Third Year Workshop

Prof. Vollrath

Summary

The overall purpose of this workshop is to accelerate your research and get you to write papers, so that you can be successful on the job market. Doing this requires you to learn a set of skills that are part of being a professional economist. By the end of this workshop in May, you should have a completed 3rd year paper, a presentation of that paper, a reading committee of three advisors, an organized bibliography, a library of code and data for your project, a website, and an up to date CV.

Throughout the semester, I am going to try and bring in a few guests to talk about different types of jobs/positions (research academic, teaching focused, private sector) so you can get some perspective on the kinds of things you might be able to do when you hit the job market.

Mechanics

We will meet in M109, Fridays from noon-1:20. This workshop is required by the department, and hence your attendance is required. Please contact me if you have an issue that requires you to miss a class.

Semesters

The fall semester is led by Dr. Vollrath, while the spring semester will be led by Dr. Yi. This document lays out the schedule/syllabus for the fall semester only. The goal of this semester is to build some professional skills, get you set up with a set of readers/advisors, and have some plausible paper ideas ready to go for the spring.

Advising and Idea Generation

August 24th: Intro and Research Ideas: Start thinking now about a research *question*, and how that question might be answered. The importance of talking with advisors about that idea.

1. **IN-CLASS**: Write 500 words on an area of research you are interested in
2. **ASSIGN**: Talk with one faculty member, in person, about a research idea
3. **ASSIGN**: Read Chin, "Writing a research paper"
4. **ASSIGN**: Read Ujhelyi, "Advice to graduate students"

Reading and Citing

August 31st. Reading with purpose: You should have a clear reason for reading any paper, otherwise you may be wasting your time when you should be coding or writing. The papers you read should be tracked, and you should write yourself summaries of those papers. Finding citation information and tracking it.

1. **IN CLASS**: Report on discussion with faculty member, their comments
2. **IN CLASS**: Set up a bibliography manager, include citations from IDEAS
3. **ASSIGN**: Write a summary of one research paper

September 7th. Creating a bibliography: The papers you cite have to end up in a paper eventually. Using Latex, you can cite and format these papers directly from your bilbliography manager.

1. **IN CLASS**: Create a Latex document that describes a research question/idea, and includes your bibliography
2. **ASSIGN**: Get comments on your research question/idea from three faculty members

Career Planning

September 14th. Calendar: Map out the remainder of graduate program, including 3rd year paper, presentations, job market paper, and the job market itself.

1. **IN CLASS**: Report on comments from faculty. Plans based on those.
2. **IN CLASS**: Write list of job characteristics you desire

September 21st. Job market: What goes into a job packet beyond the job market paper, like letters of recommendation, the CV, and a website. Different types of jobs - research, teaching, private industry, etc.

1. **IN CLASS**: Create a website using Google sites, Weebly, or an alternative
2. **ASSIGN**: Find 5 jobs in the JOE that look intriguing to you

September 28th. Publication and Tenure: What is involved in the publication process (submission, revise and resubmit, rejection, acceptance). What is involved in the tenure process (papers, service, teaching, letters).

1. **IN CLASS**: Create a CV, in Latex. You'll need this style file
2. **ASSIGN**: Read Gentzkow and Shapiro "Code and Data for the Social Sciences"

Code and Data Practices

October 5th. Data and Analysis Work Flow: Structuring directories for getting raw data to usable data, doing analysis on usable data, and producing outputs for use in papers.

1. **IN CLASS**: Create directories for data and code associated with either (a) your own project or (b) the data I provide
2. **ASSIGN**: Write a script (Stata, R, Matlab, GAUSS, etc.) that inputs raw data and puts it into usable form. The script should involve some kind of merge, reshape, and/or collapsing of data.
3. **ASSIGN**: Get comments on your research question/idea from three faculty members

October 26th. Version Control and Coding: Keeping multiple versions of the same code will create problems. Version control systems allow you to have one copy of the code, but keep track of your changes for you. Commenting code to allow others (including your future self) to replicate your work.

1. **IN CLASS**: Report on comments received on research idea. Plans based on those comments.
2. **IN CLASS**: Sign up for Github. Create a local Git repository for your project, and learn how to add, commit, and push your code to Git.
3. **ASSIGN**: Read Feynman, "Cargo Cult Science"
4. **ASSIGN**: Read Christensen and Miguel, "Transparency, Reproducibility, and the Credibility of Economics Research"

Behavior with respect to others and the profession

November 2nd. Standards for research work: Plagarism. Funding sources. P-hacking. Publication bias.

1. **ASSIGN**: Read Wu, "Gender Stereotyping in Academia"

November 9th. Standards for behaving with others: Treating everyone in this profession with respect. Behavior in seminars, conferences, and classes. Positives and negatives of being anonymous.

1. **ASSIGN**: Update the Latex document that describes your research question/idea, and includes your bibliography

Writing

November 16th. Working at writing: The parts of most empirical papers. Writing the paper is part of the research process. Your paper must focus on what you do, not on what you read. Writing tools and tips. Practice, practice, practice.

3. **ASSIGN**: Get comments on your research question/idea from three faculty members

November 30th. Planning for the break: Get status on research questions and analysis.

1. **IN CLASS**: Report on comments received from advisors on research idea. Plan for the break based on those comments.
2. **ASSIGN**: WORK ON YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT