Jorge D. Ballestero

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Profile Summary

Decision-science researcher with strong quantitative training and hands-on experience in experimental design and data analysis. Research Assistant at Columbia studying how individuals evaluate complex options under uncertainty, with a focus on choice overload, sequential evaluation, and context effects. Experienced in Python, R, oTree, and applied econometrics. Preparing for a PhD in the social sciences.

Education

Columbia University & Sciences Po Paris   *2022 – 2026*
Dual BA, Economics and Political Philosophy — GPA: 4.03/4.00
○ GS Honors Society, Dean's List, Ilse S. Mintz Scholarship (Columbia), Cum Laude Honors (Sciences Po Paris)
○ Relevant Coursework: Econometrics (A), Statistics (A), Research Seminar (A+), Behavioral Economics (A), Game Theory (A), Linear Algebra (A+), Modern Analysis (In Progress)

Columbia Business School   *2025 – 2026*
Special Concentration in Business Management
○ Coursework: Corporate Finance (A+), Strategy Formulation (In Progress)

Research Experience

Teaching Assistant – Intermediate Macroeconomics   *Jan 2026 – Present*
Columbia University, New York
○ Selected as TA for a 200-student intermediate macroeconomics course, supporting core instruction in growth, business cycles, and dynamic macro models.
○ Designed detailed answer keys and grading rubrics for weekly problem sets, ensuring consistency and rigor across large-scale evaluation.
○ Led weekly recitation sections and office hours, translating formal models into intuitive economic reasoning and guiding students through applied problem-solving.
○ Graded and provided structured feedback on problem sets, balancing mathematical precision with economic interpretation.

Research Assistant – Market Unraveling   *Feb 2025 – Oct 2025*
Columbia University, New York
○ Designed and implemented oTree experiments studying how individuals evaluate complex contracts under uncertainty, including treatment randomization and incentive-compatible payoff structures.
○ Programmed experimental logic to vary information structure, framing, and probabilistic thresholds, enabling identification of effects on perceived value and choice behavior.
○ Used externally calibrated stochastic models based on historical rainfall data to generate probabilistic outcomes for each experimental round.
○ Built reproducible R pipelines for data processing, quality control, and preparation for econometric analysis, including coverage checks, missing-data audits, and summary diagnostics.

Strategy Advisor to the Ambassador to the UN   *Jul 2025 – Sept 2025*
Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations, New York
○ Analyzed voting records and negotiation patterns from over 15 country statements to identify coalition opportunities.
○ Drafted official speeches and policy statements delivered to committees on disarmament, sustainability, and humanitarian issues.
○ Synthesized multilateral negotiations across ECOSOC sessions into strategic recommendations for senior diplomats.

Research Projects

Anchoring in Context – Behavioral Economics Research Proposal *Jan 2025 – May 2025*
Columbia University, New York
- Developed a formal model of dynamic anchoring and expectation-based salience in sequential evaluations.
- Designed an experimental framework to test anchoring, decoy effects, and salience spillovers in hiring-style decision tasks.

Sociology of Norms – Quantitative Study *Jan 2023 – May 2023*
Sciences Po Paris, Reims, France
- Conducted quantitative analysis on field observation data examining the relationship between gender norms and drinking patterns.
- Developed regression models to evaluate the impact of socially observed variables on individual behavior.

AI Misinformation and Civic Trust *Jan 2023 – Mar 2024*
Sciences Po Paris, Reims, France
- Designed a policy analysis project on AI-generated misinformation and its effects on public trust.
- Produced recommendations for institutional safeguards emphasizing cross-platform regulation.

Leadership and Service

Dual BA Representative – GS Student Council *Sep 2024 – May 2025*
Columbia University, New York
- Launched peer mentorship program supporting 50+ international students navigating dual-degree systems.
- Secured administrative support to expand mentorship access across GS and Dual BA cohorts.
- Organized academic panels and community-building events for interdisciplinary students.

Projects

FinSelf Coach – Behavioral Finance Assistant *2025*
Personal Project
- Built GPT-powered assistant identifying investor bias archetypes and generating real-time strategy nudges.
- Modeled salience and reference effects to deliver context-dependent financial insights.

UniSearch – University Discovery Tool *2025*
Personal Project
- Developed full-stack recommendation tool helping students match universities by preferences and goals.
- Designed filtering logic and deployed application using Vercel and Render.

Technical Skills and Proficiencies

Languages:
- English, Spanish, French (Native); Portuguese (Fluent); Russian, German, Italian (Conversational)

Technical Skills:
- Python, R, oTree, Stata (learning), SQL, Excel
- Git, Microsoft Office, React, FastAPI, Vercel, Render