

Working Group in African Political Economy

2018 WGAPE@NYUAD Special Meeting

New York University – Abu Dhabi

22-28 January 2018



Introduction

The [Working Group in African Political Economy \(WGAPE\)](#) brings together faculty and advanced graduate students in Economics, Political Science, and other Social Science disciplines who combine field research experience in Africa with training in political economy methods. It is co-led by Daniel Posner (Political Science, UCLA), Edward Miguel (Economics, UC Berkeley), and Brian Dillon (Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington). We are collaborating with partners at NYU - Abu Dhabi, Morgan Hardy (Economics, NYU Abu Dhabi), J. Andrew Harris (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi), Melina Platas Izama (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi), and Peter van der Windt (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi) to host a special WGAPE meeting with a research discussions component and training module.

The **Research Workshop, 26-28 January**, is built around in-depth discussions of papers and research designs that are circulated and read in advanced. Presenters provide little more than a few brief orienting comments before the floor is opened for discussion. WGAPE is more a forum for presenting work in progress than polished, finished projects and provides an unparalleled opportunity for useful feedback.

From **22-25 January**, for invited African scholars, we will organize **Learning Days**; a training workshop on experimental methods. The training will provide scholars a chance to advance their knowledge of research methods in studying topics relevant to political economy of Africa, best research practices, transparency, and the resources for relevant data sources, training materials, and networking opportunities.

Host: New York University, Abu Dhabi

Date and location:

- **January 22-25, 2018:** The Learning Days will take place in building A5, Level 1, Room 1139.
- **January 26-28, 2018:** The Research Workshop will take place in building A6, Room 005.

Funding:

- WGAPE@NYUAD is funded by New York University – Abu Dhabi, Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA), Evidence for Governance and Politics (EGAP), and Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS).

Research Workshop

The core goal of WGAPE@NYUAD is to provide a forum for scholars to present and receive feedback on their works in progress on research studying the political economy of Africa. We have a total of 8 papers and 5 research designs to be discussed during the Research Workshop. Research designs are often in the style of pre-analysis plans, a useful tool to describe the study design, outline hypotheses, specify variable construction, and pre-specify the analysis of data.

Instructions for the Research Workshop:

- Papers and research designs will be circulated and are expected to be read in advance.
- During the Research Workshop, each presenter has one hour during discussion sessions. The presenter may provide a five-minute introduction at the beginning of that hour.

Learning Days

One goal of WGAPE@NYUAD is to make researchers – especially from Africa – aware of the latest research tools. To do so, 22 – 25 January will be dedicated to a training workshop where core experimental methods in the field of political economy are discussed. Moreover, one goal of the training is to make sure we are all at the same methodological level before the start of WGAPE on January 26th. It is also a good way to get to know each other.

- The workshop is organized in collaboration with EGAP (www.egap.org) and coordinated by Peter van der Windt (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi) and Maarten Voors (EGAP and Wageningen University).
- The trainers will be: Morgan Hardy (NYU Abu Dhabi), Melina Platas Izama (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi), Andy Harris (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi), Gareth Nellis (EGAP, UC Berkeley), Peter van der Windt (Political Science, NYU Abu Dhabi) and Maarten Voors (EGAP and Wageningen University).
- Please bring a laptop. Make sure you have STATA, R or Rstudio¹ installed. See notes below.
- We will use material developed by EGAP (<http://egap.org/list-methods-guides>).
- Additional material draws from:
 - Dunning, Thad. 2012. Natural experiments in the social sciences: a design-based approach. New York: Cambridge University Press
 - Gerber, Alan S, and Donald P Green. 2012. Field experiments: Design, analysis, and interpretation: New York: W.W. Norton
 - Gertler et al: Gertler, Paul J.; Martinez, Sebastian; Premand, Patrick; Rawlings, Laura B.; Vermeersch, Christel M. J. 2011. Impact Evaluation in Practice. World Bank
 - Glennerster et al: Glennerster, Rachel; Takavarasha, Kudzai. 2013. Running Randomized Evaluations: A Practical Guide. Princeton
- **Preparation before the workshop.** Please prepare a brief (5 minutes) statement to introduce yourself (who you are, where you work, what are your expectations for the Learning Days) and to present your research question and general idea of your project that you will work on during the workshop.
- Every participant must have a research project to work on throughout the week. If you would like to discuss potential research project options with us in advance of the training, please send us an email. We are happy to discuss!

Networking

A final goal of WGAPE@NYUAD is to connect scholars working on the political economy of Africa, and to build a network among them. To do so we would like to connect researchers with each other, and particularly senior

¹ Download from <http://www.rstudio.com/products/rstudio/download/> . If you already prefer using R with an editor other than RStudio, you do not need to install RStudio.

researchers with more junior researchers. We will do so with “speed dating” moments during the research workshop.

Learning Days: January 22-25

Welcome and Arrivals for Learning Day

- Airport transfers have been arranged for all participants. Your driver will be waiting for you after you pass immigration with a sign with your name on it. The driver will transport you to the hotel.
- Hotel reservations have been made at the Southern Sun hotel in central Abu Dhabi. Upon arriving at the hotel, you will check in and be assigned a room.
- A bus will transport participants from the hotel to the Learning Days each day.
- Information and welcome packets will be available on the first day of Learning Days. This includes meal vouchers, which will be given to you by Peter van der Windt, one of the Learning Days instructors. Meal vouchers can be used in D1 and D2 dining halls.
- During the Learning Days, breakfast, lunch and dinner are not organized. You can take your meal vouchers to D1 and D2 for lunch and dinner. Breakfast is included in your hotel stay.

Monday 22 January 2018: Getting Started

Location: Social Science Building, Building A5, Level 1, Room 1139

Morning: Introduction and causal inference

10:00 AM–12:00 PM: Welcome

- Introduction of group
- Introduction of WGAPE and EGAP (what it is + types of projects)
- Discussion of the days to come, including WGAPE Research Workshop
- Objectives of Learning Days
- Expectations for collaboration: Ask questions (when you ask questions you are helping everyone, including the professors)! It is ok to sit or stand during lectures and discussions (just not in front of other people).
- Logistics
- Brief statement of research projects by participants (no formal presentation). A five-minute introduction to your research project, stressing motivation and research question, and main evaluation design plan.

12:00–1:00 PM: Lecture 1: Causal inference – Maarten Voors

- Research questions: what are X and Y ? What might it mean to say X caused Y ?
- The potential outcomes framework and the fundamental problem of causal inference
- What do experiments have to do with causality?

1:00 –2:00 PM: LUNCH

Afternoon: Research Design and Design Clinic

2:00–3:00 PM: Research presentation ¹ – Morgan Hardy

- During the “Research presentations” we will discuss a paper or research design that will also be discussed during the Research Workshop. This allows us to be understand the study and the method used.

² These research presentations are meant to be about the **process** of doing research. The presentation are short to allow questions.

- PAPER 1: Morgan Hardy and Gisella Kagy, Vassar College If She Builds It, They Won't Come: Experimental Evidence of Demand-Side Constraints in the Gender Profit Gap

3:00–3:15 PM: Lecture 1, continued

3:15–3:45 PM: Lecture 2 Stages of research design and implementation – Maarten Voors

- Introducing the *research design form*.

3:45–4:45 PM: Design clinic: your project

- Setting up laptops with R
- Break in small groups.
- Work on *research design form*.
- Small Group discussions on research ideas: What are causal drivers and what are outcomes? By what “theory of change” or “causal mechanism” should the drivers influence the outcomes?

4:45–5:15 PM: Recap

- Recap
- Quick go around: what did you find useful? What would you like to hear more about?

Resources

- [10 strategies for figuring out if X causes Y](#)
- [10 things you need to know about causal inference](#)
- Research design form (to be distributed)

Tuesday, 23 January 2018: Identification and Randomization

Location: Social Science Building, Building A5, Level 1, Room 1139

Morning: Recap and Randomization strategies

9:00–9:30 AM: Reflections on Day 1

9:30–11:00 AM: Lecture 4 What is a hypothesis test for a randomized experiment? – Gareth Nellis

- Classical hypothesis testing
- Fisher’s test of the sharp null hypothesis of no effects and relationship with large sample tests.

11:00–11:15 AM: Break

11:15 AM–12:30 PM: Lecture 5 Randomization – Maarten Voors

- Mechanics of replicable randomization
- Strategies for randomization: simple, clustered, factorial, intertemporal, block randomized, (the idea of the power of a statistical test)
- Examples from the field

12:30–1:30 PM LUNCH (1:15 PM: assistance installing R, as needed)

Afternoon: Design Workshop

1:30–2:00 PM: Lecture 5, continued

2:00–3:00 PM: Research presentation 2 – Melina Platas Izama

- PAPER 2: Jeremy Bowles & Horacio Larreguy, Political Debates and Radio Broadcasting: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Liberia¹

3:00–4:30 PM: Design clinic: assignments and design form

- Work on research design form
- Focus on strategy for hypothesis testing for each design
- Focus on randomization strategies for each design

4:30–5:00 PM: Recap

- Recap
- Quick go around: what did you find useful? What would you like to hear more about?

Resources

- [10 things you need to know about randomization](#)

Wednesday, 24 January 2018: Estimation of Causal Effects and Statistical Power

Location: Social Science Building, Building A5, Level 1, Room 1139

Morning: Estimation and Testing of Causal Effects

9:00–9:45 AM: Reflections on Day 2 from the participants

9:45–11:00 AM: Lecture 6 Average Treatment Effect and Statistical Inference – Peter van der Windt

- Unbiased estimation of average treatment effects, Standard Errors, Confidence Intervals.

11:00 AM–1:00 PM Lecture 7 Power analysis – Gareth Nellis

- What it is, relation to sample size, dispersion, standard methods, simulations

1:00–1:45 PM LUNCH

Afternoon: Design Workshop, prepare presentation

1:45–3:00 PM: In-class experiment

3:00–4:45 PM: Design clinic: design form

- Work on research design form
- Figuring out the power for each study
- Feedback and questions
- Prepare presentation

4:45–5:15 PM: Recap

- Recap
- Quick go around: what did you find useful? What would you like to hear more about?

Resources

- [10 things you should know about the local average treatment effect](#) [10 things you need to know about spillovers in experimental analysis](#)

- [10 things you need to know about statistical power](#)
- [10 things you need to know about covariate adjustment](#)
- [10 things you need to know about multiple comparisons](#)
- <https://egap.shinyapps.io/spillover-app/>
- https://egap.shinyapps.io/Power_Calculator/

Thursday, 25 January 2018: Threats and other topics

Location: Social Science Building, Building A5, Level 1, Room 1139

Morning: Threats and other topics

9:00–9:45 AM: Reflections on Day 3 from the participants

9:45–11:00 AM Lecture 8 Threats – Maarten Voors and Peter van der Windt

- Partial compliance: LATE and ITT
- Spillovers & Attrition & Mediation

11:00 AM–1:00 PM: Lecture 3 Research Transparency – Maarten Voors

1:00–2:00 PM LUNCH

Afternoon: Design Workshop

2:00–2:30 PM: Lecture 9 Other Topics

Based on demand we will discuss on one or more of the following themes.

1. IRB/Ethics
2. Spillovers & Attrition & Mediation
3. Partnerships
4. Measurement strategies
5. Reproducible workflow

2:30–4:30 PM: Design clinic: assignments and design form

- Work on research design form
- Figuring out the power for each study
- Prepare presentation

4:30–5:00 PM: Feedback session and close

- Feedback and questions

Note: 5 minute presentations take place on during the WGAPE workshop.