

**Empirical Political Economy**  
7,374

**Instructors**

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**Office hours**

Bodanstrasse 8, by appointment

**Course information**

Kick-off	Sep 16	14.15-18.00	01-U126
Stata Session	Sep 23	18:15-20:00	01-U179
Stata Session	Oct 14	18:15-20:00	01-U179
Seminar	Oct 30	08.15-18.00	22-004
Seminar	Oct 31	08.15-18.00	22-004

**Outline**

The seminar gives an overview of the quickly expanding field of empirical political economy. For this aim, students will learn the steps and methodology in carrying out applied research projects using statistical methods. Participants can either choose among a list of topics or work on their own research question. The proposed topics draw upon recently collected data from the field. Examples include the estimation of the effect of institutions on economic growth, the relationship between protestantism and fiscal spending, and the relationship between inequality and structural change. The competences acquired may serve as a basis for a successful empirical MA thesis.

Each group of two students must choose one research question, write their own empirical paper, and present the paper in class. The paper should review the relevant literature and/or underlying theory, inspect and describe the data, select appropriate quantitative methods, and estimate the model. The discussion of the results should focus on the question whether the main effects are causal or not. Furthermore, students should also try to make their empirical argument as convincing as possible.

**Participation Rules**

Students fulfilling the prerequisites can participate in the seminar "Empirical Political Economy". The number of participants is limited to 20. There will be a total of ten topics.

**Prerequisites**

Solid knowledge of linear regression analysis.

**Grading**

Paper 50%; presentation 30%; active participation 20%.

Grading criteria for the presentation (and the participation) are as follows:

- Convincing performance of the speakers as regards both content and rhetoric,
- Sensible structure of arguments within the given timeframe,
- Careful description of empirical work,

- Critical judgement about possible limitations,
- Active participation in terms of attendance and seminar discussion,
- Time: 30min plus 15min discussion.

Grading criteria for the paper are as follows:

- Motivation of the paper,
- Logical structure and priority setting,
- Careful empirical analysis,
- Formal appearance,
- Length of written paper: 12– 15 pages excluding tables and figures (12pt, 1.5 line spacing).

## **Literature**

Angrist, J.D., Pischke, J-S. (2008), *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*, Princeton University Press.

Cameron, A.C., Trivedi, P.K. (2005), *Microeconometrics: Methods and Applications*. 1st edition, Cambridge University Press.

Greene, W.H. (2008), *Econometric analysis*. 7th edition, Prentice Hall.

Wooldridge, J.M. (2008), *Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach*. 4th edition, Thomson South Western.