Experimental Methods in Social Sciences—INWS0059

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-368.
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

In this course on experimental methods, students will master the art of crafting experiments, from concept to execution. They'll delve into the collection of experimental data and discover how distinct designs align with various statistical techniques. Critical evaluation of experimental designs' merits and drawbacks will be a key focus, fostering an understanding of how they contribute to the broader scientific dialogue. By the course's end, students will be equipped to devise impactful experiments and outline practical plans for their implementation and analysis. Furthermore, they'll gain insights into the synergy between their experimental strategies and the statistical instruments previously learned.

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 it *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**. Make sure you do *all* your readings *before* start writing. Reaction papers are due *before* my lecture and in the course's respective Moodle assignment section (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; bear 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: A Design-Based Approach.* Cambridge University Press.

◇ Rebecca Morton and Kenneth Williams. 2010. *Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality: From Nature to the Lab.* Cambridge University Press.

◇ Hector Bahamonde and Andrea Canales. 2022. "Electoral Risk and Vote Buying, Introducing Prospect Theory to the Experimental Study of Clientelism." *Electoral Studies*.

◇ Kirill Zhirkov. 2022. "Estimating and Using Individual Marginal Component Effects from Conjoint Experiments." *Political Analysis* 30 (2): 236–249.

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 and Kosuke Imai. 2012. "Statistical Analysis of List Experiments." *Political Analysis* 20 (1): 47–77.
- Héctor 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:
   - Elections: Hector Bahamonde and Outi Sarpila. 2023. "Physical Appearance and Elections: An Inequality Perspective." *Political Psychology*.
   - 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, Héctor. 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.

Bahamonde, Hector, and Andrea Canales. 2022. "Electoral Risk and Vote Buying, Introducing Prospect Theory to the Experimental Study of Clientelism." *Electoral Studies.*

Bahamonde, Hector, and Outi Sarpila. 2023. "Physical Appearance and Elections: An Inequality Perspective." *Political Psychology.*

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, and Kosuke Imai. 2012. "Statistical Analysis of List Experiments." *Political Analysis* 20 (1): 47–77.

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: A Design-Based Approach.* 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, Daniel Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2014. "Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments." *Political Analysis* 22 (1): 1–30.

Morton, Rebecca, and Kenneth Williams. 2010. *Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality: From Nature to the Lab.* Cambridge University Press.

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.

Zhirkov, Kirill. 2022. "Estimating and Using Individual Marginal Component Effects from Conjoint Experiments." *Political Analysis* 30 (2): 236–249.