University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Department of Economics Spring 2021

ECON 519: Development and Growth Policy Monday and Wednesday 11 am – 12:20 pm On Zoom - https://illinois.zoom.us/j/2644347636?pwd=NjVZb0ZyRU01c1Rpd2RLTEIPNDhrdz09

Instructor: Prof. Adam Osman

Office: Osman: 109 David Kinley Hall

E-mail: aosman@illinois.edu Please include "Econ 519" at the start of the email subject to make sure I don't

overlook your email.

Office Hours Prof. Osman: Monday/Wednesday 2:30-4pm or by appointment

Anonymous Feedback: http://bit.do/EconFeedback

Course Description:

This class will study what works, what does not, and why, in the fight against poverty in developing countries. The course will have a strong methodological and analytical component, specifically focusing on articulating the why behind interventions and policies, and the how behind establishing evidence on the effectiveness of specific interventions and policies. The class will also discuss some fundamentals of behavioral economics, and learn how and when to apply such ideas to policy and program design. The course will focus on interventions and policies that apply to households, small firms, and farms, with particular but not exclusive focus on four sectors: microfinance, health, agriculture and education.

Course Format: Combined lecture and discussion every Monday and Wednesday 11:00 am – 12:20 pm

Learning Resources:

Most of the material for the course can be found on the lecture slides that will be made available on compass. While the slides provide an outline of everything that is important, they are not exhaustive, and so it is important to come to class to hear the details regarding what the slides allude to.

All of the academic studies we will cover in class are referenced below and can be found at the corresponding links in the syllabus or, if the links are not working, through a simple search through google scholar.

Supplemental (not required) Texts:

- 1. Running Randomized Evaluations: A Practical Guide (RRE), by Glennerster and Takavarasha
- 2. Good Economics for Hard Times (GEHT), by Banerjee and Duflo
- 3. Poor Economics (PE), by Banerjee and Duflo
- 4. More Than Good Intentions (MTGI), by Karlan and Appel

Student Assessment:

Assessment Activity	Activity Value
Dream Policy Changes	3 Points
NGO Critique	5 Points
Problem Set	7 Points
4 Academic Paper Summaries	4x2=8 Points
2 Data Replication Exercises	2x6=12 Points
Midterm Exam	15 Points
Dream Policy Critique	5 Points
Presentation	10 Points
Final Exam	25 Points
Class Participation	10 Points
Total	100 Points

Assessment Activity Details:

Dream Policy Changes (2-3 Pages):

• Generate a short document that outlines one of your main policy interests in the economics of poverty alleviation and what you think could be done to improve societal outcomes related to that topic. In other words, what do you think the world is doing wrong when it comes to helping the poor and if you had the ability to change one policy what would you change and why? In particular, focus on either a specific government policy (e.g. Food Stamps, Subsidizing Student Loans, Closed Borders, etc) or a specific Non-Governmental Organization's activity (e.g. giving the poor cows, building schools in rural villages, etc.) and describe what you think is wrong with the way these things are currently being implemented and how you would fix it. (Note: This is a personal benchmarking assignment. Its aim is to get you to write down your current thoughts on poverty and what you would change given your current state of knowledge. There are no wrong answers.)

NGO Evaluation Critique (2-4 pages):

• An analysis of any evaluation (or statements about supposed impact) of an intervention you find on the website of an NGO or social enterprise. Explain the intervention, the evaluation approach and results (including any information or data they use to support the claims of impact), the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation, and how you would improve their evaluation process if you had an unconstrained evaluation budget/sample.

Examples of the types of websites/reports that could be used for the assignment (you may not use one of the following however):

- One Acre Fund: https://www.oneacrefund.org/results/impact
- Against Malaria Foundation: https://www.againstmalaria.com/Transparency.
- o FINCA International: http://www.finca.org/our-impact/

Problem Set:

• Standard problem set walking through the basic econometrics and statistics techniques used in rigorous program evaluation.

Academic Paper Summaries:

• Academic Paper Summary (2-3 Pages): A review of an academic paper that estimates the impact of a development program or policy. The review should clearly explain the program or policy being evaluated, the market failure that it is addressing, the method of evaluation and basic details about the data being used, the impacts that were found, and what an NGO or government that is considering doing something similar should learn from this paper and what limitations the study has.

The first two summaries should be from the list of eligible papers below. The second two summaries can be any paper we don't cover in class but the paper must have been published in one of the following journals after the year 2015:

- o American Economic Review
- Quarterly Journal of Economics
- o Journal of Political Economy
- o Econometrica
- o Review of Economic Studies
- Review of Economics and Statistics
- o American Economic Journal: Applied Economics or AEJ: Economic Policy
- o Journal of the European Economic Association
- o Economic Journal
- Journal of Development Economics
- o Economic Development and Cultural Change
- World Bank Economic Review
- o Recent Working Paper (at least 2015) from the National Bureau of Economic Research

Eligible Papers:

- Behavioral Savings: Karlan, Dean, et al. "Getting to the top of mind: How reminders increase saving." Management Science 62.12 (2016): 3393-3411.
- Credit: Augsburg, Britta, et al. "The impacts of microcredit: Evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 7.1 (2015): 183-203.
- Health Worms: Miguel, Edward, and Michael Kremer. "Worms: identifying impacts on education and health in the presence of treatment externalities." Econometrica 72.1 (2004): 159-217.
- Health Bednets: Cohen, Jessica, and Pascaline Dupas. "Free distribution or cost-sharing? Evidence from a randomized malaria prevention experiment." The Quarterly Journal of Economics (2010): 1-45.
- International Trade: Atkin, David, Amit K. Khandelwal, and Adam Osman. "Exporting and firm performance: Evidence from a randomized experiment." The Quarterly Journal of Economics 132.2 (2017): 551-615.
- Labor Markets: Crépon, Bruno, et al. "Do labor market policies have displacement effects? Evidence from a clustered randomized experiment." The Quarterly Journal of Economics 128.2 (2013): 531-580.
- Entrepreneurship: Mckenzie & Puero "Growing Markets through Business Training for Female Entrepreneurs: A market-level randomized experiment in Kenya" Working Paper 2018 (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZVecwJIUSNQ02KmUr3SMdYurFnSwxUu7/view)
- Education: De Ree, Joppe, et al. "Double for nothing? The Effect of Unconditional Teachers' Salary Increases on Performance." The Quarterly Journal of Economics (2015).

Data Replications:

• Use the dataset (saved in csv format) uploaded to compass to create a do file that accomplishes the following tasks. You can create the tables in excel or use appropriate commands in your do files (e.g. in stata you can use estout or outreg2):

- a. Import the data into the data processing software (Stata or R)
- b. Generate a table of summary statistics for the following variables including the mean, standard deviation and number of observations for each variable at baseline. Variables: (1) Age, (2) Female, (3) Current Employment, (4) Current Income, (5) Preparatory Education or less (this includes those with preparatory, primary, literacy certificate and illiterate levels of education), (6) University Graduate and above
- c. Generate a table checking the statistical balance between the treatment group and control group for the variables included above in the baseline round. The table should include balance tests for each variable by itself as well as a test of all variables as a group.
- d. Generate a table that reports the treatment effect (difference between treatment and control) on employment and monthly income in the follow up round.
- e. Control for the baseline value of the two outcome variables listed in part "d" as well as dummies for each cohort and cluster the standard errors at the cohort level.
- Print out your tables in a clean looking way, and then staple them together with your do file and your name and submit in physical copy in class

Dream Policy Change Critique (4-6 Pages):

Return to your original "Dream Policy Change" assignment from the beginning of the semester. Review what you wrote and begin by re-writing the policy problem in the language of market failures that you learned as part of this class (1-2 page). Describe the different market failures that could have led to the problem you described and which market failures the policy you proposed addressed. If you still believe that your proposed policy change is the best way to improve societal outcomes in the realm of your original topic, describe how you would design an evaluation to test the effectiveness of the policy change you described (2-4 pages). If, on the other hand, you no longer believe that the policy change you described would be the best thing to do, describe what has changed in your understanding of this topic (1-3 pages) and what you would now suggest to do to improve policy around your original topic and why (1-2 pages), as well as how you would evaluate the new policy or program you are suggesting (1-2 pages).

Presentation:

Choose any NGO or social enterprise (but not the same one that you used for your assignments above) and focus on one intervention that they implement:

- a. Describe quickly the history and activities of the NGO. What do they do and why it is interesting?
- b. Choose one particular thing they are doing. Describe their theory of change behind that intervention. Why are they doing it? Summarize the theory of change of the NGO's or social enterprise's activity. Make sure to speak specifically about what the market failure is (if any) that the NGO purports to address.
- c. Describe what the entity currently claims about the impact of this program and what are the drawbacks of their evaluation method.
- d. Evaluation proposal: Design an evaluation of the NGO or social enterprise's activity that you want to evaluate, <u>how would you construct the counterfactual</u>? How can you design the evaluation to include as much learning you can about why the program works (if it does) not merely whether it works.
- e. Response to concerns: Be prepared to respond to concerns the "NGO management" (in this case the professor and fellow students) might have about your evaluation.

Assessment Policies

Assignment Policy:

All assignments are to be turned in in physical copy or on Compass (depending on professor instructions) by the deadline noted in the schedule. Late assignments receive no credit. The assignment portion of your grade will be the average of all your assignment scores weighted by the points as indicated in the syllabus above.

Exam Policy:

No materials are allowed during exams. There are to be no books, papers other than the exam itself, calculators or cell-phones or other items that connect to the internet. Students found to be using unapproved items are in violation of the Academic Integrity policy of the University and will be subject to disciplinary action.

The University's final exam policy is available at: http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article3 part2 3-201.html

Emergency Response Recommendations:

The university maintains guidelines for emergency responses. A list of recommendations when to evacuate and when to find shelter are available at:

http://illinois.edu/cms/2251/general_emergency_response_recommendations_8_16_13_final.docx Floor plans for specific buildings are available at: http://police.illinois.edu/emergencyplanning/floorplans/

Statement on Accommodations:

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TTY), or email a message to disability@uiuc.edu.

Academic Integrity:

"The University has the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity so as to protect the quality of education and research on our campus and to protect those who depend upon our integrity.

Expectations of Students. It is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions. Students have been given notice of this Part by virtue of its publication. Regardless of whether a student has actually read this Part, a student is charged with knowledge of it. Ignorance is not a defense."

The University's full academic integrity policy is available at: http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1 part4 1-401.html

Semester Schedule

Econ 519: Economics of Poverty Alleviation

Spring 2021, Monday and Wednesday 11:00am-12:20pm

Week	Day	Date	Lecture #	Lecture Title	Slide Deck	Assignment Due
1	Mon	25-Jan	1	Introduction	1	
	Wed	27-Jan	2	Market Failures	2	
2	Mon	1-Feb	3	Causality & Evaluation	3	
	Wed	3-Feb	4	Identification Strategies in Social Sciences	3	Dream Policy Changes
3	Mon	8-Feb	5	Experimental Designs and Threats	4	
	Wed	10-Feb	6	Probability and Statistics	5	
4	Mon	15-Feb	7	Power and Standard Errors	6	
	Wed	17-Feb		BREAK		
5	Mon	22-Feb	8	Tables, Regressions and Interaction Effects	6	NGO Critique
	Wed	24-Feb	9	Theory of Change	6	
6	Mon	1-Mar	10	Savings: Market Failures	7	
	Wed	3-Mar	11	Savings: Impact	7	Problem Set
7	Mon	8-Mar	12	Behavioral Economics	8	
	Wed	10-Mar	13	Midterm review and Q&A		
8	Mon	15-Mar	14	MIDTERM EXAM		
	Wed	17-Mar	15	Credit: Market Failures	9	
9	Mon	22-Mar	16	Credit: Impacts	-	
	Wed	24-Mar		BREAK		
10	Mon	29-Mar	17	Insurance	10	Data Replication 1
						Academic Paper Summaries
	Wed	31-Mar	18	Health – worms	11	Begin
11	Mon	5-Apr	19	Health – bednets	12	
	Wed	7-Apr	20	International Trade	13	
12	Mon	12-Apr	21	Infrastructure	14	
	Wed	14-Apr	22	Labor Markets - Training	15	
13	Mon	19-Apr	23	Poverty & Scarcity	16	
	Wed	21-Apr	24	Presentations	17	Dream Policy Critique
14						Academic Paper Summaries
14	Mon	26-Apr	25	Presentations	18	Complete
	Wed	28-Apr	26	Presentations		
15	Mon	3-May	27	Holistic Approaches: Graduation Model	19	Data Replication 2
	Wed	5-May	28	Conclusion and Review for Final		
	Final	s Week		(Tentatively May 13 from 130-430pm)		Final Exam

Reading List

TOPIC	READING
Introduction: Why Do We	1. *MTGI, Chapter 1
Act; Market Failures	2. *PE, Chapter 1
	3. Easterly, William. "The Handouts that Feed Poverty." Los Angeles
	Times, April 30th 2006. 4. Sachs, Jeffrey D. "Foreign Aid Skeptics Thrive on Pessimism."
	Los Angeles Times, May 7th 2006.
	5. <u>Karlan, Dean. "Every Which Way We Can." IMF Finance & Development, 2012.</u>
	6. Singer, Peter. "The Drowning Child and the Expanding Circle."
	<u>April 1997.</u>
	7. <u>Banerjee, Abhijit and Esther Duflo. 2007. "Economic Lives of the Poor."</u> Journal of Economic Perspectives, 21(1): 141-167.
	8. Besley, Timothy and Robin Burgess. 2003. "Halving Global
	Poverty." Journal of Economic Perspectives, 17(3): 3-22.
	9. Anagol, Santosh, Alvin Etang and Dean Karlan Continued Existence of Cows Disproves Central Tenets of
	Capitalism? (2013), working paper.
Causality & Evaluation	10. *MTGI, Chapter 2, To Work Against Poverty
	11. *RRE, Chapter 2, Why Randomize
	12. *RRE, Chapter 4, Randomizing
	12. Tital, enapter i, randomizing
Theory of Change,	13. *RRE, Chapter 3, Asking the Right Question
Outcomes and Threats	14. *Goldilocks chapter15. *RRE, Chapter 5 (in particular 5.1 and 5.3)
	16. *RRE, Chapter 7
Behavioral Economics	
Benavioral Economics	17. *MTGI, Chapter 3, To Buy
	18. Mullainathan, Sendhil. 2004. "Psychology and Development Economics." MIT and NBER.
	19. Bertrand, Marianne, Sendhil Mullainathan, Eldar Shafir and
	Jonathan Zinman. 2009. "What's Advertising Content Worth?"
Credit: Failure	20. *Karlan, Dean and Morduch, Jonathan. 2010. "Access to
Mechanisms	Finance." Handbook in Development Economics Volume, Chapter 71.
Credit: Impact	21. *"The Role of Microfinance" op-ed post on Kristof's NYTimes
•	blog: http://kristof.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/the-role-of-
	microfinance/ 22. *MTGI, Chapter 4 To Borrow
	23. *PE, Chapter 7, The Men from Kabul and the Eunuchs of India:
	The (Not So) Simple Economics of Lending to the Poor
	24. Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Rachel Glennerster and Cynthia
	Kinnan. 2013. "The Miracle of Microfinance? Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation.
	Nandoniized Evaluation.

	25. Karlan, Dean and Jonathan Zinman. 2011. "Microcredit in Theory
	and Practice: Using Randomized Credit Scoring for Impact
	Evaluation." Science, 332(6035): 1278-1284.
	26. Karlan, Dean and Jonathan Zinman. 2008 "Expanding Credit
	Access: Using Randomized Supply Decisions To Estimate the
	Impacts." Review of Financial Studies, 23(1): 433-464.
	27. de Mel, Suresh, David McKenzie and Christopher Woodruff.
	2008. "Returns to Capital in Microenterprises: Evidence from a
	Field Experiment." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 123(4): 1329-
	1372.
	28. Karlan, Dean; Ryan Knight and Christopher Udry. 2012. "Hoping
	to Win, Expected to Lose: Theory and Lessons on Micro
Cradit: Dagion	Enterprise Development." 29. Gine, Xavier and Dean Karlan, "Group versus Individual Liability:
Credit: Design	Short and Long Term Evidence from Philippine Microcredit
	Lending Groups"
	30. Field, Erica, Rohini Pande, John Papp and Natalia Rigol. 2012.
	"Does the Classic Microfinance Model Discourage
	Entrepreneurship Among the Poor? Experimental Evidence from
	India."
Savings: Impact	31. *MTGI Chapter 7, To Save
	32. *Karlan, Dean. 2008. "The Impact of Savings." Financial Access
	Initiative, Framing Note No. 1.
	33. *Karlan, Dean, Aishwarya Ratan and Jonathan Zinman. 2013.
	"Savings by and for the poor: A research review and agenda",
	forthcoming Review of Income and Wealth
	34. <u>Dupas, Pascaline and Jonathan Robinson "Savings Constraints and</u>
	Microenterprise Development: Evidence from a Field Experiment
	in Kenya." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics,
Savings: Behavioral	5(1): 163-192. 35. *PE Chapter 8, "Saving Brick by Brick"
· ·	55. TE Chapter 6, Saving Brick by Brick
Savings	
	36. *Karlan, Dean. "Helping the Poor Save More." Stanford Social
	Innovation Review, Winter 2010.
	37. Brune, Lasse and Xavier Gine, Jessica Goldberg and Dean Yang.
	2012. "Commitments to Save: A Field Experiment in Rural
	Malawi."
	38. Karlan, Dean, Nava Ashraf and Wesley Yin. 2006. "Tying
	Odysseus to the Mast: Evidence from a Commitment Savings
	Product in the Philippines." Quarterly Journal of
	Economics, 121(2): 635-672.
	39. Karlan, Dean and Leigh L. Linden. 2013. "Loose Knots: Strong
	versus Weak Commitments to Save for Education in Uganda"
Entrepreneurship	40. *PE, Chapter 9, Reluctant Entrepreneurs
Training	
-	

	41. <u>Karlan, Dean and Martin Valdivia. 2011. "Teaching</u> Entrepreneurship." Review of Economics and Statistics, 93(2):	
	510-527.	
	42. Beaman, Lori and Jeremy Magruder. 2013. "Minding Small	
	Change among Small Firms in Kenya", forthcoming Journal of	
	Development Economics 43. Drexler, Alejandro, Greg Fischer and Antoinette Schoar. 2012.	
	"Keeping it Simple: Financial Literacy and Rules of Thumb"	
	44. Bloom, Nicholas, Benn Eifert, Aprajit Mahajan, David McKenz	ie,
	and John Roberts. 2012. "Does Management Matter: evidence	
	from India" Quarterly Journal of Economics.	
	45. <u>Bruhn, Miriam, Dean Karlan and Antoinette Schoar, The Impact of Consulting Services on Small and Medium Enterprises:</u>	<u>[</u>
	Evidence from a Randomized Trial in Mexico	
Agricultural Finance	46. *PE, Chapter 6, Barefoot Hedge-Fund Manager	
	47. Karlan, Dean and Isaac Osei, Robert Osei and Christopher Udry	<u>•</u>
	2012. "Agricultural Decisions after Relaxing Credit and Risk	
	Constraints." 48. Giné, Xavier and Dean Yang. 2009. "Insurance, credit, and	
	technology adoption: Field experimental evidence from Malawi.	
	Journal of Development Economics, 89(1): 1-11.	_
	49. Duflo, Esther, Michael Kremer, and Jonathan Robinson. 2011.	
	"Nudging Farmers to Use Fertilizer: Theory and Experimental	
	Evidence from Kenya." American Economic Review, 101: 2350	<u>)-</u>
A ami aultural Taahmalaay	2390. 50. *MTGI Chapter 8, "To Farm"	
Agricultural Technology & Markets	•	t a
& Markets	51. *Conley, Timothy and Christopher Udry. 2008. "Learning about New Technology: Pineapple in Ghana." American Economic	<u>. a</u>
	Review, Yale University.	
	52. Ashraf, Nava, Xavier Gine and Dean Karlan. 2009. Finding	
	Missing Markets (and a disturbing epilogue): Evidence from an	
	Export Crop Adoption and Marketing Intervention in Kenya,	
TT 14	American Journal of Agricultural Economics	
Health	53. *PE Chapter 3 "Low-Hanging Fruit for Better (Global) Health?"	,
	54. *MTGI Chapter 10, "To Stay Health"	
	55. *Cohen, Jessica and Pascaline Dupas. 2010. "Free Distribution of	<u>or</u>
	Cost-Sharing? Evidence from a randomized malaria prevention	
	experiment." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 125(1): 1-45. 56. *Kremer, Michael and Edward Miguel. 2004. "Worms: Identifyi	ina
	Impacts on Education and Health in the Presence of Treatment	<u>iiig</u>
	Externalities." Econometrica, 72(1): 159-217.	
	57. Gine, Xavier, Dean Karlan and Jonathan Zinman. 2010. "Put Yo	<u>ur</u>
	Money Where Your Butt Is: A Commitment Savings Account for	<u>or</u>
	Smoking Cessation." American Economic Journal: Applied	
	Economics, 2(4). 58 Piorkman Martine and Jakob Syangson "Power to the Poorlay	
	58. <u>Bjorkman, Martina and Jakob Svensson</u> , "Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment of Community-	
	Evidence from a Nandomized Field Experiment of Community-	

	Based Monitoring in Uganda", Quarterly Journal of Economics, 2009, 124:2.
Education	59. *MTGI, Chapter 9, To Learn
	60. *PE, Chapter 4, Top of the Class
	61. *Duflo, Esther. 2001. "Schooling and Labor Market Consequences
	of School Construction in Indonesia: Evidence from an Unusual
	Policy Experiment." American Economic Review, 91(4): 795-813.
	62. *Banerjee, Abhijit V., Shawn Cole, Esther Duflo, Leigh Linden.
	2007. "Remedying Education: Evidence from Two Randomized
	Experiments in India." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 122(3):
	<u>1235-1264.</u>
	63. Kremer, Michael. 2003. "Randomized Evaluations of Educational
	Programs in Developing Countries: Some Lessons." American
	Economic Review Papers and Proceedings, 93(2): 102-106.
	64. Kremer, Michael, Paul Glewwe, and Sylvie Moulin. 2009. "Many
	Children Left Behind? Textbooks and Test Scores in Kenya." American Footnomic Journals Applied Footnomics 1(1): 112-125
Haliatia Amana ahaa.	American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 1(1): 112-135.
Holistic Approaches:	65. *Bandiera, Oriana et al. 2013. "Can Basic Enterpreneurship
Graduation Model	Transform the Economic Lives of the Poor?"
	66. *Banerjee, Abhijit, Esther Duflo, Raghabendra Chattopadhyah and
	Jeremy Shapiro. 2011. "Targeting the Hard-Core Poor: An Impact
	Assessment."
Conclusion	67. *RRE, Chapter 9 (particular 9.2, 9.3 & 9.4)