Advanced Research Design (ARD)

Seminar, 2nd term 2017-2018

Organised by Fabrizio Bernardi & Diego Gambetta

Please register online

Contact: Martina.Selmi@eui.eu

Course Outline

This course is primarily meant for 2nd year researchers, in particular those who want to develop causal hypotheses in their prospectus and want to learn how to put them to the test. 1st year researchers who want to participate should apply in writing to Diego and Fabrizio (copying Martina) arguing why they believe it is strongly preferable for them to attend the course this year rather than wait till their 2nd year.

The course touches on a series of designs suitable for identifying causal relations rather than correlations, from the queen technique – experiments – to second best options – natural experiments, discontinuity, Diff-in-Diff etc. The readings offer many applications of these techniques aimed at spurring participants’ imagination.

The reference texts for the seminar are:

- Thad Dunning, Natural experiments in the social sciences. A design based approach. CUP 2012 http://biblio.eui.eu/record=b1759366~S5

Classes and topics:

- Week 1: introduction to cause seeking designs & practical arrangements [9 January]
- Week 2: problems of causal identification [16 January, Fabrizio Bernardi]
- Week 3: introduction to experimental methods, focus on lab [23 January, Sergio Lo Iacono, MWF]
- Week 4: natural and field experiments [30 January]
- Week 5: instrumental variables [6 February]
- Week 6: difference in difference [13 February]
- Week 7: twins and siblings [20 February]
- Week 8: regression discontinuity [27 February]
- Week 9: to be decided [6 March]
- Week 10: Caveats, mixed methods and implication analysis [13 March, Diego Gambetta]
Requirements
In order to obtain the 20 credits participants, in addition to attending regularly, are required:

1) to give a class presentation EITHER on their research design if this employs one of the techniques discussed in the course, OR on one of these techniques as described in the readings; in the latter case, the researchers should try to develop ideas on how a particular technique might help them in their own research.

2) from Week 4 onward, to prepare brief comments on at least two of the recommended readings for each session. These comments should contain participants’ suggestions for further applications of the technique presented in each week’s readings to different research questions. These comments should be posted on the course folder by the Sunday preceding the class. A selection of these comments will be discussed in class.

Schedule
The seminar takes place on Tuesdays at 11:00-13:00, in Seminar Room 3 in the Badia, and will run from Tuesday 9 January to Tuesday 13 March. The full list of the seminar sessions is the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Tuesday 9 January</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Seminar Room 3</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Tuesday 16 January</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Tuesday 23 January</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
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<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Tuesday 30 January</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
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<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Tuesday 6 February</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
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<td>Session 6</td>
<td>Tuesday 13 February</td>
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<td>Session 7</td>
<td>Tuesday 20 February</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Seminar Room 3</td>
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<td>Session 8</td>
<td>Tuesday 27 February</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
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<td>Session 9</td>
<td>Tuesday 6 March</td>
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<td>Seminar Room 2</td>
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<td>Session 10</td>
<td>Tuesday 13 March</td>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Seminar Room 3</td>
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SYLLABUS (please note that the reading list may still be subject to change)

Week 1. Introduction to cause seeking designs & practical arrangements (Tuesday 9 January 2018)


Chapter 1, which can be found here: [http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s8769.pdf](http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s8769.pdf)


Other readings


**Week 2. Problems of causal identification - Fabrizio Bernardi (Tuesday 16 January 2018)**


Laitin David, Joachim Moortgatb, and Amanda Lea Robinson, 2012. Geographic axes and the persistence of cultural diversity, PNAS, 109, 26


**Week 3. Introduction to experimental methods, focus on lab – Sergio Lo Iacono, MWF (Tuesday 23 January 2018)**


**Other readings**


[A cautionary tale]

**Week 4. Natural and field experiments (Tuesday 30 January 2018)**

**Natural**


**Field**


**Other readings**


**Week 5: Instrumental variables (Tuesday 6 February 2018)**


**Other readings**


Not to forget a cartoon:
Week 6. Difference in difference (Tuesday 13 February 2018)


Week 7. Twins and siblings (Tuesday 20 February 2018)

For an overview: Firembaugh, G. 131-145


Other readings


**Week 8. Regression discontinuity (Tuesday 27 February 2018)**


Barceló, J., & Labzina, E. Global Terrorism and (De-) Mobilization: Do Islamic State’s Deadly Attacks Disengage, Deter, or Mobilize Supporters? Working paper. [discontinuity based on timing of terrorist attack]

**Other readings**


**Week 9. To be decided (Tuesday 6 March 2018)**

**Week 10. Caveats, mixed methods and implication analysis (Diego Gambetta) (Tuesday 13 March 2018)**


[the article is discussed by several authors here: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/some.2008.38.issue-1/issuetoc]

Durkheim E. 1897. *Suicide*. [The whole book is a great read. It relies on implications which Durkheim derives from various conjectures on what might be causes of suicide; read especially chapter 4, on Imitation] [In the original French the book can be found here http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/40489; in English here http://archive.org/details/suicidestudyinso00durk ]

*Beware of being driven by data availability! See these two blogs:*

http://themonkeycage.org/2013/06/14/is-theory-getting-lost-in-the-identification-revolution


*Last updated 19.12.2017*