

Udayan Vaidya

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Economics

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Evanston, IL 60208 Citizenship: US

Fields Research: Microeconomic Theory

Teaching: Microeconomics, Information, Mechanism Design, Game Theory

Education Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University (anticipated) 2023

Dissertation: Essays on Verifiable Information

Committee: Eddie Dekel (Chair), Asher Wolinsky, Wojciech Olszewski

B.S., Mathematics, University of Chicago 2015

Industry Catastrophe Modeling Analyst (≈ Actuary), Elementum Advisors Experience

2015-2017

Fellowships & **Awards**

Dissertation University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2022-2023 Robert Eisner Graduate Fellowship, Northwestern University 2020 Distinguished TA Award, Northwestern University 2018 & 2019

Teaching Experience Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University Intro to Microeconomics (graduate) 2020 & 2021 "Turbo" Microeconomics (advanced undergrad) 2018 & 2019 Game Theory (advanced undergrad) 2018 & 2019

Refereeing American Economic Review

Job Market Paper "Regulating Disclosure: The Value of Discretion"

> Abstract: We study the question of how to regulate the disclosure of individuals' contractible information. Within a buyer-seller relationship, we analyze the differential effects of two classes of policies (i) selective mandate policies, which compel or prohibit certain disclosures and (ii) discretionary (voluntary) disclosure policies. We formalize these policies under a model of mechanism design with evidence and characterize the optimal mechanism. Under a regularity condition, discretionary policies cannot outperform selective mandate policies, regardless of the planner's objective. Otherwise, discretion may be uniquely optimal. Finally, if the planner can design the contractible information itself, it is without loss to mandate full disclosure. The results suggest that only rarely does discretion

expand the set of regulatory possibilities.

Working Papers "Comparative Statics on Evidence Structures"

> Abstract: In a model of mechanism design with evidence, we characterize when one evidence structure is unambiguously better than another from the perspective of the principal. By unambiguously, we mean regardless of the action space, prior beliefs, or preferences of the principal and agent. We show that that evidence structure E is unambiguously better than E' if and only if E' is a monotone garbling of E. This captures two intuitive features: that the evidence is more informative as a signal (garbling), and that

the agent is given less discretion to misreport evidence (monotone). The result is shown by a novel extension of Blackwell's theorem ('53) to environments where the set of signal-contingent decision rules is restricted.

"'Under Review': Mitigating Reputation Concerns with Information Design"

Abstract: It is well-established that a reputation-concerned agent, such as a manager, may act in ways that do not maximize the interests of their organization. This is done to manipulate an external market's perception of that agent, which is inferred through the agent's action and any subsequently revealed information about the underlying state. We study how a firm might design a review policy, modeled as a statistical experiment following the manager's action, in order to optimally release information to the external market. The key observation is that, by employing reviews with different levels of informativeness, in equilibrium the firm can screen only high-quality managers into taking risky actions. For a range of parameters, the optimal review policy achieves the firm's first-best and completely alleviates the agency conflict.

Works in Progress

"Second Opinions and Disclosure"

Brief Abstract: How do transparency policies affect the quality of second-opinions? We study a model in which a patient sequentially consults with two (strategic) doctors before pursuing a safe or risky treatment. The doctors are less risk-averse than the patient and have privately-known expertise. The main tradeoff is that transparency introduces correlation between doctor recommendations, which makes them individually less informative, but allows the decision-maker to identify the relative quality of the two doctors whenever there is an overturning of recommendation. We find that the optimal regime is non-monotone in the likelihood of doctor expertise: transparency is optimal for extreme (low and high) levels of expertise, while non-transparency is optimal for intermediate levels. When there are many risky treatments, partial disclosure can further improve the patient's decision.

"Screening with Evidence" with Maren Vairo and Tomer Yehoshua-Sandak

Brief Abstract: In a dynamic contracting setting, information may arise that the principal would like to use to adjust the terms of trade. When the disclosure of information is controlled by the agent, the principal faces a tradeoff between using the information to provide ex-ante incentives versus incentivizing the agent to disclose that information. We characterize the optimal mechanism and show that the low-type agent's payment is independent of the information he provides. The high-type agent's payment has a threshold structure: as long as the likelihood ratio is above a cutoff, he is rewarded according to the informativeness principle; otherwise, his payment is constant. This cutoff coincides with the threshold type that would arise in the equilibrium of the corresponding game where the principal has no commitment power.

Languages

English (native), Spanish (intermediate)

References

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