**Sarah Xu Thesis Abstract**

I will be examining the external validity of using experimental games to study people's social preferences, i.e. are experimental games a good predictor for behavior in the real world?

I will recruit current Wesleyan University seniors and recent alumni (those who graduated within 5 years) to play various experimental games and answer non-incentivized survey questions regarding social preference behaviors. Then I will access their Wesleyan University donations information (along with participants’ majors and class year) in order to compare behavior in the lab to behavior in the field.

\*I am currently in the process of receiving IRB approval for my thesis.

**What I Need from University Relations**

* Wesleyan University seniors and recent alumni (those who graduated within 5 years) emails: I will send out an email containing a brief description of my thesis, what they can expect to do (play experimental games and answer survey questions), online link for participating in my study.
  + I am expecting 10-20% response rate, so I will be requesting 2000 emails.
* Wesleyan donations data from those who participate in my study: this information will be used in order to compare subjects’ behavior in the lab (experimental game and survey question results) to behavior in real life (donations).
  + Dates of when gifts were made
  + Amount
  + Where the gift was allocated (if any)
  + Total giving history
  + Major
  + Class year

**Timeline**

* Early January (2nd week): send out email to Wesleyan University seniors and recent alumni. The email will contain a brief description of my thesis, and ask for participation in my study. They will be informed about what they can expect to do (play experimental games and answer survey questions), and their major, class year, and Wesleyan donations data will be released to me if they choose to proceed. A link to the online study will be provided in the email. Since I am using Qualtrics, the dataset will include emails and names so that their results can be matched to their Wesleyan donations, major, and class year.
* January – February: send out reminder email(s) for participation.
* Mid February (2nd week): deadline for participation.
  + I will send the complete dataset to UR, who will then include Wesleyan donations data, major, and class year for each participant. UR will then proceed to remove all identifying information in the dataset, and return the dataset to me.

**Donations Process**

1. The dataset containing participant names, emails, experimental games results, and survey responses will be sent to University Relations.
2. University Relations will match each participant to their Wesleyan donations data, major, and class year, and add the information into the dataset.
3. University Relations will remove all identifying information (names and emails), and send it back to me. Therefore I will have a dataset that contains participant major, class year, lab game results, and matched donations data without any identifying information.

**What Participants Can Expect**

I will send out emails asking for participation in my study. The email will have a brief description of my research, and what they can expect to do in the experiment (they will be playing six different experimental games, and answering 20 survey questions), a link that directs them to the Qualtrics experiment. The debriefing script will also state that upon completion of the experiment, we will receive their major, class year, and Wesleyan donations data (this information will only for research purposes, and will not be traced back to them).

Below is a brief description of each game, followed by a brief description of the survey questions:

* Generalized dictator game: Each participant is asked to make a series of choices about how to divide a given amount of points between themselves and another person. As the participant divides the points, both players will earn money. Every point that Player 1 earns will be worth 10, 20, 30, or 40 tickets, and similarly for the earnings of the other person.
* Ultimatum game (Player 1 version): Each participant is endowed with X points. They decide how much of their endowment to send to another person (Player 2). They are told that Player 2 may or may not reject the offer amount. If the offer is rejected, both people will receive 0 points.
* Ultimatum game (Player 2 version): Each participant is given a list from 0 points to X points (in 1-point increments, which represents all possible amounts that could be offered to them by Player 1). They are asked whether they accept or reject each listed amount.
* Trust game (Player 1 version): Each participant is endowed with X points, and decide how much of their endowment to give to another person (Player 2). The amount sent over is multiplied by three. Player 2 then decides how much to return.
* Trust game (Player 2 version): Participants receive a list of all possible multiplied amounts that could have been donated to them by Player 1 (0 to 3X). For each amount, they are asked to decide how many points to give back to Player 1.
* Public goods game: Each participant is endowed with X points, and will be matched with one other person who is also endowed with X points. They are told that they can donate some of their endowment into a common group fund. The overall points in the group fund is multiplied by 1.5, and then divided evenly between the two players.
* Survey questions: Each participant will answer 20 survey questions regarding past social behavior. For each statement, they will share the frequency they have done the particular statement (“Never”, “Once”, “More than Once”, “Often”, “Very Often”). Some examples include:
  + I have allowed someone to go ahead of me in line
  + I have donated money/coins into Salvation army bell-ringers
  + I have donated money at the cash register when buying groceries

All games and questions will be the same for each participant. At the end of the deadline for participation, participants will be randomly paired up, and payoffs will be calculated for all the games. Points will be translated into tickets (1 point = 1 ticket, except if otherwise specified in each game’s instructions). The tickets will then go into a lottery, with each participant being able to put in the number of tickets they earned in the games. A ticket will be drawn randomly, and there will be winner(s) who will win $X (TBD on how many winners there will be, and how much the prize will be).

Providing a payment mechanism for experimental games is a standard procedure in behavioral economics, since it incentivizes participants to not only participate in the study, but also elicit honest actions. In order to preserve anonymity, I will do the lottery process, and send an email to the winner(s) asking how they would like best to receive their prize (PayPal, or mailing address, etc.)