Modibo Camara

Northwestern Economics

| Placement Director: | Professor Alessandro Pavan | 847-491-8266 | alepavan@northwestern.edu |
| Placement Administrator: | Alison Stoute | 847-491-5694 | econjobmarket@northwestern.edu |

Contact Information

Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208

Mobile: 202-415-2751
mcamara@u.northwestern.edu
https://sites.northwestern.edu/mkc6866/
Citizenship: United States, Germany

Fields

Research: Microeconomic Theory, Economics & Computation

Teaching: Microeconomics, Econometrics

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University (anticipated) 2022
  Dissertation: Complexities in Economic Theory
  Committee: Eddie Dekel (Chair), Jason Hartline (Chair), Marciano Siniscalchi, Jeffrey Ely
M.A., Economics, Northwestern University 2018
B.A., Mathematics & Economics, University of Pennsylvania 2016

Fellowships & Awards

Distinguished TA Award 2021-22
Dissertation University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2021-22

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University 2017-2021
  Econometrics (graduate), Econometrics (undergrad), Microeconomics (undergrad)

Research Experience

Research Intern, Nicole Immorlica, Microsoft Research 2020
Research Assistant, Eddie Dekel, Northwestern University 2019
Project Intern, Yian Liu, Federal Reserve Board of Governors 2015
Intern, Esen Onur, Commodity Futures Trading Commission 2014
Research Assistant, Susan Wachter, University of Pennsylvania 2013-14

Conferences

European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021
Cornell ORIE (invited) 2021
Economics and Computation (invited) 2021
Transatlantic Theory Workshop 2021
Risk, Uncertainty, and Decision (RUD) 2021
Decision: Theory, Experiments, and Applications (D-TEA) 2021
North American Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021
Africa Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021
European Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021
World Congress of the Game Theory Society (GAMES) 2021
Foundations of Computer Science (FOCS) 2020
European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2020
Young Economists Symposium (YES) 2020
Economics Graduate Student Conference (EGSC) 2020
Midwest Theory Day 2018

Refereeing	American Economic Review, Journal of Mathematical Economics, The Web Conference

Job Market Paper   **"Computationally Tractable Choice"**

Abstract: I incorporate computational constraints into decision theory in order to capture how cognitive limitations affect behavior. I impose an axiom of computational tractability that rules out behaviors that are thought to be fundamentally hard. I use this framework to better understand common behavioral heuristics: if choices are tractable and consistent with the expected utility axioms, then they are observationally equivalent to forms of choice bracketing. Then I show that a computationally-constrained decisionmaker can be objectively better off if she is willing to use heuristics that would not appear rational to an outside observer.

Other Papers   **"Mechanisms for a No-Regret Agent: Beyond the Common Prior"** (with J. Hartline, A. Johnsen)

Abstract: We study incomplete information games where a policymaker commits to a policy, an agent responds, and payoffs depend on a state of nature. To solve these games, it is typical to (i) make strong prior knowledge assumptions or (ii) make no prior knowledge assumptions and optimize against the worst case. We show that, if the designer and agent interact repeatedly over time, we can approximate the superior performance of (i) while preserving the robustness of (ii). The state is revealed after every period, but we make no other assumptions on the state-generating process. We develop calibrated policies that adapt to historical data over time, assuming the agent does the same, even if the data is highly non-stationary. This requires new behavioral assumptions that build on prior work on learning in games and capture ideas like "rationality" and "unpredictability" in a fully ex post sense.

"Mechanism Design with a Common Dataset"

Abstract: I propose a new approach to mechanism design: rather than assume a common prior belief, assume access to a common dataset. I restrict attention to incomplete information games where a designer commits to a policy and a single agent responds. I propose a penalized policy that performs well under weak assumptions on how the agent learns from data. Policies that are too complex, in a precise sense, are penalized because they lead to unpredictable responses by the agent. This approach leads to new insights in models of vaccine distribution, prescription drug approval, performance pay, and product bundling.

Languages	English (fluent), German (native), Spanish (intermediate)

References

Professor Eddie Dekel
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.4414
dekel@northwestern.edu

Professor Jason Hartline
Department of Computer Science
Northwestern University
2233 Tech Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.467.0280
hartline@northwestern.edu

Professor Marciano Siniscalchi
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.5398
marciano@northwestern.edu

Professor Jeffrey Ely
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.8208
jeffely@northwestern.edu