**Advanced Impact Evaluation**

**Winter 2018**

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3.30-5.30pm

**Course Description**

Evaluating the impact of public policies is key in successful policy development and implementation; however, correct evaluation of policies is often difficult to achieve, and policy impact can vary depending on the circumstances in which the policy was implemented. This course will continue from Impact Evaluation: Theory and Application and review the primary methods used to analyze the impact of public policy in an array of settings. In this course, students will draw from material learned earlier in the semester and analyze a policy of their choosing, which will involve selecting the correct method of evaluation and accounting for all possible sources of endogeneity that could hinder the estimation of the true impact. This project will constitute most of the semester and classes will be driven by students’ interests on specific policies and how they can be evaluated in practice.

This class is a 6-week intensive course that will be held two times each week (Tuesday and Friday mornings) for students who have already taken Impact Evaluation: Theory and Application.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

* Understand and implement basic and advanced methods used in impact evaluation
* Think critically about the issues involved with evaluating public policies, including the role of endogeneity.
* Select an appropriate method for evaluating a public policy, given the context of the policy and the data available
* Execute an analysis of a policy of their choosing, focusing on correct identification of the impact.

**Assessment**

Grades will have two main components:

1. Homework sets (30%): Homework will focus on practicing techniques learned in class. There will be 3 homework sets each worth 10%.
2. Final research paper (70%): The course will allow students to gradually develop their own analysis of a public policy, culminating in a journal-quality research paper.

**Course Readings**

There are no mandatory texts for this class. Instead, students will be required to complete the readings assigned before each class. For students who would like additional readings, I encourage you to read the following:

1. *Mostly Harmless Econometrics* (2009) by Joshua Angrist and Jörn-Steffen Pischke.

A more advanced version of Mastering ‘Metrics, aimed at explaining the technical aspects behind causal analysis

1. *Impact Evaluation in Practice* by Paul Gertler, Sebastian Martinez, Patrick Premand, Laura B. Rawlings, and Christel M. J. Vermeersch. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Publications. www.worldbank.org/ieinpractice.
2. *Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices* (2010) by Khander, Shahidur R., Gayatri B. Koolwal and Hussain A. Samad. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.
3. *Evaluating Anti-Poverty Programs* (2008) by Martin Ravallion. Chapter 59, in T. Paul Schultz and John Strauss, ed Handbook of Development Economics, vol.4. Elsevier: Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

**Schedule**

Please note that this schedule is approximate and is subject to change. Each week will constitute 2 classes.

Week 1: Review of Experimental vs. Non-Experimental Methods of Evaluation

Week 2: Propensity-Score Matching

Week 3: Difference-in-Differences

Week 4: Regression Discontinuity Design

Week 5: Mixed Methods of Evaluation

Week 6: Policy Analysis

**Grading**

CEU uses a system of letter grades and grade points for evaluating student work, including the thesis (please refer to the grade outline in the *CEU Student Records Manual*). Major assignments (i.e. term papers or ﬁnal exams) graded ‘unsatisfactory’ may be retaken once within a given time frame agreed upon between the faculty member(s) and the student. Students who fail to submit work, or whose work fails to meet the minimum requirements for the assignment, will receive a grade of ‘F.’ The lowest passing grade is C+. At the end of each course, course instructors distribute a detailed breakdown of the course grade components.