GOV 1263: IMPROVING GOVERNANCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EXPERIMENTS?

Spring 2018

Professor: Horacio Larreguy
Teaching Fellows: Pablo Ezequiel Balán and Daniel Baissa
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Office Hours: Pablo: Thu 10-11 am and 7-7:40 pm. Dan: Mon 2-3 pm and Wed 2-4 pm

Goals. Section will have two goals. The first goal is to provide you with the tools to be a critical consumer of cutting-edge research covered in lecture. The second goal is to learn the principles of research design, so that you can apply them to the final project.

Attendance and Reading. Attendance to section is mandatory. We will allow for one unexcused absence. For an absence to be excused, you must provide written documentation. Readings are not mandatory. Section is self-contained, but feel free to do the readings, especially if you are in the advanced section.

Assignments. The course comprises 6 assignments: 1) question you intend to tackle, 2) previous work on the topic, 3) experimental variation you would induce to answer your questions, 4) variables you would collect for the analysis, 5) final research design, and 6) in-class presentation (50% of grade). The schedule is as follows:

1. Assignment # 1: due on Week 5 in section
2. Assignment # 2: due on Week 7 in section
3. Assignment # 3: due on Week 9 in section
4. Assignment # 4: due on Week 10 in section
5. Presentation: in lecture (Weeks 12 and 13)
6. Final research design: April 26 at 10 am, by email to Horacio, Pablo, and Dan.

Guidelines on each assignment will be provided in advance. All assignments must be submitted both in paper and electronically to pbalan@g.harvard.edu and dbaissa@g.harvard.edu.
Contact. If you have questions or concerns you should come to office hours. If you can’t make it
to office hours, you can contact us by email. We will do our best to respond within 24 hours.

Weekly schedule (PRELIMINARY)

Week 2: Introduction to experiments. The fundamental problem of causal inference

1. Przeworski, A. 2007. Is the Science of Comparative Politics Possible?
6. 10 Things to Know about Causal Inference.

Week 3: Introduction to linear regression and regression analysis of experiments

1. 10 Things to Know About Reading A Regression Table
2. 10 Strategies for Figuring out if X Caused Y
3. 10 Things to Know About Covariate Adjustment

Week 4: Observational studies. Research question brainstorming


Week 5: Data analysis in Stata (or R). Assignment #1 due.

Week 6: Power analysis of experiments. Writing a literature review


2. 10 Things to Know about Statistical Power


Week 7: More on research design: Types of randomization, clustering, blocking, spillovers. Assignment #2 due.

1. 10 Things to Know About Randomization.


Week 8: Writing a Pre-Analysis Plan (PAP).


3. PAP examples [TBA]

**Week 9: Measuring variables: surveys and games. Assignment #3 due.**

1. 10 Things to Know About Survey Design


**Week 10: Delivering Effective Presentations. Assignment #4 due**


2. Shapiro, Jesse. How to Give and Applied Micro Talk

**Week 11: Lecture Recap. Or no section, we will see**

**Week 12: Lecture Recap. Or no section, we will see**

**General references: Causal inference and research design**


General references: Development

