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FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Chair of Economic Policy

Summer 2025

Seminar Applied Economic Policy:

Topics in Applied Microeconomics

This seminar covers various topics in 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 *Inroduction 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 on July 10, 2025 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 April 17, 2025. Please note that the maximum number of participants is 6 students. The deadline for submitting the seminar theses is June 23, 2025. We will have a short introduction over Zoom on April 24, 2025, at 3pm.

List of Topics

1. **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.

2. **The Gender Math Gap**
   What is the math gender gap, and what are its implications for girls' choice of major and future labor market outcomes? Can the gap be closed through an intervention? Why is it important how class content is taught?
   – Literature: Di Tommaso, M. L., Contini, D., De Rosa, D., Ferrara, F., Piazzalunga, D., & Robutti, O. (2021): Tackling the Gender Gap in Mathematics with Active Learning Methodologies. *Economics of Education Review* 100, 102538.

3. **Gender Composition in STEM**
   What are gender peer effects in higher education? For instance, can gender composition of doctoral programs influence the duration, rate of completion and dropout rates of female PhD students? If so, why could that be? Why should one care about female representation in science?
   – Literature: Bostwick, V. K., and Weinberg, B. A. (2022): Nevertheless she Persisted? Gender Peer Effects in Doctoral STEM Programs. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 40, 397-436.

4. **Homophily in Student Networks**
   Homophily is the tendency of individuals to connect with people who are similar to themselves. How can homophily be measured and on which dimensions can it be observed? What are possible consequences of homophilous student networks? Is homophily also found in other contexts?
   – Literature: Bhargava, P., D. Chen, M. Sutter, & C. Terrier (2022): Homophily and Transmission of Behavioral Traits in Social Networks, IZA Discussion Papers No. 15840.

5. **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 job seekers 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.

6. **Job Networks and Gender Gaps**
   Referral-based hiring is common. What role does one's job network play in this type of hiring? Can it disadvantage women in the labor market? If present, how can such disadvantages be reduced?
   – Literature: Beaman, L., Keleher, N., & Magruder, J. (2018): Do Job Networks Disadvantage Women? Evidence from a Recruitment Experiment in Malawi. *Journal of Labor Economics* 36(1), 121-157.