



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,357: Natural Resources and Conflict

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Individual work individual grade (30%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (70%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,357,1.00 Natural Resources and Conflict](#) -- English -- [Schaudt Paul Maximilian](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

Prior knowledge of quantitative methods (econometrics) is required. Prior knowledge on Political Economy and Development Economics is helpful.

Learning objectives

This course aims to teach students how natural resources and politics shape conflict and economic development in low-income countries. Furthermore, students will learn how to quickly access information in research papers and concisely present the core messages, data structure, and methods. Additionally, participants will become familiar and comfortable with the most frequently used methods in empirical research conducted in political science and economics and become aware of their advantages and disadvantages. Finally, the course aims to give students a better understanding of empirical journal articles in political science and economics. Finally, the course aims to enable students to identify the core ingredients in cutting-edge research papers and show them some possibilities for their Master theses.

Course content

Global demand for minerals is expected to increase significantly during the next decades. The World Bank estimates that the production of metals, such as graphite, lithium, and cobalt, could increase by up to 500% over the next 30 years. This demand is increasingly met by mineral extraction in low-income countries. However, natural resource extraction has not unequivocally benefited developing countries, and for some, it has been an outright curse. Industrial mining and oil operations can be a source of structural change and development. However, they also cause pollution and conflict over the distribution of resource rents generated from mining and drilling for oil and gas. In this course, we will analyze how natural resources and politics interact with each other and ultimately shape conflict and economic development.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course consists of lectures and short student presentations. The lectures will discuss in-depth single papers on different topics, highlighting the interplay between resources, politics, conflict and economic outcomes, such as growth, pollution, and health. Student presentations are aimed to put the lectures in a broader perspective by introducing the class to further material closely related to the respective lecture. At the end of the semester, we will have a term paper pitch, in which students can pitch their term paper idea in 5 minutes and receive feedback and suggestions from the entire group.

Course literature



The relevant literature of the course consists of compulsory literature in the form of papers that we discuss in depth in class. Additionally, there is a selection of papers for student presentations. Only the presenters are required to read their assigned papers. For other participants, this is optional. Some selected papers are listed below. You can find the additional literature in the syllabus.

- Francois, P., Rainer, I. and F. Trebbi, 2015, How power is shared in Africa, *Econometrica*, 83:2, 465-503.
- Cust, J., and S. Poelhekke, 2015, The local economic impacts of natural resource extraction, *Annual Review of Resource Economics*, 7(1), 251-268.
- Knutsen, C. H., Kotsadam, A., Olsen, E. H., and T. Wig, 2017, Mining and local corruption in Africa, *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2), 320-334.
- Sachs, J.D., and A. M. Warner 2001, The curse of natural resources, *European Economic Review*, 45:4, 827-838.
- Hodler, R., Schaudt, P., and A. Vesperoni, 2023, Mining for peace, *CEPR discussion paper* 17807.
- Hodler, R., and A. Bruederle, 2019, Effect of oil spills on infant mortality in Nigera, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.
- Adhvaryu, A., Fenske, J., Khanna, G. and A. Nyshadham, 2021, Resources, conflict, and economic development in Africa, *Journal of Development Economics*, 149
- Melhum, H., Moene, K., and R. Torvik, 2006, Insitutions and the resource curse. *Economic Journal*, 121(508), 1-20.
- Michaels, G., 2011, The long term consequences of resource-based specialization, *Economic Journal*, 121(551), 37-57.
- Glaeser, E. L., Kerr, S. P., and W. R. Kerr, 2015, Entrepreneurship and urban growth: An empirical assessment with historical mines. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 97(2), 498-520.
- Fearon, J.D. and D. D. Laitin, 2003, Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war, *American Political Science Review*, 97(1), 75-90.
- Collier, P. and A. Hoeffler, 2004, Greed and grievances in civil war, *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56, 563-595.
- Blattman, C. and E. Miguel, 2010, Civil war, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 48(1), 3-57.
- Lujala, P., N.P. Gleditsch, and E. Gilmore, 2005, A diamond curse? Civil war and a lootable resource, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49(4), 538-562.
- Berman, N., M. Couttenier, D. Rohner , and M. Thoenig, 2017, This mine is Mine! How minerals fuel conflicts in Africa, *American Economic Review*, 107(6), 1564-1610.

Additional course information

The course language is english.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	30%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

Presentation of research paper in class



Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	70%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

The examination content includes the various topics we cover during the semester. Students are free to write their term paper on any topic covered in the course, or related topics. **The final topic must be agreed upon with the lecturer, before students start their term paper.**

Examination relevant literature

- Francois, P., Rainer, I. and F. Trebbi, 2015, How power is shared in Africa, *Econometrica*, 83:2, 465-503.
- Cust, J., and S. Poelhekke, 2015, The local economic impacts of natural resource extraction, *Annual Review of Resource Economics*, 7(1), 251-268.
- Knutsen, C. H., Kotsadam, A., Olsen, E. H., and T. Wig, 2017, Mining and local corruption in Africa, *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2), 320-334.
- Sachs, J.D., and A. M. Warner 2001, The curse of natural resources, *European Economic Review*, 45:4, 827-838.
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- Hodler, R., and A. Bruederle, 2019, Effect of oil spills on infant mortality in Nigera, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.
- Adhvaryu, A., Fenske, J., Khanna, G. and A. Nyshadham, 2021, Resources, conflict, and economic development in Africa, *Journal of Development Economics*, 149
- Melhum, H., Moene, K., and R. Torvik, 2006, Insitutions and the resource curse. *Economic Journal*, 121(508), 1-20.
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Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).