

Syllabus

Development Economics in Dialogue: Debates and Perspectives

Bachelor seminar B.WIWI-VWL.0038

Summer semester 2026

(as of March 10, 2026)

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1. General information

1.1 Course content

This student-led seminar engages with current debates in development economics and encourages critical reflection on key questions and approaches within the field. Students will first develop a concept for a thematic panel, take responsibility for its organization, and actively contribute to the moderation of a panel discussion on September 12th, 2026, during the 3rd Homecoming of the Göttingen School of Development Economics (September 11th and 12th, 2026). By the end of the course, students will have a more holistic understanding of the topic, are able to contextualize different perspectives, and learn to engage in contemporary discourse across disciplines.

The event brings together former and current academics, practitioners, and students from the [Göttingen School of Development Economics](#) to foster the community, exchange experiences and insights on current debates. You can find the schedule of the last homecoming [here](#). Previous panels have explored topics such as *The Nexus of Careers in Organizations and Development Impact*, *Challenges in Making Sustainable Food Systems a Reality*, and *Forgotten Conflicts*.

1.2 Course goals

This student-led seminar engages with current debates in development economics and encourages critical reflection on key questions and approaches within the field. Students will first develop a concept for a thematic panel, take responsibility for its organization, and actively contribute to the moderation and discussion.

Throughout the course, students learn to read and critically assess scientific literature, synthesize different viewpoints, and formulate coherent, evidence-based arguments. By combining theoretical reflection with practical dialogue formats, the seminar strengthens competencies in scientific communication – the ability to communicate complex academic insights clearly, responsibly, and across disciplinary and public contexts.

For the final panel discussion at the 3rd Homecoming, students will invite academics and practitioners to engage in an open exchange of ideas, linking research perspectives with practical experience.

By the end of the seminar, students will have developed a holistic understanding of contemporary development issues, learned to contextualize different approaches, and gained experience in engaging constructively in interdisciplinary and public discourse.

1.3 Prerequisites

None.

1.4 Credit points

6 ECTS-LP (seminar: 2 SWS).

1.5 Registration

Please register via FlexNow by Friday, April 24, 2026.

2. Course overview

2.1 Description of the teaching and learning methods

The students work independently on varying topics and prepare essays that meet scientific standards. They present the argument of one interest group in one of the issue areas listed above in the seminar to the other participants and engage in a subsequent critical discussion. **The course language is English.**

2.2 Scheduling

Introductory Meeting

Thursday, April 16, 4:00–5:30 pm (s.t.)

- Introduction to the course
- Discussion of organizational and administrative questions

1st Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 4:00–5:00 pm (s.t.)

2nd Meeting

Thursday, May 7, 4:00–5:00 pm (s.t.)

Proposal Submission Deadline

Tuesday, May 26, 23:59

Please upload a PDF version of your proposal (approx. 3 pages, including an introduction, draft outline, and potential guest speakers) to Stud.IP.

The draft outlines of all participants will be made available on Stud.IP.

3rd Meeting

Thursday, May 28, 4:00–6:30 pm (s.t.)

Each group will pitch their proposal, followed by a joint discussion.

Student Presentations

Thursday, June 25, 4:00–7:00 pm (s.t.)

Each seminar group presents its discussion topic and proposed panelists.

- Slides are required
- Presentation length: 20–30 minutes (depending on group size)
- Followed by 15 minutes of Q&A and feedback

4th Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 4:00–5:00 pm (s.t.)

Panel Discussion – 3rd Homecoming

Saturday, September 12, 2026, 9:00 am–3:00 pm (s.t.)

Each group will host and moderate a panel bringing together practitioners and academics as part of the Homecoming event.

Final Paper Submission Deadline

Friday, September 30, 23:59

Please upload your final paper (6 pages $\pm 10\%$) electronically to Stud.IP.

All final papers will be made available on Stud.IP.

2.3 Examination and grading of the module

Examination prerequisite:

- Written proposal and its short pitch at the 3rd *Midterm Meeting*

The grading consists of two components:

- **Presentation:** 20-30-minute group presentation (depending on the group size) of a current debate in development economics. Upload *your slides in the morning at 8:00 am of the presentation day to Stud.IP.*
- **Term paper:** Essay (incl. *a reflection of the panel discussion*) with a length of 6 pages $\pm 10\%$; *submission deadline: September 30, 2026.*

2.4 Course materials

The readings will be announced in the introductory lectures.

3. Term paper requirements

The term paper is a short essay. The length of each essay should be 6 pages $\pm 10\%$. The cover sheet, reference list, figures, and tables (if any) are excluded from the page count. Please use the following formatting: Font size: 12 pt, line spacing: 1.5 times, alignment: justification, margin (right, left, top and bottom margin): 2.5 cm each. Please make sure that you are consistent in your referencing and bibliography.

Use a referencing style that is in line with basic conventions in the economics literature. Always quote within a work using the same method. The Chair recommends the in-text author-year citation style (see, for example, information sheet “Citation according to the Harvard system”). All sources that you have cited in the text must appear in the reference list. Everything that you have only read but not cited in the text must NOT appear in the reference list. Term Papers need to be written in English. The work must be done independently by the student.

Every idea, statement, or fact taken from any source must be appropriately cited. Quotes need to be indicated as such. Plagiarism is sanctioned with the grade 5 (failed). The general rules of the Faculty of Business and Economics apply. A signed declaration must be attached to each scientific work: “I

hereby declare that I wrote this term paper independently, without assistance from external parties, and without use of other resources than those indicated. All information taken from other publications or sources in text or in meaning are duly acknowledged in the text. I give my consent to have this thesis checked by plagiarism software.”