

Seminar Economic Policy:

Topics in Political Economy and Applied Microeconomics

This seminar covers various topics in political economy and applied microeconomics. Students get in touch with up-to-date research in these fields and learn how to deal with high-quality contributions to the respective literatures.

Please note that students can only participate if they have successfully completed the module *Introduction to Econometrics* (or an equivalent module).

The seminar has two consecutive parts. **In the first part, students write a thesis (about 15 pages)** under the guidance of their advisor. The thesis covers one of the seminar topics and analyzes in depth one recent contribution to the literature. While writing their thesis, participating students are expected to search for additional literature and work independently on their topic. Advisors provide close guidance during this process. **The second part consists of a blocked seminar in January 2025 (date to be determined) where the participating students present their theses.** Before preparing their presentations, supervisors will provide students with detailed feedback on their thesis.

To express your interest, please submit the registration form to celina.hoegn@fau.de before September 23, 2024. Please note that the maximum number of participants is 9 students. The deadline for submitting the seminar theses is January 7, 2025. We will have a short introduction over Zoom on October 14th, 2024, at 3pm.

List of Topics

1. International Differences in Preferences for Redistribution

How much inequality is acceptable? People tend to give very different answers to this important question. We want to understand if there are systematic cross-country differences in how people think about inequality and redistribution.

– Literature: Almas, I., Cappelen, A., Tungodden, B. (2020): Cutthroat Capitalism versus Cuddly Socialism: Are Americans More Meritocratic and Efficiency-Seeking than Scandinavians? *Journal of Political Economy* 128, 1553-88.

2. Taking on Another Perspective

Refugee influxes are changing the ethnic composition in schools. In this study, a program is implemented to develop social skills in schools to reduce ethnic tensions. Does taking on another student's perspective help the case?

– Literature: Alan, S., Baysan, C., Gumren, M., & Kubilay, E. (2021). Building Social

Cohesion in Ethnically Mixed Schools: An Intervention on Perspective Taking. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 136(4), 2147-2194.

3. Does Diversity Matter for Health?

People often interact with others when making important choices. For instance, patients interact with doctors when seeking advice in terms of health. We want to understand if characteristics like race play a role in these situations. If yes, why is this?

– Literature: Alsan, M., Garrick, O., & Graziani, G. (2019): Does Diversity Matter for Health? Experimental Evidence from Oakland. *American Economic Review* 109, 4071-4111.

4. Educational Choices of Immigrant Children

What is the extent and what are the consequences of educational segregation among immigrant students? Can interventions that provide tutoring and career counseling reduce differences in educational choices? Are there children who benefit more from these interventions?

– Literature: Carlana, M., La Ferrara, E., & Pinotti, P. (2022). Goals and Gaps: Educational Careers of Immigrant Children. *Econometrica* 90(1), 1-29.

5. Grit in Education

Grit has been shown to be highly predictive of academic achievement. But can students learn to have more grit? If so, what are the implications for their educational outcomes?

– Literature: Alan, S., Boneva, T., & Ertac, S. (2019). Ever Failed, Try Again, Succeed Better: Results from a Randomized Educational Intervention on Grit. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 134(3), 1121-1162.

6. Are Learning Camps Useful?

How can education systems improve the educational outcomes of low-achieving pupils? This study evaluates the effectiveness of a learning camp implemented in Denmark. What is the role of non-cognitive skills?

– Literature: Hvidman, C., Koch, A. K., Nafziger, J., Nielsen, S. A., & Rosholm, M. (2024). An Intensive, School-Based Learning Camp Targeting Academic and Non-Cognitive Skills Evaluated in a Randomized Trial. *Labour Economics* 88, 102535.

7. The Value of Leadership

Much of today's production in firms and elsewhere happens in teams. We want to understand the role of leadership for successful teamwork. Do teams perform better if they have a team leader? If yes, why is this?

– Literature: Englmaier, F., Grimm, S., Grothe, D., Schindler, D., Schudy, S. (2021): The Value of Leadership: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment. CESifo Working Papers No. 9273.

8. Competitive Job Seekers

How do job seekers behave in an increasingly competitive environment? Sharing information can reduce one's own chances of securing a job, so should they share less? With whom and

when do job seekers share details about jobs?

– Literature: Chiplunkar, G., Kelley, E. M., & Lane, G. V. (2024). Competitive Job Seekers: When Sharing Less Leaves Firms at a Loss. NBER Working Paper No. 32171.

9. **The Value of Gig-Jobs**

Gaining job experience has become increasingly difficult. Are gig-jobs a sufficient replacement for traditional jobs on a CV? Does work experience always increase an entrant's hiring chances?

– Literature: Adermon, A., & Hensvik, L. (2022). Gig-Jobs: Stepping Stones or Dead Ends? *Labour Economics* 76, 102171.