

# Experimental Social Science

University of Turku  
INVEST  
Turku, Finland

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## *General Overview*

**Professor:** Héctor Bahamonde, PhD.

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**Office Hours:** Schedule time with me [here](#).

**Place:** Pub-299.

**Time:** November 28th and December 5th, from noon to 2 pm.

**Course website:** [Moodle](#).

**Program:** Master program in 'Inequalities, Interventions and New Welfare State,' University of Turku.

**Semester:** Fall.

## *Objectives*

Students will learn to design experiments. Students will learn to understand how to gather experimental data and how various experimental designs relate to different statistical methods. Students will learn to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different experimental designs. Students will learn how new research questions and experimental designs build on the existing literature and generate cumulative scientific knowledge. After the course, students should know how to design meaningful experiments and draft implementation and analysis plans to run the experiments in practice. Students will understand the connection between their experimental design and statistical tools that they have learned in their statistics courses.

## *Academic Integrity*

I expect nothing but the best out of my students.

- I expect students to do their reading *before* class.
- Practical exercises should be turned in *before* class.
- I usually don't answer emails during weekends.

🚫 Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Make sure you follow the University's rules and definitions of plagiarism. Also, make sure you know how to cite your work.

🚫 I won't accept late work.

## Evaluations

1. **Two Reaction Papers:** for each session you will submit one reaction paper (two reaction papers in total). Reaction papers are topical, i.e., they focus on themes rather than particular pieces. Also, reaction papers are critical assessments of the reading material, i.e., **they are *not* summaries**. For guidance, see some of the issues you might want to address in your piece. Make sure you do *all* your readings *before* start writing. Reaction papers are due *before* my lecture and in Moodle (late papers and/or submissions via email will not be considered). Make sure the length of your paper is never below 1k words but never longer than 1.5k words (I'll stop reading beyond that limit). Also, be sure to support your claims citing what you think is relevant; bare in mind aspects of citation format, and please, be economical (quotes should not exceed two sentences).
- The following questions are intended for guidance only, and are meant to inspire you in your critical assessment. Reaction papers usually focus on a grand question such as: *What are the possible advantages/disadvantages of this particular methodology? How/where else would you apply this methodology? Is this methodology feasible in your particular area of research? Do you think this methodology posits ethical issues if applied in your area of research?*

## Recommended Readings

- ◇ Jared Diamond and James Robinson. 2011. *Natural experiments of history*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- ◇ Thad Dunning. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.

## Schedule and Required Readings

### 1. November 28th: **Survey Experiments**.

- ◇ Overview:
  - Brian Gaines, James Kuklinski, and Paul Quirk. 2007. "The Logic of the Survey Experiment Reexamined." *Political Analysis* 15 (1): 1–20.
  - Kevin Mullinix et al. 2015. "The Generalizability of Survey Experiments." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2 (2): 109–138.
- ◇ Application #1—conjoint experiments:
  - Kirk Bansak et al. 2021. "Conjoint Survey Experiments." In *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, 19–41. Cambridge University Press.
  - Jens Hainmueller, Daniel Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2014. "Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments." *Political Analysis* 22 (1): 1–30.
- ◇ Application #2—list experiments:
  - Graeme Blair, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall. 2014. "Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan." *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (4): 1043–1063.
  - Hector Bahamonde. 2022. "Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence from a List Experiment." *Acta Politica* 57 (1): 73–95.

### 2. December 5th: **Natural Experiments**.

- ◇ Overview:

- Rocío Titiunik. 2021. “Natural Experiments.” In *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, 103–129. Cambridge University Press.
  - Jasjeet Sekhon and Rocío Titiunik. 2012. “When natural experiments are neither natural nor experiments.” *American Political Science Review* 106 (1): 35–57.
- ◇ Applications:
- Immigrant discrimination: Jens Hainmueller and Dominik Hangartner. 2013. “Who Gets a Swiss Passport? A Natural Experiment in Immigrant Discrimination.” *American Political Science Review* 107 (01): 159–187.
  - Income redistribution: Daniel Doherty, Alan Gerber, and Donald Green. 2006. “Personal income and attitudes toward redistribution: A study of lottery winners.” *Political Psychology* 27 (3): 441–458.
  - Political attitudes: Robert Erikson and Laura Stoker. 2011. “Caught in the Draft: The Effects of Vietnam Draft Lottery Status on Political Attitudes.” *American Political Science Review* 105 (2): 221–237.

## References

- Bahamonde, Hector. 2022. “Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence from a List Experiment.” *Acta Politica* 57 (1): 73–95.
- Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, Daniel Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2021. “Conjoint Survey Experiments.” In *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, 19–41. Cambridge University Press.
- Blair, Graeme, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall. 2014. “Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (4): 1043–1063.
- Diamond, Jared, and James Robinson. 2011. *Natural experiments of history*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Doherty, Daniel, Alan Gerber, and Donald Green. 2006. “Personal income and attitudes toward redistribution: A study of lottery winners.” *Political Psychology* 27 (3): 441–458.
- Dunning, Thad. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.
- Erikson, Robert, and Laura Stoker. 2011. “Caught in the Draft: The Effects of Vietnam Draft Lottery Status on Political Attitudes.” *American Political Science Review* 105 (2): 221–237.
- Gaines, Brian, James Kuklinski, and Paul Quirk. 2007. “The Logic of the Survey Experiment Reexamined.” *Political Analysis* 15 (1): 1–20.
- Hainmueller, Jens, and Dominik Hangartner. 2013. “Who Gets a Swiss Passport? A Natural Experiment in Immigrant Discrimination.” *American Political Science Review* 107 (01): 159–187.
- Hainmueller, Jens, Daniel Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2014. “Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments.” *Political Analysis* 22 (1): 1–30.
- Mullinix, Kevin, Thomas Leeper, James Druckman, and Jeremy Freese. 2015. “The Generalizability of Survey Experiments.” *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2 (2): 109–138.
- Sekhon, Jasjeet, and Rocío Titiunik. 2012. “When natural experiments are neither natural nor experiments.” *American Political Science Review* 106 (1): 35–57.
- Titiunik, Rocío. 2021. “Natural Experiments.” In *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, 103–129. Cambridge University Press.