

Dwight H. Perkins

Short bio

Dwight H. Perkins is the Harold Hitchings Burbank Research Professor of Political Economy of Harvard University, where he joined the faculty in 1963. Previous positions at Harvard include Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor of Political Economy, 1963-2006; Associate Director of the East Asian (now Fairbank) Research Center, 1973-1977; chairman of the Department of Economics, 1977-1980; Director of the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), the University's former multi-disciplinary institute for research, teaching, and technical assistance on development policy, 1980-1995; and Director of the Harvard University Asia Center, 2002-2005.

Dwight Perkins has authored or edited twelve books and over one hundred articles on economic history and economic development, with special references to the economies of China, Korea, Vietnam and the other nations of east and southeast Asia. Topics include the transition from central planning to the market, long-term agricultural development, industrial policy, the underlying sources of growth in East Asia, and the role of economic and legal institutions in East Asian growth.

He has served as an advisor or consultant on economic policy and reform to the governments of Korea, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea. He has also been a long-term consultant to the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, various private corporations, and agencies of the U.S. government, including the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (then chaired by Senator Henry M. Jackson). He has been a Visiting Professor or Scholar at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, the University of Washington, and Fudan University in Shanghai. He also served as a Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer at eight colleges and universities around the U.S. in 1993-94. In 1997 he taught for a semester at the Fulbright Economic Training Program in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and has continued to teach in that program for several weeks each year since 1997. He and has given individual lectures to numerous audiences in the U.S., Asia, Europe, and elsewhere.

Dwight Perkins served in the U.S. Navy (active duty 1956-58), received his B.A. from Cornell University in Far Eastern Studies in 1956, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University in 1961 and 1964. He is a member of the American Philosophical Society and of various professional organizations in the fields of economics and Asian Studies.