**International Affairs 8803/4803**

Evaluating International Development Projects

Thomas D. Boston

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

Georgia Tech, Fall Semester 2014

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.

Learning Outcomes:

**Social Science Learning Objectives**

.

1. Develop and understanding of how researchers investigate causal relations to better understands the world in which we live.
2. Develop the ability to organize and collect information to interpret and influence the world around us.
3. Be able to determine whether the social and human outcome of programs and projects are the result of activities implemented by the projects or by other factors.
4. Improve professional presentation skills
5. Develop the ability to adhere to strict directions in summarizing and presenting findings

**Global Perspective Learning Outcomes**

* Develop an in-depth knowledge of the state of developing countries and the human, social and economic challenges confronting them
  + - * Become familiar with Millennium Development Goals (which are universally agreed upon targets for poverty reduction, education, gender equality, health improvement, disease mitigation and environmental sustainability.
* Gain a better appreciation of the challenges that confront low income developing countries; including the institutional framework and historic factors that condition the development process.

**INTA Group Outcomes**

* + - * Develop problem solving skills in International Affairs.  Students will be able to use their knowledge of international affairs in a practical problem-solving way to address issues of immediate international concern.  They will gain knowledge of key issues, familiarity with methods to assess solutions, data-gathering research skills through which to put different methods into place.
      * Cultural and ethical awareness.  Students will become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world.  Able to understand key issues with respect for a range of different variables.  May include ability to communicate in a foreign language.
      * Develop skills at monitoring and evaluating development projects and programs.

**Class Specific Outcomes**

* + - * Develop an understanding of how researchers use data to formulate project metrics, base lines, targets and outcomes.
      * Become familiar with different approaches to project evaluations
* Develop skills at collecting and organizing data for the purpose of conducting evaluations
  + - * Developed the ability to apply econometric models to construct evaluations of experimental and quasi-experimental data , and do so with little or no econometric or statistical background
      * Know how to assemble and analyze data using IBM/SPSS statistical software
      * Know how to present project evaluation reports and case studies of impact evaluations
      * Develop an in-depth knowledge of the development challenges
      * Develop an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different project evaluation approaches
* Become familiar with case studies of impact evaluations of development projects in selected low income developing countries.
* Know how to write proposals for conducting impact evaluations

1. **Required books: (required books and references are downloadable at the links specified)**
2. 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>
3. 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>
4. 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>
5. 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>

1. James Stock and Mark Watson (2011) Introduction to Econometrics. Third Edition (New York: Addison-Wesley)
2. **Overview**

**Background**

Impact evaluations increasingly demanded by developing countries, international development organizations, private corporations, government agencies, nonprofits, NGOs and community stakeholders. Evaluations allow organizations to allocate scarce resources more efficiently, inform stakeholders and funders of the effectiveness of program and project and make decisions regarding whether programs will be scaled up, scaled back or replicated in other locations.

Formally, impact evaluation is 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 want to know if the programs they are funding, implementing, voting for, receiving or objecting to, are actually having the intended effect”

This class is designed to help students understand the techniques for conducting quantitative impact evaluations of programs and projects in developing countries.

The course is also intended to give students an understanding of the socioeconomic challenges facing low and middle income developing countries; including development challenges such as poverty, gender equity, access to education, infectious diseases and infant mortality, governance and environmental sustainability.

1. **Why conduct Impact evaluations?**

Impact evaluation is defined formally 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 want to know if the programs they are funding, implementing, voting for, receiving or objecting to, are actually having the intended effect”

Impact evaluations seek to measure:

1. the extent to which a project, program or policy achieved its intended objective or mission,
2. the relative contribution of each activity to the achievement of the objective,
3. why did a project implementation succeed or fail

In short, impact evaluation focuses on the cause-and-effect relationship. In so doing it answers important policy questions such as the following:

1. how can the project be improved,
2. is it worthwhile to repeat or expand it
3. can it be replicated at different geographic locations
4. are there unintended adverse impacts, and
5. which activities are most effective or ineffective at achieving project goals
6. **Grading**

Grades will be based the following activities (1) two examinations; (2) a class presentation on a Millennium Development Goal (3) a class presentation that summarizes the case study of a project evaluation in a developing country (4) final project, which is a proposal for conducting an impact evaluation (5) homework assignments (approximately four) related to data analysis and evaluation modeling. Students are expected but not required to attend each class. All assignments and grade based performance material must be turned in at times designated by the instructor, unless prior approval has been secured. A full letter grade will be deducted from all material submitted late.

1. **Georgia Tech Honor Code will be enforced at all times.**

Since many assignments require writing, it is particularly important that you observe MLA guidelines in writing. This is particularly important in regards to quoting, paraphrasing, or copying and pasting from material written by others, including “word”. *“For any questions involving these or any other Academic Honor Code issues, please consult me, my teaching assistants, or www.honor.gatech.edu.”*

1. **Basis for calculating final grade:**

* Examination #1- 25%%
* Examination #2 – 25%
* MDG presentation – 13%
* Case study Class Presentation -13%
* Homework Assignments -4%
* Final research Design proposal – 20%

1. **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%.

**Lectures:**

1. **Topic #1: Introduction to the Course, Student Introductions and Logistics**
2. **Topic #2 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?
3. **Topic #3 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
4. **Topic #4 Millennium Development Goals: Where to From Here?**
   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
  3. Note: Other Readings to be added

1. **Topic # 5 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. **Topic #6 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. **Topic #7 Applied Program Evaluation Techniques**

* Ordinary Least Squares Regression
* Analysis of Random Experimental Designs
* Double Difference Methods
* Logistic Regression Analysis
* Propensity Score Matching Methods
* 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. **Topic #8 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;
5. **Topic # 9 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
6. **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

CLASS CALENDAR

