

Experimental Approaches to Law Making & Regulation

Short syllabus – 2021- 2022

Course description

Students will start with learning what experiments are and how they can be used both to advance our understanding of the world and to design better public policies, regulations and laws. We will then quickly overview the foundations of experimental methodology both in the lab and in the field. Students will thus be introduced to behavioural studies of human cognition and social interactions. Experiments have been key to the emergence of the field of behavioural law and economics and experiments are key to test the policies that exploit behavioural biases and social preferences (nudges).

Topics of Lectures

- Causation, Credibility and Experiments

Angrist, Joshua D., and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. "The credibility revolution in empirical economics: How better research design is taking the con out of econometrics." *Journal of economic perspectives* 24.2 (2010): 3-30.

Ho, Daniel E., and Larry Kramer. "Introduction: the empirical revolution in law." *Stanford Law Review* (2013): 1195-1202.

- Types of experiments: lab, field and RCTs

Croson, Rachel. "Experimental law and economics." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 5 (2009): 25-44.

Roth, Alvin E. "Is experimental economics living up to its promise." *The Methods of Modern Experimental Economics*. Oxford (forthcoming) (2010).

- Experiments for policy making

Duflo, Esther. "Field experiments and the practice of policy." *American Economic Review* 110.7 (2020): 1952-73.

Abramowicz, Michael, Ian Ayres, and Yair Listokin. "Randomizing law." *U. Pa. L. Rev.* 159 (2010): 929.

- A brief introduction to experimental methods

Nicolas Jacquemet and Olivier L'Haridon. *Experimental Economics: Method and Applications*, Cambridge University Press, 2018

- Behavioural Economics

Eyal Zamir and Doron Teichman, *Behavioral Law and Economics*, Oxford University Press 2018

- Social interactions and preferences

Dhami, Sanjit. *The foundations of behavioral economic analysis*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Bicchieri, Cristina. *The grammar of society: The nature and dynamics of social norms*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

- **Nudging: exploiting the complexity of human behaviour for good**

Thaler, Richard H., and Cass R. Sunstein. "Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness." Penguin 2009

- **Is nudging good? exploring the practical and ethical limits of nudging**

Sugden, Robert. "Do people really want to be nudged towards healthy lifestyles?." *International Review of Economics* 64.2 (2017): 113-123.

Schmidt, Andreas T., and Bart Engelen. "The ethics of nudging: An overview." *Philosophy Compass* 15.4 (2020): e12658.

Teaching methods

Lectures, in-class experiments, flipped classes with presentations of real world RCTs by students