Humphrey faculty: Art Rolnick, Senior Fellow

Time: Starting October 24, 2018, M, W 1:00 – 2:15 pm
Building/room: Carlson 2-219
Prereq: Some familiarity with regression analysis
Office hours: Rolnick: Mon., Wed. 2:30-3:30 pm (other times by appointment)

Instruction and learning goals:
In this course we examine early childhood development (ECD) from an economic perspective, viewing ECD as economic development. Students will become familiar with the role of government in a market economy with a specific focus on the role of ECD and human capital in general in economic growth and development. Students will learn about the newer research from longitudinal studies of ECD as well as newer studies of early brain development. Students will develop an understanding of the basic features of cost-benefit (or return on investment) analysis as a tool for efficient resource allocation.

This course contributes to several learning objectives for the MPP program, especially (3) “to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve complex problems, and make decisions” and (4) to understand the role of government in a market economy.

Required text:

Some readings will be from Zigler, E.; Gilliam, W.S.; W. Steven Barnett (2011) The Pre-K Debates. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing. These will be placed on Moodle.

In addition to the books above, the readings will include a number of journal articles and reports.

Evaluation:
The total number of points is 200.
Final exam (100 points) Date: December 12 (Tentative Date)
Presentation (40 points) To be scheduled during the semester. Students will present a research article or brief overview of research literature of article(s) not on reading list, but relevant to the course.
Reaction papers (15 points) Due before class on dates that starred papers (**) will be discussed (as announced in class). There are 9 readings marked with asterisks (**). Students will submit reaction papers for 4 of 9. Four papers worth 15 points each. The students will briefly summarize and react to the insights provided by the research. Length: 1.5 – 2 pages typed (double spaced).

For the 20 minute presentation, students are expected to meet with the instructor to discuss at some point prior to presentation.

The University of Minnesota’s Uniform Grading Policy stipulates that a grade of an A represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. Grades will be determined as follows: A (94-100%), A- (90-94%), B+ (87-90%), B (83-87%), B- (80-83%), etc., and F (below 55%). Late assignments may be penalized by as much as
10% per day.

Outline (dates are tentative)

October 24, 29, 31

I. The Economics of Growth and Development—Why some countries are rich and others are poor (the importance of human capital investment and an open, market-based economy)

II. Review: The role of government in a market economy
   i. Public Goods
   ii. Externalities
   iii. Competition
   iv. Efficiency vs equity

November 5

The Economic Bidding War—How conventional economic development policy in the U.S. is seriously flawed, yielding a zero return.

November 7, 12

III. We can do better – early childhood development is economic development yielding an extraordinary return.

A. Prenatal environment

B. Birth to three

November 14, 19

IV. Evidence on long-term effectiveness of early childhood programs.
a. Perry Preschool Program

b. Abecedarian Program

c. CBA evidence from longitudinal studies
   ** Heckman et al. (2010) Chapter 17: A New Cost-Benefit and Rate of Return Analysis for the Perry Preschool Program.

d. Additional estimates of the benefits of early education.

November 21, 26, 28

V. More on preschool programs

**December 3, 5, 10**

VI. Early years of elementary school
Finn et al. (2010) Chapter 14: Small class sizes in the early grades. In Childhood

VII. Debates about Preschool

VIII. Wrapping up the semester:
   i. How have the research results affected policy and why is ECD still marginalized?
   ii. Discussion of politics in early childhood development.
   iii. Federal and local initiatives.

**December 12 Final (Tentative Date)**

Canvas: Some or all of our class readings, resources and assignments are available on the course Canvas site. Find the site at canvas.umn.edu, or go to “Key Links” on MyU.umn.edu and scroll down to Canvas. For help with Canvas, go to https://z.umn.edu/CanvasHelpandSetup or click the “Canvas Help” link on our course Canvas site.

University and School policies: For links to University of Minnesota and Humphrey School policies, please click the “U of M Policies” link on our course Canvas site, or see https://z.umn.edu/PolicyStatements. Policies include information on student conduct, scholastic dishonesty, sexual harassment, equal opportunity, disability accommodations, and more.

Access to readings and materials after semester: Student lose access to Canvas sites and course reserves at the end of the semester. If you’d like to download class material (depending on copyright) or your own work for personal use, please do so during the semester.