ordinance).

In cases where a course has been discontinued or has undergone major changes, the student should normally be guaranteed access to at least three examination sessions (including the regular examination session) during a period of at least one year, but at the most two years after the course has been discontinued/changed. In regards to internships/placements, the equivalent applies but limited to only one additional examination session.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Excellent (A), Very good (B), Good (C), Satisfactory (D), Sufficient (E) and Fail (F).

To pass the course (A-E), at least a passed result in all assessing components of the course is required. The grade in the course is based on a weighted average of achieved results in the examinations.

Course evaluation

At the end of the course, a course evaluation is carried out. Evaluation results and any changes in the course structure should be communicated to both the students who completed the evaluation and to the students who will start the course.