15.838 Research Seminar in Marketing

Professor John R. Hauser


Schedule: Mondays 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, H1 Only. Note that February 19 is a Monday schedule. Richard Derbes Conference Room (E62-526)

Goal of the Seminar

In Spring 2011 I taught a seminar on the philosophy of science, the methodology of measurement, Planckian vs. Princetonian perspectives on behavioral research, and other topics. Both Song and Nell participated in the seminar so I plan to take a different tack.

There are two parts to the seminar that we will explore through the five sessions of the course.

1. Exploring myths about the job market.
2. Job market papers one year after – placements at the top schools.

My goal is that we work together to explore these topics. Naturally, we may modify focus and explore alternative directions should they be warranted.

Exploring myths about the job market

There are many myths about the job market, some have validity and some do not. Some represent the views of a minority; others of the market as a whole. I have my own beliefs with respect to these myths, but I feel we should address these myths with data. My goal is to help you learn to address these hypotheses with messy data. This is an important skill to define research and to carry out research. Seminal research often comes from messy hints.

For example, is it better to have a single-authored job-market paper, a multiple-authored paper, or does it even matter? How does this affect your likelihood of earning tenure seven years later? Is the topic or the execution more important? Do published papers help? Do the courses you have taken matter? Etc.

We might analyze data from the AMA and Marketing Science consortia, from various job market reports, from mapping careers, etc. We will identify six myths, each of which will be explored by one student. You will be judged on your ability to identify data sources and use those sources to address the myth.

Session 1. Come to the session with a list of your beliefs about the job market—these beliefs can come from other seminars, discussions with prior students, or your own beliefs. You should also come prepared with ideas on potential sources of data and how you might obtain those data. We
will organize the myths into topics, discuss how we will gather data to support the myths, and assign each student a myth.

Session 3. Each student will present a preliminary report on his/her topic. The report must be based on data, which might include interviews. The report should be 5-10 PowerPoint slides.

Session 5. Final reports. The report should be 5-10 pages and must include data. If the answer is mixed or still uncertain, that is okay. Each student will make a presentation using 5-10 PowerPoint slides. Some slides from Session 3 can be reused.

**Job market papers one year after**

Each year a few students are identified as stars and get the best placements. We’ll explore their job market papers (and their vitae). The focus is on quantitative students. Whether or not that is your own interest, it is important that you understand this area of the field. I want you to read papers that have been revised based on feedback, therefore, for the most part, we will focus on papers from the 2011-2012 job market. I added Eric Schwartz from 2012 because he was the hot commodity this year. These papers will not overlap with those in Birger’s half-seminar. My perspective on the papers is likely to be different anyway.

I have contacted students from the 2011-2012 job market and they are enthusiastic about having us review their papers. Some students report having participated in similar seminars at their universities; others wish they had. In some cases, the students have given me extra material to help you prepare. I’ll share this material.

Each student will select a primary paper. That student will present the primary paper as if it were his or her job market paper. The presentation will include a motivation of the problem, a brief literature review (obtained by examining the paper’s references), a presentation of the methods and results, and a discussion of future directions. One goal here is to give you practice for a job-market presentation. By revealed preference the material in each paper (or set of papers) was sufficient for a top job. We can focus on your ability to present the material effectively and answer questions from “faculty” critics.

A second student will be designated as a discussant. That student will present a formal discussion of the paper. Students are often judged in job interviews on how they discuss others’ papers, especially papers written by faculty at the universities at which the student is seeking a job. A third student will examine the candidate’s other papers and discuss the candidate’s career trajectory. There are only six papers or sets of papers. All students are expected to have read the paper(s) in depth. Every student should demonstrate this knowledge by asking the presenter pointed questions as if the student was faculty member evaluating the presenter. This will give you the perspective of sitting on the other side.
There are six designated candidate papers. Each student has selected an assignment as a presenter and as a discussant. I will provide a disk containing all papers, but if you want to pre-read, most of these papers are available on the web. Ask me for any you cannot find on the web.

As the seminar progresses we may or may not review the other papers. It depends upon student interest and the speed with which we cover the primary papers. Four additional papers have been designated as secondary papers for this purpose. I would be surprised if we cover more than four. Daria’s paper came from her thesis but was not her job market paper. You have all seen her present her job market paper many times.

Many of these papers use structural models. To prepare we will first review material on structural models, with apologies to Song and Sachin who have seen the *Marketing Science* papers in the previous seminar. To get up to speed, we will devote the second half of the first session to a general review of structural models. I am asking Song to present a recent review by Andrew Ching. I am asking Aliaa to present a *Marketing Science* review article and the commentaries.) Song has also provided a series of articles from the *Journal of Economics Perspectives* on structural models. All other students are expected have read both the Ching and the Chintagunta, et al. papers, are expected to have skimmed the *JEP* papers, and should be prepared to discuss these papers in class. To reflect the extra assignments for Song and Aliaa, we’ll balance the rest of workload. Note that Tuesday, February 19 is considered to be on a Monday schedule by MIT.

Session 1 (February 11). Song and Aliaa present review papers.

Sessions 2 (February 19) and 4 (March 4). Each session will cover two job-market papers.

Sessions 3 (February 25) and 5 (March 11). Each session will cover one job-market paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Degree From</th>
<th>Hiring Institution</th>
<th>Assigned: Presenter, Discussant, Vita, Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yaniv Dover</td>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>Yu-Wei, James, Nell, 4</td>
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<td>Pranav Jindal</td>
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<td>Penn State</td>
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<td>Anita Rao</td>
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<td>James, Yu-Wei, Aliaa, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navdeep Sahni</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
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<td>Nell, Sachin, Yu-Wei, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Schwartz</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Song, Aliaa, Sachin, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinar Yildirim</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Wharton</td>
<td>Aliaa, Song, James, 2</td>
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**Secondary Papers**

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Other Authors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Chung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daria Dzyabura</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>NYU</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyo Ryung Nam</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Erasmus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jason Roos</td>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>Erasmus</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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**Bibliography** *(I will provide a disk that contains all of these readings.)*

*Vita. There is a file with all six vitae.*

*Other papers. There is also a file with other papers by the primary authors. These are the paper that are freely available on the web. Feel free to contact the authors for other papers.*

*Session 1 papers (Ching presented by Song; Chintagunta presented by Aliaa, all other students are to read these papers and be prepared to discuss the papers).*


*Session 1 papers to be skimmed by all students.*

All from the Journal of Economic Perspectives, 24, 2, (Spring), 2010.

Angrist, Joshua D. and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. The credibility revolution in empirical economics: how better research design is taking the con out of econometrics. 3-30.


Keane, Michael P. A structural perspective on the experimentalist school. 47-58.

Nevo, Aviv and Michael D. Whinston. Taking the dogma out of econometrics: structural modeling and credible inference. 69-82.
Sims, Christopher A. But econometrics is not an experimental science. 59-68.


Session 1. Can marketing science and structural models learn from one another?


Job market papers. There is a Word file on the DVD with a few comments from the authors.


Dzyabura, Daria. 2012. Product search as consumers learn their preferences through product evaluation.


Sahni, Navdeep 2012. Effect of temporal spacing between advertising exposures: evidence from an online field experiment. Includes 1979 paper by John Little that gives some perspective on the literature and the models used.

Schwartz, Eric. 2012. Core methodological development in “bandit’s paradise: customer acquisition through online display advertising. Includes a paper by Scott that addresses similar issues. Includes Eric’s presentation slides.


Related readings (feel free to seek other supporting articles)
For Jindal: Selove, Matt – Selove experiment. Figure and Tables comparing alternative conjoint formats.


**Standards**

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