

GLOBAL POVERTY & IMPACT EVALUATION:
LEARNING WHAT WORKS FOR THE WORLD'S POOR

Mondays 6:00 – 8:00 PM, xx Evans

Student Facilitators:

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Instructor of Record:

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Sponsored by the Center of Evaluation for Global Action (<http://cega.berkeley.edu>)

Course Content: The course will cover impact evaluation theory (causal inference, experimental design and basic statistics) as well as methods (randomization, difference-in-difference, regression discontinuity, and propensity score matching). The curriculum will be very applied, with weekly case studies of field research drawn from the international development literature. Discussions of methods will include issues related to research ethics and the protection of human subjects. At the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to present their own impact evaluation research projects and get feedback from CEGA faculty members.

Learning Outcomes: The primary objective of the course is to provide participants with the ability to 1) distinguish research-based “best practices” from those that have not been rigorously evaluated; and 2) understand the value and practice of impact evaluation within the development community. For more motivated students, who are considering conducting an impact evaluation of a program, facilitators will provide references to technical resources (e.g. textbooks on sample design and software for power calculations) and guidelines for developing a rigorous study.

Methods of Instruction: During class, facilitators will present the main concepts in short lectures structured around case studies (suggested readings from the literature), which will also serve as the basis for class discussion and small group activities. Lectures will discuss the strongest (most rigorous) evaluation methods and the shortcomings of weak evaluation methods. Case studies will highlight research from Africa, Asia, and South America as well as the U.S. and will cover programs related to health, governance, education, and agriculture. Group work will provide hands-on experience with research design and data analysis.

Audience: Both undergraduate and graduate students may participate in the course. It is expected that students will have basic knowledge of statistics and quantitative analysis. Again, the curriculum is very applied and will be useful for students engaged in international development field projects or social entrepreneurship.

Grading: As with other DeCal courses, those who attend class and participate in discussion will pass. Depending on time availability, class size, and students’ interests, group presentations will take place in the final two weeks of class.

Anticipated Schedule:

September 8: Introduction to impact evaluation in international development

Banerjee, Abhijit et. al.. *Making Aid Work*. The MIT Press. 2007.

Duflo, Esther. Scaling Up and Evaluation. Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, 2004.

September 15: Randomized Evaluations I: Introduction, methodology, and the basic econometrics
(Case Study: conditional cash transfers in Mexico)

Duflo, Esther, Rachel Glennerster, and Michael Kremer. Using Randomization in Development Economics Research: A Toolkit. Poverty Action Lab White Paper, MIT.

Schultz, T. Paul. School Subsidies for the Poor: Evaluating the Mexican Progresa Poverty Program. *Journal of Development Economics*. June 2004, 199-250.

September 22: Randomized Evaluations II: Applications
(Case Studies: housing vouchers in the US, microfinance in South Africa, and agriculture in Kenya)

Kling, Jeffrey, Jeffrey Liebman, and Lawrence Katz. Experimental Analysis of Neighborhood Effects. *Econometrica*, January 2007, 83-119.

Karlan, Dean and Jonathan Zinman. Credit Elasticities in Less Developed Countries: Implications for Microfinance. *American Economic Review*, forthcoming.

Duflo Esther, Michael Kremer and Robinson J. How high are rates of return to fertilizer? Evidence from field experiments in Kenya. *American Economic Review*, May 2008, 482-488.

September 29: Randomized Evaluations III: Complications, Externalities
(Case Study: deworming drugs in Kenya)

Kremer, Michael and Edward Miguel. Worms: Identifying Impacts on Education and Health in the Presence of Treatment Externalities. *Econometrica*. January 2004, 159-217.

Kremer, Michael and Edward Miguel. The Illusion of Sustainability. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. August 2007, 1007-1065.

October 6: Research Ethics
(Case Study: HIV prevention educational programs in Kenya)

Dupas, Pascaline. Relative Risks and the Market for Sex: Teenage Pregnancy, HIV, and Partner Selection in Kenya. Working paper.

October 13: Regression Discontinuity
(Case Studies: scholarship program for girls in Kenya, educational finance in Chile)

Unpublished results from follow-up on a girl's merit scholarship program. For a description of the intervention, see Kremer, Michael et al. Incentives to Learn. NBER Working Paper #10971. 2004.

Chay, Ken et al. The Central Role of Noise in Evaluating Interventions that Use Test Scores to Rank Schools. *American Economic Review*. September 2005, 1237-1258.

October 20: External Validity

(Case Studies: anti-corruption programs in Indonesia and Brazil, & community-based monitoring of health clinics in Uganda)

Olken, Benjamin. Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia. *Journal of Political Economy*. April 2007, 200-249.

Ferraz, Claudio and Frederico Finan. Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2008, 703-745..

Bjorkman, Martina and Jakob Svensson. Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment of a Community-Based Monitoring Project in Uganda. Community-Based Monitoring of Primary Health Care PCEPR Working Paper # 6344. June 2007.

October 27: Matching, Propensity Score

(Case studies: water infrastructure and children's health in India & workfare in Argentina)

Jalan, Jyotsna and Martin Ravallion. Does Piped Water Reduce Diarrhea for Children in Rural India? *Journal of Econometrics*. January 2003, 153-173.

Jalan, Jyotsna and Martin Ravallion. Estimating the Benefit Incidence of an Antipoverty Program by Propensity Score Matching. *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*. January 2003, 19-30.

November 3: Data Quality, Logistics

Baird, Sarah, Joan Hamory, and Edward Miguel. Tracking, Attrition and Data Quality in the Kenya Life Panel Survey Round 1. Working paper..

November 10: Differences in Differences

(Case studies: malaria eradication in the Americas and land reform in India)

Bleakley, Hoyt. Malaria Eradication in the Americas: A Retrospective Analysis of Childhood Exposure. Working paper.

Besley, Timothy and Robin Burgess. Land Reform, Poverty Reduction, and Growth: Evidence from India. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. May 2000, 389-430.

November 17: Power Calculations

Data exercise based on the Kenya Rural Water Project.

November 24: Group Presentations / Further topics

December 1: Group Presentations / Further topics