

Benjamin S. Manning

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Education

Ph.D. Management Science, Information Technology, MIT	2027 (Expected)
Committee: John J. Horton (Chair); Christopher Avery	
S.M. Management Research, MIT	2024
M.P.P. Economic & Social Policy, Harvard University	2021
B.A. Mathematics (College Honors), Washington University in St. Louis	2017

Working Papers

Eliciting Preferences with AI Agents to Facilitate Complex Market Designs

(with Gili Rusak & John J. Horton)

Under Review

[As Generative Models Improve, We Must Adapt Our Prompts](#)

(with Eaman Jahani, Joe Zhang, Hong-Yi TuYe, Mohammed Alsobay, Christos Nicolaides, Siddharth Suri, & David Holtz)

Under Review

[Automated Social Science: Language Models as Scientist and Subjects](#)

(with Kehang Zhu & John J. Horton)

The Quarterly Journal of Economics - Reject & Resubmit

[Large Language Models as Simulated Economic Agents: What Can We Learn from Homo Silicus?](#)

(with John J. Horton & Apostolos Filippas)

The Review of Economics and Statistics - Revise & Resubmit

Nudging Teachers: A Megastudy To Increase Math Achievement Among 3 Million Elementary School Students

(with Angela L. Duckworth, Katherine L. Milkman, & 26 others)

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences - Revise & Resubmit

Peer-Reviewed Publications

[Effect Size Magnification: No Variable is as Important as the One You're Thinking About—While You're Thinking About It](#)

(with Linnea Gandhi & Angela L. Duckworth)

Current Directions in Psychological Science - 2024

In Proceedings

[Large Language Models as Simulated Economic Agents: What Can We Learn from Homo Silicus?](#)

(with John J. Horton & Apostolos Filippas)

ACM Transactions on Economics and Computation (EC) - 2024

Research in Progress¹

From Simple Preferences to Proxies: How Do AI Agents Trade on Our Behalf?

(with Hal Abelson, John J. Horton, Crystal Qian, Vivian Tsai, James Wexler & Kehang Zhu)

A New Kind of Economic Agent

(with Christopher Avery, Bruce Schneier, and Peter Zemsky)

Some Simple Methods to Better Ideate with AI Subjects

(with John J. Horton)

Deriving Data-Driven Nudges to Help Students Learn Math

(with Marcos Gallo, Sean Hu, Angela L. Duckworth, & Colin C. Camerer.)

Honors & Awards

Mercatus Center Emergent Ventures Fast Grant (\$50,000)

2024

MIT Sloan PhD Fellowship (~ \$250,000)

2022 – Present

Kosciuszko Foundation Scholarship (\$6,500)

2019 & 2022

Invited Workshop, Conference, & Seminar Presentations²

2025: Khipu Latin American Meeting in Artificial Intelligence (*Scheduled*); Artificially Intelligent Social Science Workshop (Oxford); American Economic Association (AEA) Annual Meeting;

2024: Workshop on Information Systems and Economics (WISE); Conference on Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Business Analytics; National Association for Business Economics (NABE) Tech Economics Conference; Informs Annual Meeting; AI in Social Science Conference at the University of Chicago; Conference On Digital Experimentation (MIT CODE); Machine Learning in Science (MLiS) Conference; Econometric Society Interdisciplinary Frontiers Conference on Economics and AI+ML; NBER Summer Institute—Digital Economics and Artificial Intelligence; International Conference on Computational Social Science; ZEW Conference on the Economics of ICT; ACM Collective Intelligence 2024; International Conference of the French Association of Experimental Economics; Instacart Economics Team Seminar; Statistical Conference in E-Commerce Research; Wharton AI and the Future of Work Conference; International Meeting on Experimental and Behavioral Social Sciences; MIT IDE Annual Conference; Microsoft Research AI, Cognition, and the Economy Workshop; Measuring Development: AI, the Next Generation at the World Bank; American Physical Society's March Meeting

2023: Interactive Causal Learning Conference; Conference On Digital Experimentation (MIT CODE); MIT CSAIL'S FutureTech Seminar; Talking to Machines AI Workshop at Oxford University

Teaching

Guest Lecturer—QSTBA 830: Business Experimentation and Causal Methods

Spring 2025

Faculty Instructor: Andrey Fradkin; Level: MSBA students; Boston University

TA—BUSN 38802: Managerial Decision Making (Rating: 4.7/5.0)

Fall 2024

Faculty Instructor: Richard Thaler; Level: EMBA students; University of Chicago, Booth London Campus

- "Thanks Ben for such a wonderful class! Best TA I've had so far"

- "Very clear in explaining concepts in an interesting 'real world' way"

TA—API-101Z: Markets and Failures (Rating: 4.6/5.0)

Fall 2024

Faculty Instructor: Christopher Avery; Level: MPP students; Harvard University

¹Select drafts available upon request.

²Includes coauthors presenting joint work

- “Ben is an excellent teacher—explains concepts in a way which is not condescending but is easy to understand.”
- “Humor, clarity, knowledge of the subject, and patience.”
- “I think his greatest strength is his evident passion for the material, and his excitement is infectious.”

TA—API-101Z: Markets and Failures (Rating: 4.3/5.0)

Fall 2023

Faculty Instructor: Christopher Avery; Level: MPP students; Harvard University

- “Far and away the best TA out there. Kind, thoughtful, and helped me develop the skills to independently answer questions”
- “Great examples rooted in our day-to-day lives to help us understand conceptually difficult terms and make them sticky.”

Pre-Doctoral Teaching

OIDD-7050: Leading with Grit. Angela Duckworth (Penn—MBA)

Spring 2022

PSYCH-399: Research Seminar. Angela Duckworth (Penn—Undergrad)

Fall 2021, Spring 2022

API-500: Applied Intensive Policy Seminar. Joe Aldy & Jack Donahue (Harvard—MPP)

Spring 2021

API-202Z: Econometrics II. Teddy Svoronos (Harvard—MPP)

Spring 2021

API-101Z: Markets and Failures. Christopher Avery (Harvard—MPP)

Fall 2020

DPI-610: Big Data for Politics. Benjamin Schneer (Harvard—MPP, MPA, Undergrad)

Spring 2020

References

John Horton - Associate Professor of Information Technologies - MIT

Christopher Avery - Professor of Public Policy - Harvard

Angela Duckworth - Professor of Psychology - Penn

Colin Camerer - Professor of Behavioral Economics - CalTech

Sydney Finkelstein - Professor Of Management - Dartmouth

Jon Rogowski - Professor of Political Science - UChicago

Professional Experience

Research Assistant, John Horton (MIT)

2023 - 2024

Research Assistant, Angela Duckworth (Penn)

2021 - 2022

Research Assistant, Jon Rogowski (UChicago)

2020 - 2022

Research Assistant, Sydney Finkelstein (Dartmouth)

2018 - 2019

High School Math Teacher, Phetpittayakom School, Thailand

2017 - 2018

Execution Trading Intern, Optiver, Chicago

2016

Affiliations

[MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy](#), Research Team

[Heterodox Academy](#), Member

Referee Service

Conference on Digital Experimentation (CODE), ACM-Collective Intelligence, International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), Sociological Science, International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2)