Introduction to Education and Development
Professor Joan Dassin
Fall 2017 Module II
Thursdays 9:00am-11:50am
HS-310f
Room: TBD

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University
Sustainable International Development Graduate Program
Course Meeting Dates: October 26, November 2, 9, 16, 30, December 7, 14

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Office Hours: By appointment

University Notices:

1. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

Course Description
Education is widely believed to be a fundamental pillar of development. Various development models and theories emphasize the benefits of education for both individuals and society, including providing people with skills that lead to better jobs, higher wages, improved health, nutrition and family life, as well as promoting economic growth, democracy and political stability. UNESCO summarizes this view: “Education is a right that transforms lives...quality education is the most influential force for alleviating poverty, improving health and livelihoods, increasing prosperity and shaping more inclusive, sustainable and peaceful societies...” (UNESCO 2013).

This course critically examines these assumptions and the relationships between education and development, especially the pivotal question of whether education reduces poverty. The first session presents the state of education at the global level and introduces concepts of access,
quality, outcomes and inequality that inform the way we present and understand education in the developing world. The second session examines both positive and negative theories about the role of education in development, allowing us to consider whether education leads to economic growth and helps create ‘modern’ democratic societies, or – conversely – whether education reinforces existing inequalities and impedes peace and stability. In the third session, we analyze the forces and trends shaping current debates and policies in the education sector, such as human rights versus more instrumental approaches and public versus private provision, all in the rapidly changing global context shaped by the rise of new information technologies, increasing reliance on evidence-based policies, and the emergence of non-Western donors.

Sessions 4 through 6 review innovative programs in educational policy areas with a high potential for producing positive impacts on poverty and human development. Of many areas that might be highlighted, we focus here on Early Childhood Education (ECD), Girls’ Education, and Technical and Vocational Training (TVET). Finally, in Session 7, we look at potential ‘game changers’ such as educational technology and new methods for teaching and learning, as well as the most current assessment strategies and tools to monitor and evaluate policy choices and programs in the education sector.

**Specific Goals**

- To gain knowledge of the state of education at the global level, with a focus on developing countries and regions
- To gain exposure to the main theoretical and conceptual frameworks for understanding the relationship between education and development
- To gain familiarity with the main forces and trends that are shaping current debates about aid and education policy, such as privatization and the emergence of non-Western donors
- To introduce students to innovative programming in areas that have a high potential for impact in development, such as early childhood development, girls’ education, and technical and vocational training
- To identify “best practices” as well as the most common reasons for policy failure in educational programming
- To help students consider the impact of technology on educational policies and programs
- To expose students to the analytic, strategic and assessment tools that are most useful in the education sector
- To help students apply the information they learn in the course to an educational policy or program of interest to them

**Core Competency Statement**

This course teaches concepts and skills that have been identified as core competencies for a degree in SID, although students in all degree programs are eligible --and welcome-- for the course.

Education is a key component of social and economic development, linking the topic of this course with the required literacy in the history, concepts, and goals of sustainable development, including theories of what development is, how it occurs, and how it affects economic, social, and environmental sustainability (*Competency 1*). Similarly, educational policies and programs
are subject to the interaction of ecological, social, political and economic systems and to the relationship between market forces, governance institutions, social welfare strategies and environmental management approaches to desired development outcomes, requiring awareness and understanding of these interconnections (Competencies 2 and 3, respectively). The course also relies on contextual analysis to determine the appropriateness of specific educational policies and programs for certain countries and groups, especially for marginalized children and youth in poor communities (Competency 4).

Competency 5 on problem solving methodologies is less connected to the course outline although we do focus on using evidence and research to frame programs, policy and advocacy. Competency 6 on use of evidence is addressed directly in the course and opportunities will be created for students electing to go deeper into basic research on topics related to education, such as the relationship between poverty, educational opportunity, learning outcomes, and social mobility. Competency 7 on scarcity and distribution is only indirectly connected to the course, although the focus on children and youth in poor communities implicitly raises these concepts. As in any policy area, educational policies and programs may be designed to address specific problems in an incremental or comprehensive manner, thus alerting students to the function of time in the social change (Competency 8). Finally, the course will help students to understand management and leadership functions in organizations promoting education policies and programs (Competency 9) and will also enable students to develop and practice their communication skills (Competency 10).

Sustainable Development Statement:
Issues of sustainability of policy and program impacts in the education sector are closely connected to the content of this course. Starting with an analysis of the state of education at the global level, the course examines how greater access to education may—or may not—lead to poverty reduction and greater social and human development. It is critical for students to consider the importance of specific settings and contexts for determining the conditions under which education enables children and youth to overcome structural inequalities in their societies, or merely reinforces them. It is similarly important for students to understand the forces and trends, such as globalization and privatization, which are affecting not only the structure of educational systems but also their relationship to society as a whole. In this dynamic context, the study of education acquires a fundamental importance for broader questions about the future of development.

Race and Ethnicity Statement:
This course examines educational policies and programs from a comparative perspective, as seen by researchers, policy makers and young people themselves who come from different cultural traditions. It is based on understanding the social construction of race, ethnicity, social class and other markers of ‘difference’ in contemporary societies, and how those perceptions lead to bias, social exclusion and marginalization in specific policy areas.

Gender Perspective Statement:
By definition, the concerns of both women and men in development need to be considered both separately and together, recognizing that different societies employ diverse approaches to gender relations. Students will learn how to incorporate a gender lens into discussions of educational policies and programs. This is especially critical in the education field, since investment in girls’ education has been shown to have the highest rates of return of virtually any
social investment. At the same time, boys and young men have their own educational needs, especially in relation to technical and vocational training.

**Course Requirements**
1. Attendance at all sessions
2. Prompt arrival
3. Preparation of all readings
4. Participation in class discussions and any small group work
5. Timely submission/presentation of assignments
6. Class exercises and presentations
7. Helpfulness to other students.

Your **Grade** will be calculated as follows

1. Class participation (20%)
2. Group presentation (20%).
   Groups will make a class presentation on the discussion topics for each session.
3. Final paper (60%) - Each student is required to submit a **final paper** of 7-8 pages (single spaced) on an educational policy or program of his or her choosing.

**Key Sources:**

Harber, Clive (2014). *Education and International Development: theory, practice and issues*. Oxford: Symposium Books Ltd. (This volume has been ordered for our course and will be available at the Brandeis bookstore. If book does not arrive in time for the first session, I will put copies of the required chapters on reserve at the Brandeis library.)


Video: “The Girl Effect: the Clock is Ticking” ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e8xgF0JtVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e8xgF0JtVg))
And materials found on [www.girleffect.org](http://www.girleffect.org)

Other readings as indicated under each session will either be available online or posted as PDF
files on Latte.

Class Schedule and Readings:

PART I – THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN DEVELOPMENT: PROS AND CONS

Session 1 (Oct 26): The Value of Education for Development: An Open and Shut Case?
The class with open with introductions by the participants who will explain why they are interested in education and development and what their experience has been in the education sector.

The professor will then review the syllabus, the class assignments and the grading system. She will explain the rationale, organization and scope of the course.

The substantive portion of the session will assess the state of education in developing countries. Education has been a priority of the international development for decades. What advances have been achieved? What are the most pressing challenges that remain? Beyond the data and statistics, what underlying issues need to be addressed when considering the factors affecting access, quality, outcomes and inequality in education? Does education always lead to positive outcomes?

Required:

Read:
Chapter 1: “Education and Development: introductory ideas,” pp. 11-27

Recommended:
Read:
Part 1: Histories, Ideas and Actors in International Education.

Discussion Topic for Session 1: Of the advances made in education as described in the UNESCO report, which do you think is the most important? Why? What are the most important challenges that remain? If you were in charge of education policy in your country (or countries), which issue area or areas would you prioritize? Why?

Session 2 (November 2): Theoretical and Historical Approaches to Education and Social Transformation
This session reviews influential theoretical approaches to the role of education in development, including human capital theory, modernization theory and rights and capabilities. It examines
the utility of these theories for assessing whether educational programs and policies have intrinsic value for human development and also accelerate progress towards other development goals, such as improved health, nutrition and livelihoods. Based on these texts and our own experience and observation, we will ask whether—and under which conditions—education promotes greater equality of opportunity and social mobility or reproduces social and economic inequalities.


Recommended:


Discussion Topic for Session 2: Consider the theoretical approaches to education discussed in the reading assignments. Based on your experience and observations, which approach do you think has the most explanatory value? Which concepts do you find particularly helpful as a way of framing education and educational policy debates?

Session 3 (November 9): From Theory to Policy and Practice: Education Strategies of Development Organizations
This session reviews the education strategies adopted by major international development organizations in recent years. What are the priorities of these international donors? What are their evaluation criteria and metrics for assessing progress?

Required:
Part II – Innovative Policies and Programs with High Potential for Impact on Poverty and Development

Session 4 (November 16): Early Childhood Education (ECD)

Early Childhood Education (ECD) is increasingly seen as the most effective and cost-efficient way to intervene to address inequalities and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. After an initial overview of why early childhood development is so critical for individual children, families and societies at large, this session looks at several examples of ECD policies and challenges in developing countries at different stages of economic growth and poverty reduction. Featured cases include China, Cuba and South Africa.

Required:

Read:
Executive Summary, pp. xi-xiv
Chapter 1 – Introduction, pp. 1-4
Chapter 4 – Case Studies, pp. 23-36

**Recommended:**


See Video: Cuban home visiting programme ‘Educate your Child’ (2014). Available online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbgHSNBLWYI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbgHSNBLWYI)


**Discussion Topic for Session 4:**
Based on the cases that you read, what are the key lessons for policy and practice in the area of Early Childhood Development (ECD), particularly in education?

**Session 5 (November 30): Girls’ Education**
This session will focus on the state of education for adolescent girls in developing countries and on ‘second generation’ priorities for girls’ education: access, safety, quality learning, transition and local leadership. We will discuss the lessons from and key features of girls’ education programs, and then examine various examples of projects developed by NGOs as well as intergovernmental organizations. What are the strategies behind these efforts, what targets do they set, and are they realistic given the dimensions of the problems? For international NGOs and private foundations, in particular, to whom (or what) are they accountable?

**Required:**


Chapter 4: “Strategies to address the needs of adolescent girls,” pp. 48-60.

Materials and resources on website: The Girl Effect – www.girleffect.org

**Case Studies:**

Camfed – Campaign for Female Education ([https://camfed.org](https://camfed.org))

Care: Girls Education ([http://www.care.org/work/education/girls-education](http://www.care.org/work/education/girls-education))


Save the Children: Empower Girls to Succeed [http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGipl4E/b.6196511/k.846C/Girls_Education.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGipl4E/b.6196511/k.846C/Girls_Education.htm)


**Discussion Topic for Session 5:** Select a NGO that works on girls’ education. What are the main elements of the organization’s work? For example, is it primarily an advocacy organization? Do the organization’s campaigns and materials draw on research? How are data used or presented? What are the main arguments? Key recommendations? What evaluation frameworks are used, and are they realistic?

**Session 6 (December 7): Technical and Vocational Education (TVET)**

This session will focus on the role of education and training in providing young people with the skills to make a successful transition to the world of work. What types of education and skills are most important? Is secondary schooling, in particular, paving the way for work, especially for disadvantaged urban and rural youth? What education and training models have been developed for early school leavers? And perhaps most important, do the educational options available to young people seeking a better future actually enable them to achieve not only ‘decent work’ but also to attain social mobility and opportunities to develop their full potential and capabilities? In analyzing different types of source material (e.g. official reports, NGO policy briefs and academic research articles), the session will also focus on different styles of data presentation, argument and use of intellectual frameworks.

**Required:**


Read the following selections:
  King, K., Editorial: Now That TVET Has the Floor – What is the Story Line, pp. 10-12.

Recommended:


Discussion Topic for Session 6:
Find an example of a successful TVET program. Do you think that governments should invest heavily in this area, or should incentives and investment come from the private sector? Should governments prioritize TVET over university education, given the high rates of return to people with a university education? What kind of education is most effective in enabling young people to make a successful transition to the world of work?

Session 7 (December 14): Technology and New Approaches to Teaching and Learning
Rapid changes in technology have the potential to revolutionize teaching and learning, especially higher education. Do massive open online courses (MOOCs) reach the educationally underserved, or do they reinforce the ‘digital divide’? More generally, what are the key issues for development practitioners related to technology in education?

Required:


Case study: CiênciaWeb
http://www.cienciaweb.com.br
Low-cost video to improve science education in Brazilian schools

Sugata Mitra’s 5 favorite education talks. Available online:
http://www.ted.com/playlists/89/sugata_mitra_s_5_favorite_educ

Recommended:
http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/redefining_education_in_the_developing_world


Discussion Topic for Session 7: Under what conditions does digital technology (especially mobile forms) have the potential to change not only formal education systems but also teaching and learning? What are the key education sectors that could be revolutionized by online technology?

FINAL PAPER: 7-8 Pages, Times New Roman Font #12, Single Spaced, 1” Margins Due by 11:55pm on December 15. Topic Choices:

a) Select a country that interests you. What is the educational situation in terms of enrollment and completion rates? Pay particular attention to inequalities in both access and quality among racial or ethnic groups, males and females, and rural and urban areas. What policies and programs are in place to improve educational opportunities for poor or marginalized communities? What are the goals and objectives? Are the programs successful, and if so, why? If you could design your own program for an underserved group, what would it entail?

OR:

a) Select a level of education (ECD, primary, secondary, post-secondary, university) that interests you. Find examples of policies or programs aimed at increasing access and improving quality for poor and marginalized groups (e.g. women, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children and adults living in remote rural areas). These could include bilingual education programs, indigenous universities, or international scholarship programs. What are the goals and objectives? Are the programs successful, and if so, why? If you could design your own program for an underserved group, what would it entail?