ADVANCED RESEARCH DESIGN & DATA COLLECTION

ALLIEVI HONORS PROGRAMME

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/23

Coordinated by Krzysztof Krakowski

Instructors
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Course Outline
This course is meant for second year Allievi students. The course has two principal aims. The first aim of the course is to teach a series of designs suitable for identifying causal relations rather than correlations. The second aim of the course is to teach a series of techniques of data collection. The readings offer many applications of these techniques aimed at spurring students’ imagination.

The reference texts for the course are:


Schedule
The course takes place on Wednesdays from 15:00 to 18:00, in Classroom 1 in the Collegio Carlo Alberto, and will run from Wednesday 28 September to Wednesday 7 December.

Classes and topics:
▪ Week 0: Practical arrangements [21 Sept, 17:30-18:00, Krzysztof Krakowski]
▪ Week 1: Brief history of cause-seeking designs & problems of causal identification [28 Sept, Aron Szekely]
▪ Week 2: Natural and quasi experiments [5 Oct, Krzysztof Krakowski]
▪ Week 3: Survey experiments [12 Oct, Davide Morisi]
▪ Week 4: Laboratory experiments [19 Oct, Aron Szekely]
▪ Week 5: Field experiments [26 Oct, Camilla Borgna]
▪ Week 6: Designing surveys [9 Nov, Davide Morisi]
▪ Week 7: Unconventional data collection I: Social media, text analysis, web scraping [16 Nov, Moreno Mancosu]
▪ Week 8: Unconventional data collection II: GIS and archival data [23 Nov, Krzysztof Krakowski]
▪ Week 9: Integrating theoretical and empirical social science [30 Nov, Giovanna Invernizzi]
▪ Week 10: Mixed methods and implication analysis [7 Dec, Diego Gambetta]
Assessment
Participants must complete the following requirements: In addition to attending regularly, students are required:

1) from Week 2 onward, to prepare **response papers** (1-2 pages long) on at least one of the mandatory 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. The students are encouraged to try to develop ideas on how a particular technique might help them in their own research. These comments should be submitted electronically to federica.gai@carloalberto.org by the Sunday preceding the class. The comments will be discussed in class.

2) to give two **class presentations** of empirical studies that apply the technique presented in each week’s readings. The syllabus includes a list of applied studies the participants can choose from for each week’s presentations. During Week 0, the students will be assigned presentations according to their preferences (within constraints).

3) to write a **final essay** of 2,500 words (references excluded), elaborating on one of the research ideas described in the response papers. The exact guidelines for this essay will be provided during the course.

**Important:** Students who present in the class in a given week need *not* submit a response paper commenting on the readings in this week. Only the final essay will be graded; the response papers and class presentations will be marked as pass or fail.

**SYLLABUS**

**Week 1:** Brief history of cause-seeking designs and problems of causal identification (Aron Szekely)
- Mandatory readings:

**Week 2:** Natural and quasi experiments (Krzysztof Krakowski)
- Mandatory readings:
  - Dunning, T., Introduction [Natural experiments]
  - Firembaugh, G. 2007, p. 153-158 [Instrumental variable]
  - Schlotter, Martin, Guido Schwerdt, and Ludger Woessmann. 2011, sections 3 & 5 [Instrumental variable & difference-in-differences]
- Applied studies:
  - Conley, Dalton and Brian J. McCabe. 2012. Bribery or just desserts? Evidence on the influence of Congressional reproductive policy voting patterns on PAC contributions from exogenous variation in the sex mix of legislator offspring. *Social Science Research* 41:120-129. [Instrumental variable]
  - Valentim, Vicente, Parliamentary Representation and the Normalization of Radical Right Support (November 22, 2018). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3289275 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3289275 [Regression discontinuity]

**Week 3: Survey experiments (Davide Morisi)**

- Mandatory readings:
  - Coppock, A., Leeper, T. J., & Mullinix, K. J. (2018). “Generalizability of heterogeneous treatment effect estimates across samples.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115 (49) 12441-12446

- Applied studies:
Week 4: Laboratory experiments (Aron Szekely)
- Mandatory readings:
- Applied studies:

Week 5: Field experiments (Camilla Borgna)
- Mandatory readings:
- Applied studies:
Week 6: Designing surveys (Davide Morisi)
- Mandatory readings:

- Applied studies:
  - **Measuring trust**
  - **Left-right ideology**
  - **Vote buying**
  - **Racial prejudice**
  - **Risk preferences**
  - **Turnout**
**Week 7: Unconventional data collection I: Social media, text analysis, web scraping** (Moreno Mancosu)

- Mandatory readings:

- Applied studies:

**Week 8: Unconventional data collection II: GIS and archival data** (Krzysztof Krakowski)

- Mandatory readings:

- Applied studies:
Week 9: Integrating theoretical and empirical social science (Giovanna Invernizzi)
- Mandatory readings:
- Applied studies:
  o See multiple examples in Ashworth et al. (2021)

Week 10: Mixed methods and implication analysis (Diego Gambetta)
- Mandatory readings:
  o 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]
  o 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
- Applied studies: