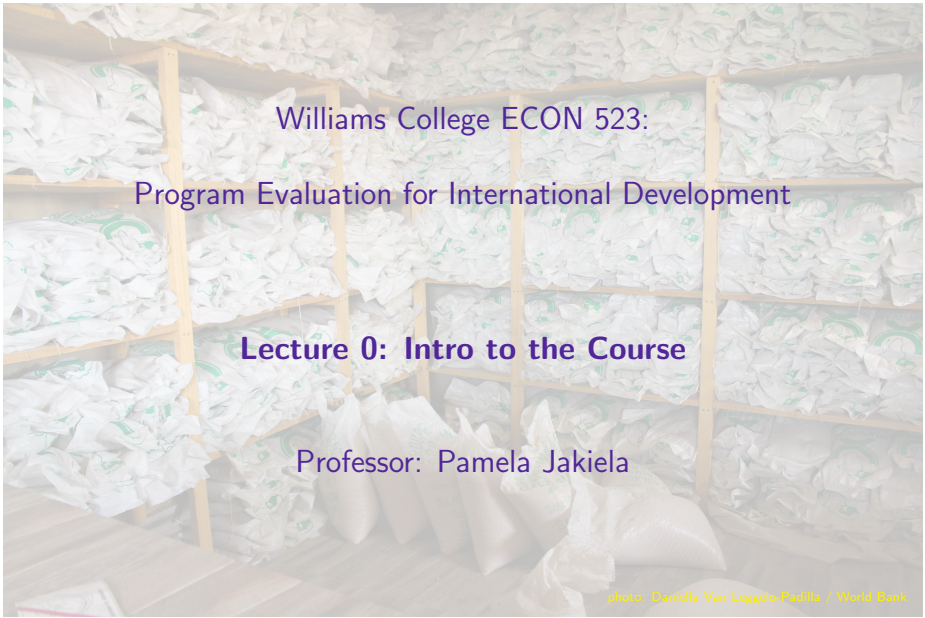


Williams College ECON 523:

Program Evaluation for International Development

Lecture 0: Intro to the Course

Professor: Pamela Jakiela

photo: Daniella Van Leggelo-Padilla / World Bank

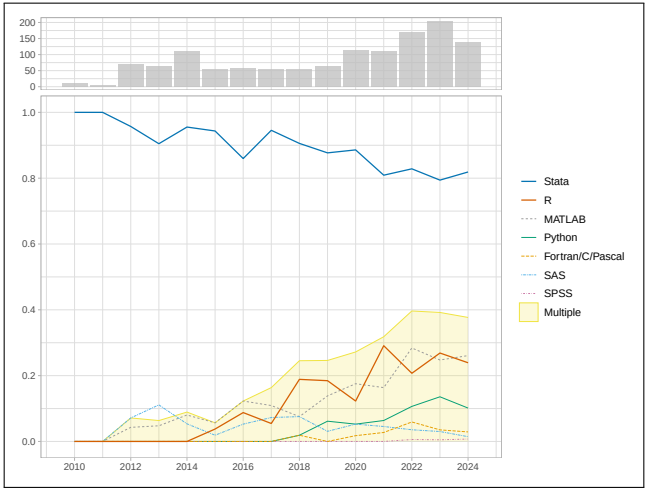
What This Course Is About

- Framework: potential outcomes, selection bias, linear regression
- Identification strategies: RCTs, DD, IV, RD
- Randomized evaluations: implementation, power calculations, clustering, analysis, controls
- How to code for data analysis (transparent and reproducible social science)

Course Logistics

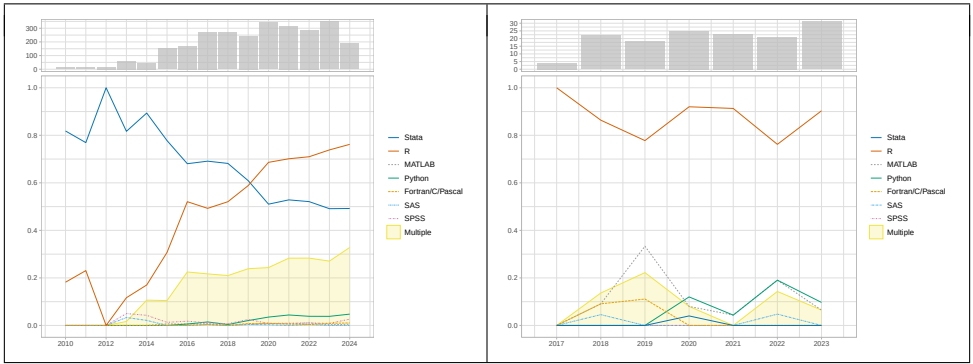
- Class meetings: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM in 211 CDE
  - Mondays = lecture, Wednesdays = Stata lab, Fridays = R/Python lab*
- Instructor: Professor Pamela Jakiela (`pj5@williams.edu`)
  - Office hours: Fridays from 2:00 to 4:00 PM in 339 Schapiro or by appointment
- Teaching Assistant: Agustin Aliaga (`aa22@williams.edu`)
  - Office hours: Sundays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the CDE (somewhere)
- Prerequisites: ECON 255, ECON 503, ECON 502 + 53, STAT 346
- Course websites:
  - `https://pjakiela.github.io/ECON523/` (course materials)
  - `https://www.gradescope.com/courses/977010` (submitting assignments)

Stata vs. R vs. Python in Economics



Source: Cai, Jakiela, Ozier, Raman, Upton, Zimmerman (2025)

Stata vs. R vs. Python in Statistics and Political Science



Source: Cai, Jakiela, Ozier, Raman, Upton, Zimmerman (2025)

Getting Started in Stata, R, or Python

- Download Stata 18 from Williams OIT (if you haven't already)
  - Williams' Stata tutorials: https://pjakiela.github.io/stata/
- If you are interested in using R:
  - Download R and R Studio: https://posit.co/download/rstudio-desktop/
  - R is also available through google's colab (see below)
  - Hadley Wickham's R for Data Science (2e) is a good primer: https://r4ds.hadley.nz/
- If you are interested in using Python:
  - I recommend using Python through google colab: https://colab.research.google.com/
  - For Python on your computer:
    - Install Anaconda distribution (but not the navigator), run Python with Spyder

Assignments, Grading, and Important Dates

Assignment(s)	**Date(s)**	**Points**
One-on-one coding assessments	Weeks of 3/17–3/21 and 5/12-5/16	30 points
Empirical exercises	Every week	25 points
Replication project	Due March 21*	12 points
Pre-analysis plan project	Due May 16*	12 points
Final exam	During the final exam period	12 points
In-class worksheets	March 10, April 28	4 points
Class participation	Every class meeting	4 points
Getting-to-know-you survey	Now	1 point

To Do List

- Read the syllabus
- Complete the Getting to Know You Survey
- Readings for next week:
  - Mostly Harmless Econometrics, Chapter 1
  - Optional: *Impact Evaluation in Practice*, Chapter 3 ("Causal Inference and Counterfactuals")
  - J-PAL: A Balancing Act
  - Optional: "Price Subsidies, Diagnostic Tests, and Targeting of Malaria Treatment: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial" by Cohen, Dupas, and Schaner (AER, 2015)
- Make sure you are ready to work in Stata, R, or Python by Wednesday/Friday