This course covers policy issues related to education and inequality in developing contexts. We will analyze education policies and reforms, develop skills to be a critical consumer of relevant research on each topic, and examine implications of the findings to policy and practice. Class content will include and incorporate discussion and lenses related to discrimination and inclusion in education, understanding factors that influence educational decisions, provision of basic needs in schools, teacher pay and incentives, educational responses to economic and social shocks, student behavior, and curricula. Students will develop skills understanding and interpreting academic papers. This syllabus is subject to change.

Prerequisites: We will draw upon tools of program evaluation, econometrics, and microeconomic theory. Students lacking these prerequisites are responsible for learning the relevant material.

Relationship to Other Programs: This course fulfills part of the following UChicago Harris School Certificates/Specializations: Education Policy, International Policy and Development, Social and Economic Inequality, & Gender and Policy.

Readings and Guest Speakers
Readings. Many of the issues discussed in the course would benefit from the perspective of multiple disciplines. However, much of the emerging causal evidence on education in developing countries comes from the field of development economics, and therefore, the reading list of the course is composed mainly
of studies that use economic tools to analyze educational issues. These articles can be found through the University of Chicago library system or through the course reserves link on Canvas. Useful resources in understanding some of the methods used in the readings include: *Mostly Harmless Econometrics* by Angrist and Pischke or *Methods Matter: Improving Causal Inference in Educational and Social Science Research* by Murnane and Willett. Students may also find useful: *Running Randomized Evaluations* by Glennerster and Takavarasha and *Failing in the Field* by Karlan and Appel. These are on reserve at Regenstein Library.

*Guest speakers.* Guest speakers will often join us at the beginning of each class, typically via videoconference. They will often request that students prepare materials in addition to the readings listed for the course, which will also be announced ahead of time. The schedule may change as we go, and the instructor will announce adjustments accordingly. Speakers spend their valuable time to visit the class whether in person or virtually, so it is very important that students remain engaged during their visits.

**Requirements, Assignments, and Grading**
Grades will be based on regular attendance and active class participation including submission of weekly reading responses (40%), and a final project consisting of two project proposals, a first draft, a peer review, a presentation, and a final paper (60%).

*Deadlines are as follows:*
- Student survey (online link on Canvas): Please fill out by January 9 by noon.
- Reading responses: Due by noon on Canvas the day before class (minimum 4 classes)
- Final project: Form a group and set a meeting time with your TA by January 17, 2-3 project proposals due by noon January 24, first draft of project by February 14, individual contribution statement by February 15, peer review by February 21, oral presentation slides on February 25, presentation on February 26, written paper due March 1, individual contribution statement due March 2.

**Class Participation, including Attendance and Discussion Questions** (40%)
Active engagement and reflection are essential requirements for this course. Students are expected to contribute substantively to class discussions. The quality of participation is just as important as the quantity. Class participation grades will be based on questions and comments students pose in class and on the weekly discussion questions, in addition to questions posted on Piazza for the weekly speaker. Disengagement from the class will count against the participation component of your grade. Students must also be on time for class, especially when we have a guest speaker; otherwise, it may count against one’s grade.

*Reading responses.* For a minimum of four of the weeks in the term, students are expected to submit the following for at least one of the starred (*) week’s readings by 12:00 pm on the day before the class meets (Sunday) on Canvas: (1) a summary of the main idea of the paper and a new understanding, (2) something from the text that resonated or needs unpacking, (3) a question that will help us wrestle with the meaning of the text and/or the implications of the text, and (4) a research question that the readings or week’s topic inspired.

For the first reading response, after coming up with one’s own response, students should enter the prompt into ChatGPT, include the output, and compare/contrast their response vs. that from ChatGPT. In this, students should point out and discuss departures from their own response rather than objectively noting output that is correct or incorrect.

If a student submits reading responses for more than four of the class sessions, only the highest four grades will be counted.
**Attendance.** Attendance is considered as part of the participation grade. If a student needs to miss a class, they should email the TA before missing the class. If students miss a class session, this will count against their class participation.

**Final Project (60%)**
One of our goals is to cultivate critical consumership of research evidence. For the final project, students will work in self-selected groups to design an ambitious and realistic research project that uses quantitative methods that can help determine the causal impact of a policy or program. The specific topic is open-ended but must be related to education in a developing context, allowing students to explore a question that is most suited to their interests. Students do not need to conduct the research itself. The final product will comprise a research proposal which includes the design of the research project. The audience for these proposals will be a funder. This will be done in groups comprising two or three people.

The final project will be comprised of a few components:
- Form a group and sign up for a meeting with your TA (due January 17, 12pm)
- 2-3 one-page project proposals (due January 24, 12pm)
- First draft of your group’s final project (due February 14, 12pm)
- Individual contribution statement (due February 15, 12pm)
- Peer review first draft (due February 21, 12pm)
- An oral group presentation (slides uploaded on Canvas by February 25, 5pm)
- A jointly-authored, 12-15-page document (page limit does not include references) (due March 1, 12pm)
- Individual contribution statement (due March 2, 12pm)

**Topic Proposals.** Student groups will submit a minimum of two to three ideas (a minimum of one idea for each group member) for their final projects (one page each). It is useful to practice generating different viable ideas. This helps develop creativity and helps one deepen their thoughts around how to address an issue. We encourage groups to brainstorm ideas individually and in their groups to come to consensus around interests. Student groups will meet with the instructional staff to discuss their ideas. The proposals will address the following briefly:
- What's the bigger issue you want to address? What's the specific question/part of the issue you wish to address?
- What is the conceptual framework? Help structure the reader’s thinking as to how this will expand our understanding of how the world works or how we can understand people’s motivations, citing related academic literature.
- For which content, for which population?
- What data do you propose to use? How will you collect it?
- How will you design your research project?
- How will you interpret your results?
- What are potential limitations or threats to validity to this project?
- What will we learn from this project? What will remain to be understood?

**First Draft.** You will complete a comprehensive first draft of your project. Your classmates will need this for peer review, so be sure to complete it on time. Each draft will be assessed by a rubric that will be made available. Each group member should also individually submit a note about the contributions of each of the group members (including themselves) for each component of the final project.

**Peer Review.** Each group member will be assigned to individually peer review another group’s project. These should provide comprehensive feedback which both provides bigger picture perspectives (what is the contribution of this project, what are the strengths and areas for improvement, are there any gaps in the logic or project, helping the group see the forest from the trees, checking that enough information is
included such that all parts of the project make sense and are easily understood such as pointing out where things need to be clearer or more concrete, where they need to link point A to point B, whether they need to include a better rationale for their idea, etc.) in addition to more detailed feedback about specific ways they can improve the project and copyediting. This will be anonymous. It is important that the feedback is constructive and kind.

Final Class Presentation. Students will present their projects to their classmates in the final class session. Students should meet with the instructional staff at least one week prior to the presentation itself. The presentation should be directed at a specific audience (e.g. a minister of education, a foundation funding youth programs, a venture capitalist supporting non-profit organizations, a research organization, etc.). Students should practice ahead of time and ensure that each group member has equal presentation time. At the end of each presentation, there will be an opportunity for the rest of the class to ask questions. All assertions on slides should be cited using APA format. Students will also provide feedback to their peers on their presentations during the presentations. The final set of slides and a bibliography in APA format should be uploaded to Canvas the day before (Sunday) at 5pm.

Final Project. One group member should submit the final jointly authored research proposal to Canvas by March 1 at 12pm. Each group member should also individually submit a note about the contributions of each of the group members (including themselves) for each component of the final project.

Students should consider the following when crafting their projects and presentations:

- Do you think that this project could help in solving the larger issue? Is this an interesting and promising idea?
- What is the quality of the project and analysis?
- What role does evidence play in supporting the different components?
- How well is the information communicated?
- If you were the target audience member (minister of education, grant officer at a foundation, venture capitalist, newspaper or book editor, art curator, etc.), would you support this project? Why or why not? What more would you need or want to know?

Assignments should be typed and submitted using a font size of 11 point Times New Roman (or equivalent) with 1-inch margins and 1½-inch spacing. APA format should be used in citations.

Papers will not be accepted past the deadline. Students should work on their projects continually throughout the term and allow for the possibility of unforeseen circumstances. If you need accommodations, please see the instructors at the start of the quarter.

Optional: Observe the moon. As an optional activity, students can observe the moon and record their observations individually and/or on Canvas.

Course Readings and Schedule (subject to change – please check Canvas for updates)

Required readings denoted with an asterisk (*). Other readings (without an asterisk) are listed for students who wish to explore a topic further. Classes are held in-person. We will have optional additional class sessions throughout the quarter to make up for holidays and changes in the academic calendar.

Why Education? (January 8)

*This syllabus (read it before the first class session)


**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY, NO CLASS (JANUARY 15)**

**WHY EDUCATION? (MAKE-UP SESSION: JANUARY 19 AT 10 AM, VIRTUAL, OPTIONAL)**


**DISCRIMINATION AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION (JANUARY 22)**


**DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS: ROLE OF BASIC NEEDS, INCENTIVES, COSTS (JANUARY 29)**

*Guest Speaker: Anjali Desai, Manav Sadhna, Patangyu, Gandhi Ashram, India*


**VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS (MAKE-UP SESSION: FEBRUARY 2 AT 10 AM, VIRTUAL, OPTIONAL)**

**Guest Lecturer: Susannah Hares, Center for Global Development**

**Readings on Violence, Student Discipline, and Shaping Behavior (Optional)**


**SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS: TEACHERS (FEBRUARY 5)**

*Guest Speaker: Dr. Christina Collins, Director of Research and Policy, United Federation of Teachers*


**Curricula (February 12)**

*Guest Speaker: Dr. Heather Harding, Campaign for Our Shared Future*

*Guest Lecturer: Emileigh Harrison, University of Chicago*


**Education Responses to Economic and Social Shocks (February 19)**

*Guest Speaker: Jeannie Annan, International Rescue Committee*


Learning losses due to COVID19 could add up to $10 trillion. blogs.worldbank.org/education/learning-losses-due-covid19-could-add-10-trillion


**Student Presentations of Projects (February 26)**

**University Resources Available to Students.** The University offers a set of student support services (described [here](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/)), including student health services. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated disruptions, the University has provided links for students via its “Learning Remotely” website; specific resources are listed [here](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/). Specifically, we wish to remind you about available counseling services in particular: If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, remote counseling services are available. Student Counseling Service (SCS) urges you to attend to your mental wellbeing and to reach out to them for support during these challenging times. All SCS services are covered by the Student Life Fee, and there is no additional cost for students to access their services. See [https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/). Students seeking new services/resources can call 773.702.9800 during business hours (Monday–Friday 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.) and ask to speak with a clinician. Students needing urgent mental health care can speak with clinicians over the phone 24/7 by calling the SCS at 773.702.3625. Similarly, the Harris School itself provides both academic and non-academic support services for students. These resources are described on [this page of the Harris website](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/).

**Disability Accommodations.** The University’s policies regarding students with disabilities are available [here](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/). The University of Chicago is committed to ensuring equitable access to our academic programs and services. Students with disabilities who have been approved for the use of academic accommodations by Student Disability Services (SDS) and need a reasonable accommodation(s) to participate fully in this course must follow the procedures established by the Harris School of Public Policy.

Timely notifications are required to ensure that your accommodations can be implemented. If you require accommodations for this course, please inform Professor Adukia and your TA at the beginning of the quarter so we can discuss how your accommodations may be implemented in the course. Currently registered students are asked to notify the Harris Student Disability Liaison, Eman Alsamara (ealsamara@uchicago.edu) of their access requests by the end of the first week of the quarter. The Harris Student Disability Liaison will work with the student and instructor to coordinate the implementation of student accommodations. Harris students are not required to submit their accommodations letter to the instructor. Students who are facing extenuating circumstances at any point during the quarter should reach out to their Academic Advisor in the Dean of Students Office for support. If you feel you need accommodations on an ongoing basis, contact Student Disability Services. To contact SDS: disabilities.uchicago.edu, (773) 702-6000, disabilities@uchicago.edu.

**Diversity and Inclusion.** The Harris School welcomes, values, and respects students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, and we believe that rigorous inquiry and effective public policy problem-solving requires the expression and understanding of diverse viewpoints, experiences, and traditions. The University and the Harris School have developed distinct but overlapping principles and guidelines to ensure that we remain a place where difficult issues are discussed with kindness and respect for all.

The University’s policies are available [here](https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/student-counseling-service-spring-quarter-faq/). Specifically, the University identifies the freedom of expression as being “vital to our shared goal of the pursuit of knowledge, as is the right of all members of
the community to explore new ideas and learn from one another. To preserve an environment of spirited and open debate, we should all have the opportunity to contribute to intellectual exchanges and participate fully in the life of the University."

The Harris School’s commitments to lively, principled, and respectful engagement are available here: “The Harris School of Public Policy welcomes and respects students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives as part of our commitment to building an inclusive community. Fostering an environment that encourages rigorous inquiry and effective public policy problem-solving requires the involvement and understanding of diverse viewpoints, experiences, and traditions. As a leading public policy school, Harris holds diversity as a core value. That includes not only diversity of opinion, but diversity along a broad spectrum of factors, including race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability status, religion, socio-economic background, and social or political belief. Recognizing the value of diversity and inclusion is essential to combating discrimination, addressing disparities, and cultivating ethical and clear-eyed policy leadership.”

**Academic Integrity.** All University of Chicago students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Among other things, this means that students shall not represent another’s work as their own, use un-allowed materials during exams, or otherwise gain unfair academic advantage. Please read The University of Chicago policy on plagiarism, presented in the Student Manual. If you have any questions about how to properly attribute sources, please contact the teaching staff. The University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty are described here. The University’s approach is: “It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another’s statements or ideas as one's own work. To do so is plagiarism or cheating, offenses punishable under the University's disciplinary system. Because these offenses undercut the distinctive moral and intellectual character of the University, we take them very seriously.” The Harris School’s student policies are available on the policies page of our website. The *Academic Honesty and Plagiarism* section expresses the main principles.