

Optional 2: Field Experiments: Research Design and Impact Evaluation using RCTs

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Topic 1

Introduction to Impact Evaluation: Thinking about a major policy problem, designing an experiment to evaluate a program that aims to solve this problem, and evaluating the program in a causal manner to guide policy.

Lecture notes.

Topic 2

Theory of Change and Data: Establishing theory of change and underlying mechanisms in evaluation designs.

Lecture notes.

Topic 3

Randomization in Practice: Random assignment of program participation, cluster designs, phase-in designs, balance checks, research ethics in program participation.

Lecture notes.

Topic 4

Indicators and Measurement: Determining outcomes of interests: Real outcomes, behavioural (incentivized) outcomes, lab-in the field, survey outcomes.

Lecture notes.

Topic 5

Sampling: Determining optimal sample size, power calculations, study registration, pre-analysis plan (PAP). *Lecture notes.*

Topic 6

Threats and analysis: Dealing with missing data, non-compliance, demand effects, and attrition.

Topic 7

Evaluation: ATEs, ITTs LATEs, inference, small sample permutation, mechanism search, mediation analysis.

Lecture notes.

Topic 8

An evaluation from A to Z: Student presentations of the outline of the take home project, receiving feedback.

Teaching material

Course materials will be lecture notes, lecture slides (provided by S. Alan), and assigned journal articles.

Evaluation

Course work will be 20 percent outline presentation 80 percent take home project. The project will be a case study where students are expected to replicate a well-known RCT from design stage to dissemination of the results. There will be no exercise classes.