

2020-21 Progress Report for PhD Students

Department of Economics – University of Pittsburgh

Student name: Taylor Weidman

Year in the PhD program: Entered 2016

PART 1 – RESEARCH

WORKING PAPERS

Please provide a list of your working papers and attach them to the email you will send to Brian. A working paper is a paper that is ready to be widely circulated not only with your advisors but with the research community at large. If you are in doubt whether your paper classifies as “working paper”, please consult your advisor.

Paper # 1

Title: Testing Models of Strategic Uncertainty: Equilibrium Selection in Repeated Games

Co-authors: Emanuel Vespa, Alistair Wilson

Abstract: In dynamic environments where the strategic setting evolves across time the specific rule governing the transitions can substantially alter the incentives agents face. This is particularly true when history-dependent strategies are used. In a laboratory study we examine whether subjects respond to the transition rule and internalize its effects on continuation values. Our main comparison is between an endogenous transition where future states directly depend on current choices, and exogenous transitions where the future environment is random and independent of actions. Our evidence shows that subjects readily internalize the effect of the dynamic game transition rule on their incentives, in line with history dependent theoretical predictions.

Conference / brown bag presentations: Experimental brown bag (Nov. 2019, April, 2019, Sept. 2018)

Journal submissions: R&R at the Journal of the European Economic Association

WORK IN PROGRESS

Please provide a list of your research in progress. For this purpose, a research in progress is one that has already been presented in one of our brownbag seminars (or in a conference).

In progress # 1

Title: Herding to the Polls

Abstract: Democracy forms the backbone of our decision-making across nearly all western countries. Voters choose how to cast their ballots, but also, importantly, whether to cast their ballot. I build a model of homophily to capture whether voters make their turnout decision in response to the political composition of their proximate neighbors. I find that voters turnout at higher rates in neighborhoods with similar neighbors. And according to early estimates, this effect is large enough to be influential in the outcomes of local and national elections.

Conference / brown bag presentations: Public/Urban Brown Bag (November 2019)

In progress # 2

Title: Well, Excuse Me! Replicating and Connecting Excuse-Seeking Behavior

Co-authors: Beatriz Ahumada, Yufei Chen, Neeraja Gupta, Kelly Hyde, Marissa Lepper, Will Mathews, Neil Silveus, Lise Vesterlund, Alistair Wilson, K. Pun Winichakul, Liyang Zhou

Abstract: Excuse-seeking behavior that undermines other-regarding choices has been a robust finding across different decision-making environments. In a laboratory study we examine whether excuse-making can be predicted by certain types of individuals, especially those who exhibit “moral wiggling”. We replicate the findings from Dana et al. (2007), Exley (2015), and Di Tella et al. (2015), leading papers in this field, and answer the growing call for replication studies (Maniadis et al. 2015). We do not find evidence that moral flexibility consistently predicts excuse-seeking across the three decision contexts. We discuss potential reasons for the lack of associations, and implications for the design of future replications.

Conference / brown bag presentations: Experimental Brown Bag (Spring 2019?)

RESEARCH-RELATED HONORS

University fellowships

Arts and Sciences Graduate Fellowship (Academic year 2016-2017)

Research assistantships

Felipe Augusto de Araujo (Winter 2021)

Alistair Wilson (Summer 2020)

David Huffman and David Danz (Summer 2018)

PART 2 – TEACHING

	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Course title	Intro Micro	Intro Micro	Intro Micro
TA or main instructor?	Instructor	TA	TA
If TA, name of main instructor		Carey Treado	Carey Treado and Neal Becker
If TA, held recitations? Office hours? Grading?		Recitations, office hours, and grading	Recitations, office hours, and grading
OMET's average scores	4.51	4.21	4.33

PART 3 – COURSEWORK, COMMITTEE AND ADVISORS

COURSEWORK

Have you completed your coursework (72 credits) and field requirements?

Yes

FIELDS

What are your major and minor fields (completed or intended)?

Major 1: Public/Urban Economics

Major 2: Experimental Economics

Minor: Econometrics

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND ADVISORS

Have you formed a dissertation committee? Yes

Member # 1: Richard Van Weelden

Member # 2: Alistair Wilson

Member # 3: Randy Walsh

External member: John Miller

Overview date: TBD, July 2021

A (Zoom) meeting has taken place to discuss this Progress Report. The student has received specific suggestions on how to strengthen their research portfolio and teaching experience in preparation for a successful job market.

Student name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Advisor name: _____ Signature: _____