<u>**Syllabus**</u>

<u>**Ethics and Security in "Field Research" for Development Economics**</u>

<u>**Winter Term 2020/2021**</u>

<u>**(as of 7th of April 2021)**</u>

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1. General information

1.1 Course content

Economics and other social sciences have experienced a rapid increase in primary data collection activities, not only since the Nobel prize in economics for randomized controlled trials in 2019. Already during their studies, many students engage in primary data collection in partner countries of the Global South in the framework of internships or participation in field studies as student assistants or as part of their master thesis. Recent discussions have shown that primary data collection in partner countries often comes with ethical dilemmas, but also with security challenges.

As academic coursework often is not covering the examination of aspects of ethics and security, this course plans to provide knowledge in the following fields:

a) **Research ethics and ethical research design**
   This module is designed to provide an overview about different aspects of research ethics. Students will learn and critically reflect on the goals of research and its design. While the module can obviously not cover the realm of research ethics all-inclusively, it will provide students with further references and indicate how they connect to the modules of this course.

b) Positionality

The aim of the module is to raise students' awareness of their role in the research context and as visitors in another country. Questions on how to deal with local values and one's own privileges are also addressed.

c) Collaboration with local scientific partners

The students are sensitized to the complementarity between local and international knowledge. In particular, this module discusses opportunities to work together with local partners already when designing the study and data collection as well as in the later evaluation and publication process.

d) Working conditions of translators, enumerators and colleagues in the global south

While it is mandatory to provide clear statements on how to deal with respondents' wellbeing, especially in ethics reports, this does not apply to dealing with research personnel in the Global South (translators, enumerators, researchers). Potential pitfalls include working conditions (payment, insurance), security, emotional well-being, gender inequalities, power imbalances and conflicts in the team. While many of those challenges are related to proper project management, they are often not considered in planning, and thus, in combination with intercultural differences and budget constraints, lead to ethical and security problems.

e) Security

This module covers various topics explicitly on security. The central element is careful preparation with the help of checklists and references to important contact persons and resources. In addition, mobility, physical and mental health, as well as behavior in extreme situations are addressed. Students will learn which factors may contribute to risks both for the researchers themselves and for the extended research team (data collectors, translators, drivers).

f) Approaching participants in an ethical manner

The participants of a study play a key role in relevant development research. However, ambitious research designs result in a high effort for the respondents, which is often not compensated due to limited research budgets. In addition, research often has only indirect and long-term effects on local communities. An ethical approach to local expectations will be discussed in this module. The aim of the module is to raise students' awareness of their role in the research context and as visitors* in another country.

1.2 Course goals

The course is tailored to raise students' awareness of potential security and ethical challenges and how they are intertwined. Although those challenges are very context-specific, the course provides students with toolkits for better planning and reflection as well as knowledge about the relevant support structure.

1.3 Prerequisites

Knowledge of Introductory Development Economics (M.WIWI-VWL.0008: Development Economics I: Macro Issues in Economic Development; M.WIWI-VWL.0009: Development Economics II: Micro Issues in Development Economics)

1.4 Registration

Students need to register until 30th of April 2021 via e-mail to lennart.kaplan@wiwi.uni-goettingen.de. Enrollment for the course via StudIP will be possible from 1st of May onwards.

The number of participants is restricted to 12.

2 Specific information

2.1 Description of the teaching and learning methods

The course consists of six online modules, which consist of lectures and short videos, supplemented by self-study based on provided materials and literature. Short quizzes and vignettes provide an opportunity to reflect on the covered content. While we expect participants to have worked through the assigned material, meetings (digital or in person) will be held to critically reflect and discuss the topics covered. The meetings will also enable students to engage in group discussions and define their ethical standpoints. **The course language is English.**

2.2 Meetings

There will be reflection meetings of two hours for each module taking place on following dates:

 20th of May, 27th of May, 3rd of June, 10th of June, 17th of June, 24th of June, 6 – 8 pm.

This schedule is preliminary and may change.

2.3 Examination and grading of the module

Students will be required to deliver a written paper of max. 12 pages, which consists of reflections on the different modules covered by this course.

2.4 Course materials

- We will read a mixture of academic papers and opinion pieces to account for ongoing status of the debate.

- Further course material includes recorded lectures, interviews, and other video material.

- Supplementary course materials will be announced and published on Stud.IP.

- Exercise questions will be announced during the tutorial and/or published on Stud.IP.

For curious students, take a look at this blog: https://www.gicnetwork.be/silent-voices-blog/