IDC122 Policy Evaluation

This course offers an accessible introduction to the field of policy evaluation with a special focus on its practice in developing countries. Evidence-based policy making is the key to effective public policy both in developed and developing countries. Policy makers need instruments to measure the effectiveness/impact of policies in order to ensure that scarce resources are spent in a way that indeed improve people’s lives. The importance of rigorous policy evaluation matters even more so in developing countries which are often more likely to suffer from ineffective government spending. Hence, aid and development effectiveness are on top of the global development agenda and there is an ever growing need for rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of development programs and projects. These will help governments and development partners to make policy decisions based on evidence and to move towards achieving the SDGs. This course will introduce basic evaluation theory, empirical evidence, and state-of-the-art tools used by practitioners. It will introduce students to basic quantitative methods for impact evaluation and provide hands-on exercises using STATA in the computer lab. Students should have either taken quantitative research methods prior to this course or are advised to take it in the same semester as this course.

COURSE HOURS
Thursdays 2:00 to 4:45pm in Room tba, International Studies Hall. Lecture notes will be made available on Blackboard prior to the lectures.

OFFICE AND CONTACT NUMBERS
Office Hours: Right after class (or by appointment), Room #528, International Studies Hall. Tel: (02) 3290-2413. Email: rrudolf@korea.ac.kr

MAIN READINGS

FURTHER READINGS

In addition, see empirical papers referred to in the lecture slides.
PROCEEDING
Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to the lecture. The exam will focus on materials presented during the lecture and presentations. In-class participation is a core ingredient in this course; student’s participation will be reflected in their grades.

GRADING
✓ In-class participation & Assignments (20%)
✓ Exam (50%)
✓ Group Project & Presentation (30%)

COURSE OUTLINE

I.   Introduction

II.  M&E Preparation: Theory of Change, Results Chain, and Indicators

III. Causal Inference and Counterfactuals

Excursion/Revision: Basic Quantitative Methods

IV.  Different Evaluation Approaches to Ex Post Impact Evaluations
  1.   Randomized Assignment
  2.   Instrumental Variables
  3.   Regression Discontinuity Design
  4.   Difference-in-Differences
  5.   Matching

V.   Impact Evaluation Practice: STATA Sessions in the Computer Lab

VI.  Group Project: Designing an Impact Evaluation