

Modibo Camara

Northwestern Economics

Placement Director: Professor Alessandro Pavan 847-491-8266 alepavan@northwestern.edu
Placement Administrator: Alison Stoute 847-491-5694 econjobmarket@northwestern.edu

Contact Information	Department of Economics Northwestern University 2211 Campus Drive Evanston, IL 60208	Mobile: 202-415-2751 mcamara@u.northwestern.edu https://sites.northwestern.edu/mkc6866/ Citizenship: United States, Germany
Fields	Research: Microeconomic Theory, Economics & Computation Teaching: Microeconomics, Econometrics	
Education	Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University (anticipated) 2022 Dissertation: Complexities in Economic Theory Committee: Eddie Dekel (Chair), Jason Hartline (Chair), Marciano Siniscalchi, Jeffrey Ely M.A., Economics, Northwestern University 2018 B.A., Mathematics & Economics, University of Pennsylvania 2016	
Fellowships & Awards	Distinguished TA Award 2021-22 Dissertation University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2021-22	
Teaching Experience	Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University 2017-2021 Econometrics (graduate), Econometrics (undergrad), Microeconomics (undergrad)	
Research Experience	Research Intern, Nicole Immorlica, Microsoft Research 2020 Research Assistant, Eddie Dekel, Northwestern University 2019 Project Intern, Yian Liu, Federal Reserve Board of Governors 2015 Intern, Esen Onur, Commodity Futures Trading Commission 2014 Research Assistant, Susan Wachter, University of Pennsylvania 2013-14	
Conferences	European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021 Cornell ORIE (invited) 2021 Economics and Computation (invited) 2021 Transatlantic Theory Workshop 2021 Risk, Uncertainty, and Decision (RUD) 2021 Decision: Theory, Experiments, and Applications (D-TEA) 2021 North American Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021 Africa Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021 European Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society 2021 World Congress of the Game Theory Society (GAMES) 2021 Foundations of Computer Science (FOCS) 2020 European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2020 Young Economists Symposium (YES) 2020 Economics Graduate Student Conference (EGSC) 2020 Midwest Theory Day 2018	

Refereeing

American Economic Review, Journal of Mathematical Economics, The Web Conference

Job Market Paper**“Computationally Tractable Choice”**

Abstract: I incorporate computational constraints into decision theory in order to capture how cognitive limitations affect behavior. I impose an axiom of computational tractability that rules out behaviors that are thought to be fundamentally hard. I use this framework to better understand common behavioral heuristics: if choices are tractable and consistent with the expected utility axioms, then they are observationally equivalent to forms of choice bracketing. Then I show that a computationally-constrained decisionmaker can be objectively better off if she is willing to use heuristics that would not appear rational to an outside observer.

Other Papers**“Mechanisms for a No-Regret Agent: Beyond the Common Prior”** (with J. Hartline, A. Johnsen)

Proceedings of the IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science (FOCS 2020)

Abstract: We study incomplete information games where a policymaker commits to a policy, an agent responds, and payoffs depend on a state of nature. To solve these games, it is typical to (i) make strong prior knowledge assumptions or (ii) make no prior knowledge assumptions and optimize against the worst case. We show that, if the designer and agent interact repeatedly over time, we can approximate the superior performance of (i) while preserving the robustness of (ii). The state is revealed after every period, but we make no other assumptions on the state-generating process. We develop calibrated policies that adapt to historical data over time, assuming the agent does the same, even if the data is highly non-stationary. This requires new behavioral assumptions that build on prior work on learning in games and capture ideas like “rationality” and “unpredictability” in a fully ex post sense.

“Mechanism Design with a Common Dataset”

Abstract: I propose a new approach to mechanism design: rather than assume a common prior belief, assume access to a common dataset. I restrict attention to incomplete information games where a designer commits to a policy and a single agent responds. I propose a penalized policy that performs well under weak assumptions on how the agent learns from data. Policies that are too complex, in a precise sense, are penalized because they lead to unpredictable responses by the agent. This approach leads to new insights in models of vaccine distribution, prescription drug approval, performance pay, and product bundling.

Languages

English (fluent), German (native), Spanish (intermediate)

References

Professor Eddie Dekel
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.4414
dekel@northwestern.edu

Professor Marciano Siniscalchi
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.5398
marciano@northwestern.edu

Professor Jason Hartline
Department of Computer Science
Northwestern University
2233 Tech Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.467.0280
hartline@northwestern.edu

Professor Jeffrey Ely
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.8208
jeffely@northwestern.edu