

Course Description

This course will demonstrate how one can use the power of the free market to address some of the most vexing social and economic problems of our time, with a particular emphasis on issues that plague minority communities and women. The course will give students an introduction to social finance and impact investing in a manner that does not require prior coursework in Economics. **It is intended not only for those interested in finance or social justice, but also for students with a disruptor spirit.**

Students will study situations in which market-based approaches were used to solve problems in areas such as education, discrimination, economic mobility, crime, healthcare, food instability, and the future of work. In the context of these topics, the course will provide an introduction to basic principles in finance and for-profit enterprises, venture capital, and other alternative investment strategies. The course will include discussions with leading investors and entrepreneurs who are determined to have positive social impact and culminates in a team-based capstone project in which you build your own startup to take on an important social issue and demonstrate its commercial viability.

Application for Economics 1021

1. Please provide a detailed resume
2. Write an essay about a particular social problem you are deeply passionate about and why you think this course will help you make progress toward a solution of that problem.
3. Any other information about you or your interest in using markets to solve social problems is not covered in (1) or (2), please feel free to add it.

Use this [link](#) for the application. Do not send requirements via email to Professor Fryer or his assistant.

Course Syllabus

meet in Boylston #105

Linden Schrage (Course Assistant) email: lschrage@college.harvard.edu

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK (found under "Files" tab in Canvas):

Lecture 4 (Monday 9/18):

- Financial Incentives and Student Achievement
- Understanding the Black-White Test Score Gap in the First Two Years of School

Lecture 5 (Wednesday 9/20):

- Injecting Charter School Best Practices into Traditional Public Schools