

Syllabus

40995 METHODS FOR POLICY EVALUATION

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Office hours: by appointment

Aim of the course: introducing the main tools used for data analysis and applied empirical research with a focus on the estimation of causal relationships. The methods covered will allow students to address questions that are relevant from a social, economic, and political perspective. The course is inherently applied. By the end of the course, students should be able to go through the multiple stages of empirical research: searching for interesting questions, devising an appropriate research design, collecting the data, and implementing the analysis.

Exam: Class presentation of research projects (100%). Detailed instructions will be given in class.

All the relevant material is covered in the slides, which will be posted on the course's platform.

General references

Angrist and Pischke (2009) *Mostly Harmless Econometrics*. Princeton University Press

Cunningham (2021) *Causal Inference*. Yale University Press

Gerber and Green (2012) *Field Experiments*. W.W. Norton & Company

Topics

1. Introduction. Directed Acyclic Graphs

Angrist and Pischke (2010). "The credibility revolution in empirical economics: How better research design is taking the con out of econometrics" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*

Cunningham (2021), chapter 3

2. Causal inference and experimentation

Angrist and Pischke (2009), chapter 2

Carlana, M., La Ferrara, E. & P. Pinotti (2022). "Goals and gaps: The Educational Careers of Immigrant Children" *Econometrica*

Galasso, Morelli, Nannicini, and Stanig (2022) "Fighting Populism on Its Own Turf: Experimental Evidence" CEPR

Gerber and Green (2012), chapters 2, 5, and 6

3. Naturally occurring experiments

Gagliarducci, Onorato, Sobbrino, and Tabellini (2020) "War of the Waves: Radio and Resistance During World War II" *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*

Drago, Galbiati, and Vertova (2009) "The Deterrent Effects of Prison: Evidence from a Natural Experiment" *Journal of Political Economy*

Hall, Huff, Kuriwaki (2019) "Wealth, Slaveownership, and Fighting for the Confederacy: An Empirical Study of the American Civil War" *American Political Science Review*

4. Survey experiments

Alesina, Miano, and Stantcheva (2023) "Immigration and Redistribution" *The Review of Economic Studies*

Alesina, Stantcheva, and Teso (2018) "Intergenerational Mobility and Support for Redistribution" *American Economic Review*

Stantcheva (2022) "How to Run Surveys: A guide to creating your identifying variation and revealing the invisible" *Annual Review of Economics*

5. Instrumental variables

Angrist and Pischke (2009), chapter 4

Cunningham (2021), chapter 7

6. Natural experiment of history

Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001) "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation" *American Economic Review*

Dittmar (2011) "Information Technology and Economic Change: The Impact of the Printing Press" *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Giorcelli (2019) "The Long-Term Effects of Management and Technology Transfers" *American Economic Review*

Lowes, Nunn, Robinson, and Weigel (2017) "The Evolution of Culture and Institutions: Evidence from the Kuba Kingdom" *Econometrica*

Voth (2021) "Persistence—myth and mystery." *The handbook of historical economics*. Academic Press

7. Regression discontinuity designs

Angrist and Pischke (2009), chapter 6

Cattaneo and Titiunik (2022) "Regression Discontinuity Designs" *Annual Review of Economics*

Dell (2010) "The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining Mita" *Econometrica*

Gagliarducci and Nannicini (2013) "Do Better Paid Politicians Perform Better? Disentangling Incentives from Selection" *Journal of the European Economic Association*

Eggers, Freier, Grembi and Nannicini (2017) "Regression Discontinuity Designs Based on Population Thresholds: Pitfalls and Solutions" *American Journal of Political Science*

Lee and Lemieux (2010) « Regression Discontinuity Designs in Economics" *Journal of Economic Literature*

8. Difference-in-Differences

Angrist and Pischke (2009), chapter 5

Cunningham (2021), chapter 9

de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfoeuille (2020) "Two-Way Fixed Effects Estimators with Heterogeneous Treatment Effects" *American Economic Review*

de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfoeuille (forthcoming) "Two-Way Fixed Effects and Differences-in-Differences with Heterogeneous Treatment Effects: A Survey" *Econometrics Journal*