Chicago Booth Full-Time Research Assistant Application

1. Labor Market Analysis Task

   - Time: Spend no more than 5 hours on this task

   - File: cps_wages_LFP.zip contains a stata .dta file (and duplicate .csv[1]) from the U.S. Current Population Survey since 1976.[2] It provides individual-level data on year, state, month, survey weight, demographic characteristics, and labor market outcomes. You can download the data here:
   `http://www.ericzwick.com/ra/cps_wages_LFP.dta.zip`

   - Goal: We'd like you to use these data to produce your best answer to the following question: how have hourly wages ("wage") and labor force participation ("lfp") evolved for skilled and unskilled workers since 1976?

     (a) Please summarize the key trends for wages and labor force participation.

     (b) Among men older than age 25, which groups of people have had the biggest changes in labor force participation?

     (c) What factors do you think are driving these patterns? What evidence might you want to assemble to test these hypotheses if you were to investigate them further?

   - Output:

     (a) Please provide a short note in .pdf format that concisely answers these questions. Please be sure to include a few graphs and/or tables to support your conclusions.

     (b) Please provide the code that you used to produce these figures and/or tables.

   - Note: You should feel free to use whatever techniques you want. The goal here is not to show off hi-tech econometrics, but rather to show us how you think about data. Sometimes something as simple as a graph can do more for an argument than all the estimators in the world.

2. Data Manipulation Task

   - Time: No limit; complete as quickly as you can without sacrificing quality (e.g., it is worth spending 5 minutes "commenting" your code so we can understand it.)

     (a) Please email our assistant Stephen Lamb (stephen.lamb@chicagobooth.edu) and specify the time when you would like to start your task (please use the Chicago time zone).

     (b) Stephen will email you the data and instructions.

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[1]A .csv version is available here: `http://www.ericzwick.com/ra/cps_wages_LFP.csv.zip`
[2]Extracted from `https://cps.ipums.org/cps/`.

(c) When you have finished the task, email Stephen your output and code that you used to produce it.

(d) If there is some reason why the time you spent on your task does not line up with the time you received / sent emails to Stephen, please send Stephen a follow-up email explaining what happened.

- File: Medicare_Advantage.zip

    - The zip archive you will receive from Stephen contains a document called Medicare Advantage Instructions.pdf that describes the task in detail. You will need to take the data in scp-1205.csv and perform some simple manipulations. You are welcome to use whatever tool you like for this – a statistical program like Stata would work well.