

Experimental methods, Lecture and tutorial

Urs Fischbacher (lecture) and Konstantin Hesler (tutorial)

Monday, 15:15-16:45, A702, lecture

Monday, 17:00-18:30, A702, tutorial according to schedule

Content

Experiments have established their own role in economics as a source of knowledge. Experiments allow testing the behavioral assumptions underlying economic modeling; they provide tests for the empirical validity of different models and permit to establish behavioral regularities even when a theory is not yet available. Experiments also guide the researchers in the development of new theories. So, without experiments, prospect theory and social preference theories would be without relevance, since the relevance could not be proven. This lecture gives an introduction into the experimental method in economics. It should enable you to design, plan, conduct, and analyze an economic experiment. Furthermore, it presents typical and prototypical experimental designs.

Schedule

Lectures	Tutorials
13.04.2015 1 Introduction	
20.04.2015 2 Experimental Markets	Visual Data Analysis
27.04.2015 3 Designing Experiments	
04.05.2015 4 Bargaining and Fairness	Design I
11.05.2015 5 Data Analysis	
18.05.2015 6 Public Goods Experiments	Non Parametric Tests I
25.05.2015 (Pentecost)	
01.06.2015 7 Behavior under Risk	
08.06.2015 8 Auctions	Non Parametric Tests II
15.06.2015 9 Strategic Thinking	
22.07.2015 10 Statistical Game Theory	Design II
29.07.2015 11 Field Experiments	
06.07.2015 12 Questions and Answers	Q&A

General Literature

1. Charles A. Holt, Markets, games, and strategic behavior, 2006.
2. Colin F. Camerer, Behavioral Game Theory, Princeton University Press, 2003.
3. Davis/Holt, Experimental Economics, Princeton University Press, 1993.
4. Kagel/Roth, The Handbook of Experimental Economics, Princeton Univ. Press, 1995.
5. Daniel Friedman, Shyam Sunder, Experimental Methods, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994.
6. Daniel Friedman, Alessandro Cassar, Economics lab, an intensive course in experimental economics, Routledge, London, 2004
7. Francesco Guala, The Methodology of Experimental Economics, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
8. Theodore C. Bergstrom and John H. Miller, Experiments with Economic Principles, McGraw-Hill, 1997.
9. Charles R. Plott, Vernon L. Smith, Handbook of Experimental Economics Results, Volume 1, North Holland , Amsterdam, New York, Oxford, Tokyo, 2008.
10. Bardsley, N., Cubitt, R., Loomes, G., Moffatt, P., Starmer, C. and R. Sugden, Experimental Economics: Rethinking the Rules. Princeton University Press, 2010.
11. Dan Ariely, The Upside of Irrationality: The Unexpected Benefits of Defying Logic at Work and Home, Harper, 2010.

Book (1) is an introduction into economics using experiments. It can also be considered as an introduction to experimental economics. It is most appropriate at the undergraduate level. Books (2) to (4) provide an overview of experimental economics. They deal with the question how economic problems are translated into an experimental design, what we observe in these experiments and what we can learn from these results. The book by Camerer is most up-to-date; and for this reason, it is the most recommendable among them. The books by Friedman/Sunder and Friedman/Cassar give introductions into the experimental method. They present in a rather abstract way what types of research questions experiments can address, and explain very concretely how experiments are implemented and conducted. Guala is a philosopher. His book discusses experiments from a philosophical point of view. Bergstrom/Miller is an introduction into economics based on experiments. Bardsley et al. discuss the experimental method. The book relies on a lot of knowledge and is most enjoyable for the experienced researcher. Finally, (11) is an entertaining introduction to experimental and behavioral economics.

The lecture will be based on slides, which will also contain the necessary references. For the exam, the content presented in the lecture, i.e. the slides are relevant.