**DEPARTMENT:** Economics  
**TERM:** Spring 2021 (May 3 to June 12)  
**PROFESSOR:** Jason Garred  
**RESEARCH TITLE:** China in Africa: Building Access to Resources?  
**NUMBER OF STUDENT:** 1  
**LANGUAGE:** English  
**ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE SUBMITTED IN FRENCH:** □ YES x NO

**RESEARCH DESCRIPTION:**

The main objective of the research project in which the student will be involved is to better understand the pattern of China-funded investments in African roads, railways and ports, including whether infrastructure funded by China is likely to increase the flow of minerals from Africa to China and create a friendlier trading environment for Chinese firms. The project uses an economic model of spatial interactions to compare the predicted effects on market access of African transport infrastructure investments funded by China as compared to infrastructure funded by the World Bank. The student will assist in finalizing the project’s dataset.

**KEY LEARNING ACTIVITIES:**

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

- We will 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 being used in analyzing the data and the implications of the conclusions for public policy. This will help the student to gain a global perspective on the nature and conduct of a major (multi-year) research project in economics.
- The student will be given a tutorial in how to use GIS software. Familiarity with such software could be useful in a variety of potential future careers.
- The student will assist in checking and finalizing two key components of the dataset: a detailed GIS map of African transportation networks, and a linked database of projects funded by China and by the World Bank. In doing so, the student will learn about the design of transportation networks, the nature of large infrastructure projects and African geography. The student will also gain experience in the use of GIS software, and in searching for, classifying and organizing information in textual form.