International Affairs 8803/4803

Evaluating International Development Projects

Habersham Building G – 17, 9:25 am – 10:55 am

Georgia Tech, Fall Semester 2013

Office: Room 150, Habersham Bldg.

781 Marietta St. NW.

Atlanta, GA 30332

T: 404.894.5020

[Thomas.Boston@Econ.gatech.edu](mailto:Thomas.Boston@Econ.gatech.edu)

Office hours: 11:00 – 12:30 TTH and by apt.

**Required books:**

1. Linda Morra-Imas and Ray Rist 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* (Washington DC: The World Bank) 582 pp. Available for purchase at the World Bank website or download free at Open Knowledge Repository: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2699>
2. Judy Baker (2000-05) *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: a Handbook for Practitioners* (Washington DC: The World Bank) 217 pp. Available for purchase at the World Bank website or download free at Open Knowledge Repository: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2693>
3. Shahidur Khandker; G. Koolwal and H. Samad. 2010. *Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices* (Washington DC: The World Bank) 239 pp. Available for purchase at the World Bank website or download free at Open Knowledge Repository: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13949>

**Reference Resource:**

1. Paul Gertler, S. Martinez, P. Premand, L. Rawlings, C. Vermeersch 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice.*(Washington DC: The World Bank) 245pp. Available for purchase at the World Bank website or download free at Open Knowledge Repository:

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2550>

**Objectives of the Class**

The class seeks to develop student’s skills at monitoring and evaluating international development projects. Students will examine the literature related to quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques, review case studies of development evaluations projects, and conduct practical evaluations based on constructed data sets and scenarios. Students will gain an understanding and appreciation of the development context, the institutional framework, current conditions and historic and contemporary factors that influence the development process and dictate the manner within which project monitoring and evaluations occur. Students will also conduct practical evaluation exercises using constructed data sets and SPSS software.

**Expected Outcomes**

Students who are so motivated will be better equipped to participate effectively in the emerging global partnership for development. Students not interested in participating in the development process will, nevertheless, have the knowledge and experience necessary to judge the strengths and weaknesses of program evaluations, even in industrialized countries. Technical skills in project and program performance evaluation are increasingly demanded by employers. This demand has arisen out of the global competitive pressures being experienced by corporations and fiscal austerity measures imposed on government agencies. Corporations, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, stakeholders and potential beneficiaries are increasingly mandating that policy actions be accompanied by evaluation strategies. Their intent is to improve the efficiency of resource allocation and delivery services to beneficiaries more effectively.

This class will help students become more skilled practitioners in program performance evaluation. In addition to studying the theory and praxis of monitoring and evaluation, students will present summaries of case studies involving project evaluations, learn basic skills in designing evaluations, understand how to collect, organize and code data, and conduct quantitative and qualitative evaluation exercises. SPSS will be used for data analysis and evaluations. Students are not required to have a prior knowledge of the statistical software. In addition, skills in statistical and econometric analyses are not required. Basic techniques of econometric analysis are a component of the teaching and learning process. As an outcome, each student will design and present an approach to evaluating a hypothetical or real development project. If time permits, students may also be engaged to assist the instructor in delivering a database construction strategy for evaluating development projects in Ethiopia.

**Background to the Global Emergence of Development Evaluation Practice**

Program Evaluation is a relatively new but rapidly growing field of study and practice. It has evolved most prominently in the disciplines of economics, sociology, psychology, social work and education. While elements of evaluation studies have been documented in writings that are more than 1000 years old, the modern push to monitor and evaluate impacts is believed to have its origin in the need to evaluate the impact of the Great Society programs of the 1960s.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the developing countries of the world began a new partnership agreement with donor organizations in industrialized countries. The partnership coalesced around a unified strategy to reduce world poverty and inequality, improve health and education, accelerate human development and create a broad-based partnership for economic development. This partnership was crystallized in the United Nations Declaration on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Rather than forcing ill-advised growth strategies down the throats of developing countries through aid agreements conditioned on draconian fiscal restructuring policies, donor organizations increasingly tied aid to the achievement of MDGs. As a result, the new conditions provided a tremendous impetus to improving the global capacity for Monitoring and Evaluating (ME) development projects. The leading donor organizations include the following: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Development Program (UEDP), UK’s Department for International Development (DIFD), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the United Nations Oversight Committee on Millennium Development Goals.

**What is Development Evaluation?**

**Development Evaluation** is a subset of **Program Performance Evaluation.** It is aimed specifically at monitoring and evaluating programs and projects in developing countries. However, it increasingly includes tracking and evaluating impacts not just at the local level, but also regional and macro-level impacts.

Program Evaluation involves both quantitative and qualitative techniques and most often a combination of the two. It has been formally defined as “a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency. In both the public and private sectors, stakeholders will want to know if the programs they are funding, implementing, voting for, receiving or objecting to, are actually having the intended effect (and to what cost). This definition focuses on the question of whether the program, policy or project has, as indicated, the intended effect. However, equally important are questions such as how the program could be improved, whether the program is worthwhile, whether there are better alternatives, if there are *unintended* outcomes, and whether the program goals are appropriate and useful.”

**Why Focus on Evaluating International Development Projects?**

The emerging global partnership for development represents a landmark change in the paradigm of development. By virtue of this new partnership, the theory and praxis of development have shifted from the historic narrow focus on growing per capita income, making structural adjustments, ensuring unfettered free markets and mimicking the path of industrialized nations. Instead, priorities are now placed on the broad spectrum of factors that contribute to accelerating human development and improving the quality of life in developing countries. The MDGs is the best expression of this new priority and global partnership. Furthermore, the push to achieve the Millennium Goals has the collateral effects of encouraging low income developing countries to reset their national development priorities – even though some countries have achieved only modest gains toward fulfilling MDGs.

**Grading Procedures**

Grade will be based on several student-centered activities: (1) Two examinations; (2) Class presentations – a. summary of a case study of a development project (see section II at the rear of the syllabus); b. Presentation of information on an MDG Goal and Target (see section I at the rear of the syllabus) (3) Quantitative and qualitative evaluation assignments (4) Final requirement – a research proposal and research design for a real or hypothetical development project.

**Basis for calculating final grade:**

* Examination #1- 20% Grad: 15% Undergrad
* Examination #2- 20% Grad: 15% Undergrad
* Case study Class Presentation -10% Grad: 10% Undergrad
* MDG focus area presentation – 15% Grad: 20% Undergrad
* Qualitative and quantitative evaluation worksheet exercises – 10% Grad: 5% Undergrad

Grade based on submission and completion, not accuracy.

* Final research proposal - 5% Grad: 5% Undergrad
* Final research design project – 20% Grad: 20% Undergrad
* Class Participation – 10% Undergrad only

**Grading Scale**

The grading scale is as follows: A = 90% to 100%; B = 80% to 89.9%; C = 70% to 79.9%; D = 60% to 69.9%.

**Calendar of Key Events and Requirements**

* Tuesday August 20th – Overview and Introduction to the class
* Thursday August 22nd – Formal lectures start
* Thursday August 22nd students select case study and MDG focus area
* Tuesday August 27th student case study presentation rotation start

(15 minutes max. approximately one per class)

* Monday Sep 2nd , Labor Day Holiday
* Tuesday October 1st, student MDG focus area presentation rotation start

(15 minutes max. approximately one per class)

* Tuesday October 8th Examination #1-
* Saturday October 12th – Tuesday October 15th , Fall Recess
* Tuesday November 19th – Final research design proposal due
* Thursday November 21st – Examination #2
* Thursday November 28th – 29th Thanksgiving Holiday
* Thursday December 6th – Last day of classes
* Tuesday December 10th 5:00 pm. Final Research designs due
* Qualitative and quantitative evaluation worksheet assignments – periodic

Lectures:

1. **Introduction to Development Evaluation: What is it and Why?**
   1. Morra-Imas 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* Chapter 1, Introducing Development Evaluation
   2. Baker (2000-05) *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: a Handbook for Practitioners* Chapter 1, Defining Concepts and Techniques for Impact Evaluation
   3. Khandker 2010. *Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices,* Chapter 1, Introduction, Chapter 2, Basic Issues of Evaluation
   4. Gertler 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice*, Chapter 1, Why Evaluate?
2. **Introduction to the Context and challenges for Development Evaluation**
   1. Morra-Imas 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* Chapter 2, Understanding the Issues Driving Development Evaluations; Chapter 3, Building a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System
   2. Baker (2000-05) *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: a Handbook for Practitioners* Chapter 2, Key Steps in Designing and Implementing Impact Evaluations
   3. Gertler 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice* Chapter 3, Causal Inference and Counterfactuals
3. **Introduction to Millennium Development Goals Evaluation**
   1. United Nations, 2013 The Millennium Development Goals Report

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf>

* 1. UNDP 2013. Human Development Report, (New York: United Nations Development Program)
  2. C. Victoria, R. Black et al 2011. “Measuring Impact in the Millennium Development Goals Era and Beyond: a New Approach to Large-Scale Effectiveness Evaluations” www.thelancet.com Vol 377 January 1, 2011

1. **Overview of Quantitative and Qualitative Program Evaluation Methods and Challenges**
   1. Morra-Imas 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* Chapter 4, Understanding the Evaluation Context in the Program.
   2. Baker (2000-05) *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: a Handbook for Practitioners* Chapter 3, Applying Analytical Methods for Impact Evaluation: a Case Study
   3. Gertler 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice* Chapter 10, Operationalizing the Impact Evaluation Design
2. **Learning SPSS for Statistical Analysis and Regression Modeling**

Nancy Leech, k. Barrett, G. Morgan 2011 IBM SPSS for Intermediate Statistics: Use and Interpretation (New York: Routledge/Taylor and Francis) selected sections and data exercises.

1. **Planning Research Designs and Data Collection Strategies**
   1. Morra-Imas 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* Chapters 6, Developing Evaluation Questions and Starting a Design Matrix; Chapter 7, Selecting Designs for Cause and Effect Descriptive, and Normative Evaluation Questions; Chapter 8, Selecting and Constructing Data Collection Instruments; Chapter 9, Choosing the Sampling Strategies; Chapter 10, Planning for and Conducting Data Analysis.
   2. Baker (2000-05) *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: a Handbook for Practitioners* Chapter 4, Drawing on Good Practice Impact Evaluation; Annex 2, Sample Terms of Reference
   3. Gertler 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice* Chapter 11, Choosing the Sample, Chapter 12, Collecting Data; Chapter 13, Producing and Disseminating Findings
2. **Applied Program Evaluation Techniques**

* Analysis of Random Experiments
* Propensity Score Matching Methods
* Double Difference Methods
* Regression Discontinuity
* Cox Survival Regression Models
* Generalized Estimating Equations with Repeated Observations

1. Khandker 2010. *Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices* Chapters 3, Randomization; 4, Propensity Score Matching; 5, Double Difference; 7, Regression Discontinuity and Pipeline Methods
2. Gertler 2011. *Impact Evaluation in Practice* Chapter 4, Randomized Selection Methods; Chapter 5, Regression Discontinuity Design; Chapter 6, Difference in Difference; Chapter 7, Matching
3. Econometric exercises
4. **Evaluation Ethics, Standards and Principles, Including Human Subject Research**
   1. Morra-Imas 2009 *The Road to Results: Designing and Constructing Effective Development Evaluations* Chapter 14, Guiding the Evaluator: Evaluation Ethics, Politics, Standards, and Guiding Principles
5. **MDG STUDENT PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS**

**Objectives of MDG Student Presentations**

1. Develop skills at analyzing and presenting related to development issues
2. Become familiar with MDGs
3. Develop an understanding of metrics, base lines, targets and goals
4. Improve professional presentation skills
5. Develop the ability to adhere to strict directions in summarizing and presenting findings
6. Develop an in-depth knowledge of the development challenges related to a particular Target

**Procedure**

Select one of the MDG Goals and focus specifically on a Target. Your presentation should be structured to address the 11 points described below. You should conduct background research on the Target, starting with (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf> ) and include any other material you feel is helpful. Prepare a 15-minute presentation, assisted by PowerPoint. Your presentation should cover the 11 topics listed below. You will be graded on the effectiveness of your presentation, the quality of your slides, the extent of your knowledge of the topic, and the effectiveness with which you answer student questions. Your presentation should not exceed 15 minutes - excluding Q & A. Therefore, it is especially important that you rehearse your presentation.

1. Give an overview of the development issues that are related to the Goal and Target
2. Discuss the baseline conditions of the target.
3. Identify the metrics used to measure progress toward the target.
4. Indicate how the baseline conditions differ by regions around the world.
5. Identify countries that enjoyed the most favorable baseline conditions and those that encountered the worst.
6. Summarize the progress made thus far and the developing world’s likelihood of achieving the target by 2015.
7. Identify the countries and regions that are closest to achieving the target, and those that are farthest away.
8. Discuss any data challenges encountered in monitoring progress toward the target.
9. Discuss the non-data challenges involved in achieving the Goal by 2015, including social, political and institutional factors as well as religious practices and cultural beliefs.
10. Discuss any landmark developments (e.g. significant breakthroughs in practices and policies, significant innovations in medicine and treatment, etc.) that have occurred relative to the attainment of the target.
11. In your opinion what, if anything, should be done to ensure the attainment of the goal.

GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target a: Decreased by one-half between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.

Target b: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people

Target c: Decreased by one-half, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Target a: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Target a: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

GOAL 4: REDUCED CHILD MORTALITY

Target a: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Target a: Reduced by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio.

Target B: Achieve universal access to reproductive health

GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

Target a: Stop and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

Target b: achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it.

Target c: By 2015, stop and reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Target a: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reversed the loss of environmental resources.

Target b: Reduce biodiversity loss by 2010 and make a significant reduction in the rate of loss.

Target c: Reduce by one-half the proportion of population without sustainable access to drinking water and basic sanitation.

Target d: by 2020, achieve a significant improvement to the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

GOAL 8: CREATE A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target a: Develop an open, rules-based predictable, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system

Target b and c: address the special needs of the least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states

Target d: Deal with developing countries comprehensively

Target e: Cooperate with the private sector to make available the benefits of new technologies, especially in information and communications

1. **CASE STUDY PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT EVALUATIONS**

**Objectives of Student Case Study Presentations**

1. Develop skills at analyzing the outcome of project evaluations
2. Become familiar with different approaches to project evaluations
3. Develop an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different evaluation approaches
4. Improve professional presentation skills
5. Develop the ability to adhere to strict directions in summarizing and presenting research.
6. Develop an in-depth knowledge of a particular project evaluation approach.

Your case study presentation should follow the topic outline in the case study. Your responsibility is to gather additional background information on the case by reviewing some of the supplemental material. Prepare a 15-minute presentation assisted by PowerPoint that covers the topics outlined in the case study. Include your additional material. You will be graded on the effectiveness of your presentation, the quality of your slides, your knowledge about the case, and the effectiveness with which you answer student questions. Your presentation must not exceed 15 minutes- excluding Q & A. Rehearse your presentation.

**Case Studies** (available in your required book by Judy Baker, *Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects*)

1.1 Evaluating the Gains to the Poor from Workfare: Argentina's TRABAJAR Program p94

1.2 Does Microfinance Really Help the Poor? New Evidence from Flagship Programs in Bangladesh p101

1.3 Bangladesh Food for Education: Evaluating a Targeted Social Program When Placement Is Decentralized: p105

1.4 Evaluating Bolivia's Social Investment Fund p109

1.5 Impact of Active Labor Programs: Czech Republic p114

1.6 Impact of Credit with Education on Mothers' and their Young Children's Nutrition: Lower Pra Rural Bank Program in Ghana p119

1.7 Textbooks and Test Scores: Evidence from a Prospective Evaluation in Kenya p123

1.8 Evaluating Kenya's Agricultural Extension Project p128

1.9 The Impact of Mexico's Retraining Program on Employment and Wages (PROBECAT) p134

1.10 Mexico, National Program of Education, Health, and Nutrition (PROGRESA) p140

1.11 Evaluating Nicaragua's School Reform: A Combined Quantitative-Qualitative Approach p145

1.12 Improving Elementary Mathematics Education in Nicaragua: An Experimental Study of the Impact of Textbooks and Radio on Achievement p151

1.13 The Impact of Alternative Cost-Recovery Schemes on Access and Equity in Niger p156

1.14 Schooling Outcomes in Philippine Elementary Schools: Evaluation of the Impact of Four Experiments p160

1.15 Assessing the Poverty Impact of Rural Roads Projects in Vietnam p165