**DEPARTMENT:** Economics  
**PROFESSOR:** Jason Garred  
**RESEARCH TITLE:** Is China Building a More China-Centered World?  
**NUMBER OF STUDENT:** 3-4  
**LANGUAGE:** English

### RESEARCH DESCRIPTION:
The main objective of the research project in which students will be involved is to examine the extent to which China-funded investments in African infrastructure and mines increase the flow of minerals from Africa to China and create a friendlier trading environment for Chinese firms. Students will participate in building an extensive database and map of African transport infrastructure financed by China, as well as infrastructure funded by the World Bank. This will eventually allow for the use of an economic model of spatial interactions to compare the effects of these two sets of infrastructure investments on market access.

### KEY LEARNING ACTIVITIES:
The directed research project will proceed as follows, with implications for student learning as noted:

- We will first carefully discuss the research project as a whole: the research question, the related academic literature, the tasks involved in putting together data for the project, the methodology to be used in analyzing this data and the implications of the conclusions for public policy. This will help students to gain a global perspective on the nature and conduct of a major (multi-year) research project in economics.
- Students will then be given a tutorial in how to use GIS software. Students’ familiarity with such software could be useful in a variety of potential future careers.
- Each student will choose a subset of African countries, and will assemble information from maps, primary sources and secondary sources on the transportation network of each of these countries, and on projects funded by China and by the World Bank. In doing so, students will learn about the design of transportation networks, the nature of large infrastructure projects and African geography.
- Students will compile the above information into GIS maps and a database of project-specific information. This will give the students extensive experience in the use of GIS software, and also in searching for, classifying and organizing information in textual form.
- Students will be expected to support one another, share best practices and ensure consistency across their individual contributions to the project, which will help to build teamwork skills.