



*"Microfinance is a rapidly growing industry, just starting to get noticed in mainstream business and academic circles. The Microfinance Program allows Lehigh students the opportunity to get an early jump and in-depth exposure to a dynamic field increasingly important in the developing world."*

*Todd A. Watkins  
Director, Microfinance Program*

### **Microfinance Program**

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for the Study of Private Enterprise  
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[www.lehigh.edu/~incntr/programs/microfinance.html](http://www.lehigh.edu/~incntr/programs/microfinance.html)

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The Martindale Center  
for the Study of  
Private Enterprise



# MICROFINANCE PROGRAM

College of Business and Economics

**MICROFINANCE** is an innovative strategy for poverty alleviation in developing countries that provides financial services for the economically active poor. Nearly three billion poor people lack access to basic financial services. The best anti-poverty strategies are those that recognize the power that people have to improve their lives. Access to financial services – whether in the form of savings, credit, money transfers or insurance – is a fundamental tool for improving a family's productive capacity. When poor people have access to financial services, they invest in assets such as sending their children to school, seeking health care and more nutritious food, and building income-earning potential by investing in their own enterprises.



## MICROFINANCE INITIATIVES

### Speaker Series

Every semester, the interdisciplinary lecture series features leading microfinance practitioners and scholars.

### Curriculum

Two undergraduate courses are offered by the Department of Economics each year: Microfinance Seminar (1 credit) runs each fall semester; and Microfinance (3 credits) each spring.

### Microfinance Field Immersion

This program is a 10-day travel experience visiting microfinance institutions in different global regions. Faculty and students have traveled to Honduras, Peru, Ghana, and Cambodia.

### Microfinance Technology Projects

Each year, a team of students collaborates on an innovative technology development project in partnership with a microfinance institution abroad.

### Microfinance Club

Students have a vibrant and active campus organization. Activities include onsite visits to microfinance organizations, fundraising for microfinance institutions in the developing



world, assisting local microentrepreneurs to grow their business, and inviting well-known practitioners to share their expertise and best practices on campus.



### Workshops and Symposia

The Program hosts an ongoing series of workshops in targeted innovation needs areas in the microfinance industry. Recent workshop topics have included management information systems technologies, and the prospects for microfinance growth in Africa.



### Research and Publications

The Program sponsors faculty and student research on the microfinance industry. The first scholarly volume of articles, "Moving Beyond Storytelling: Emerging Research in Microfinance," outlines a multidisciplinary agenda for the field. Included are articles written by Lehigh faculty and other leading microfinance academics and practitioners. Additionally, Lehigh students collaborated with faculty in writing what is currently the only "Introduction to Microfinance" textbook targeted for undergraduates.

