

IDEV*3400: Managing and Evaluating Change in Development

International Development Studies
University of Guelph

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Course Description

This course explores the key practical skills required by those engaged in the implementation of development policy and practice including logical frameworks, theories of change, impact assessment, and project management. It aims to equip students with an understanding of the nature of these techniques, and how and where they are employed. The strengths and weaknesses of these techniques and their implications for development policy and practice are explored.

The course is divided into four sections, all of which build cumulatively:

1. *Causal identification*: How can we use experiments to learn the effects of some intervention?
2. *Coding*: How can we tell computers how to analyze data?
3. *Statistics*: Sometimes things work or fail because of random chance. How do we quantify the likelihood of these sort of random events and separate the effects of randomness from the effect of a project?
4. *Project evaluation*: How do we apply all of the above skills to development projects?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Explain why causal inference in social systems is often difficult
2. Write and debug simple R scripts
3. Understand basic statistical issues such as bias, generalizing from samples to populations, confidence intervals, and hypothesis tests
4. Understand the basics of project evaluation, including theories of change and measurement issues
5. Create a plan to run a simple RCT and be able to evaluate the resulting data