



Field Research in Development Economics
Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
Department of Economics
Summer Semester 2018

TEACHING TEAM

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Office hours: Every Tuesday after class, no appointment needed.

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Room: Waldweg 26 (Altbau) 1.118
Office hours: Every Tuesday after class, no appointment needed.

CONTENT

The course focuses on building up core skills for planning and implementing a research project in a developing country. The students (assigned to small groups of 2-5 students each) set up a research protocol for their own small-scale research project, write project proposals and terms of reference for funding and overseeing institutions (such as ethical committees) and develop effective tools for policy communication. A particular emphasis is placed on research methodology and quantitative skills pertinent to data collection and evaluation needs, such as sampling methodology (power calculations, sampling design), randomized assignment (units of randomization, balance checks), and causal inference for experimental designs (treatment effect estimation, dealing with treatment noncompliance, attrition, and other threats to internal validity). At the end of the course each student group will have elaborated a project portfolio ready for application with funding agencies and at least one of the developed projects shall be implemented in the field with students' participation.

STRUCTURE

The lecturers will provide methodological background information on the essentials of field research in developing countries. Beyond that, the students are expected to acquire relevant knowledge independently and in particular the project specific applications on their own. This means, this course is less structured than others and contains a considerable amount of independent group work, student presentations on their project's progression and feedback sessions with lecturers and students. The weekly four hour sessions are structured as such that the first half contains lecturer or student presentations, while the second half will contain independent group work and feedback.

SCHEDULE

1. **Introductory meeting** (Week 1, 10.4.)
 - Overview of course and organisational matters
 - Formation of student research groups based on research interests
 - *Homework*: 2-page exposé identifying field of research and research idea (submission 24.4.)
2. **Field project example from the Chair of Development Economics** (Week 2, 17.4.)
3. **Student presentations of first research ideas** (Week 3, 24.4.)
 - *Student presentations*: 5-minute presentation and subsequent 10-minute class discussion
 - *Homework*: Peer review of 2-page expose (submission 1.5.), Revision of own expose
4. **Student presentations of extended research ideas** (Week 5, 8.5.)
 - *Student presentations*: 10-minute presentation of extended research idea including a plan on how to implement feedback from peer reviewers; subsequent 10-minute class discussion
 - *Homework*: Continue working on proposal and include feedback from reviewers and in class discussion
5. **Research hypothesis and study design** (Week 6, 15.5.)
 - Overview of research and study design methods, including, hypotheses, sampling and randomization
 - *Homework*: Continue working on proposal and include research hypothesis and study design
6. **Student presentations of extended proposals** (Week 8, 29.5.)
 - *Student presentations*: 10-minute presentation and subsequent 10-minute class discussion
 - *Homework*: Finalization of proposal (ca. 7 pages, submission 12.6.)
7. **Study protocol, analysis plan and ethical clearance proposal** (Week 9, 12.6.)
 - Introduction to outcomes, confounders, mediators, compliance indicators and estimation strategies as well as ethical concerns and clearance
 - *Homework*: Study protocol, analysis plan and ethical clearance proposal
8. **Student presentations of study protocols and ethical clearance proposals** (Week 10, 19.6.)
 - *Student presentations*: 10-minute presentation and subsequent 10-minute class discussion
 - *Homework*: Finalization of study protocol, analysis plan and ethical clearance proposal
9. **Survey instruments and field logistics** (Week 11, 26.6.)
 - Introduction to questionnaires, survey instruments and the planning of field projects
 - *Homework*: Survey instruments and field plan
10. **Student presentations of survey instruments and field plan** (Week 13, 3.7.)
 - *Student presentations*: 10-minute presentation and subsequent 10-minute class discussion
 - *Homework*: Finalization of survey instruments and field plan
11. **Final student presentation of complete portfolio** (tba, 18.7.-17.8.)
 - *Student presentations*: 20 minute portfolio presentation and subsequent 10 minute discussion
 - *Homework*: Finalization of portfolios (graded submission late August)

GRADING

- Presentations & Assignment 1/3
- Final portfolio submission 2/3

SUBMISSIONS

- All texts should be written in English.
- Use font style “Arial”, font size 12, 1.5 spacing, margins each 2.5cm.
- Details of submissions will be announced in class
- Sent your report to Cara (cara.ebert@wiwi.uni-goettingen.de). Please name the document as follows: “Content_MatriculationNumbers”.

Date	Content	Format	Graded
24.4.	First research idea	2-page PDF	No
1.5.	Peer review report	1- to 2-page PDF	Yes
12.6.	Complete proposal	7-page PDF	No
Late August	Complete portfolio, including proposal, study protocol, analysis plan, ethical clearance proposal, survey instruments and field plan	10 pages total, PDFs and commented excel tables if needed.	Yes

Note: this is an intended schedule but will be adjusted to the needs and progression of projects.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

- We expect you to be present during all meetings of the seminar and to participate in class discussions. If you are unable to attend please do not register for this seminar.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

- Duflo, E., Glennerster, R., & Kremer, M. (2007). Using randomization in development economics research: A toolkit. *Handbook of development economics*, 4, 3895-3962.
- Glennerster, R., & Takavarasha, K. (2013). *Running randomized evaluations: A practical guide*. Princeton University Press.
- TBA