



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2019

10,368: Causal Inference

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Written examination (40%)

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)

Decentral - Presentation (individual) (20%)

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[10,368,1.00 Causal Inference](#) -- Englisch -- [Lechner Michael](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

As defined for the econometrics specialisation of PEF.

Course content

In the past 60 years econometrics provided us with many tools to uncover lots of different types of correlations. The technical level of this literature is impressive (see the PEF course Advanced Microeconometrics). However, at the end of day, correlations are less interesting if they do not have a causal implication. For example, the fact that smokers are more likely to die earlier than other people does not tell us much about the effect of smoking. For example, it might just be that smokers are the type of people who face more health and crime risks for quite different (social or genetic) reasons. The same problem occurs with almost any correlation of economic or financial variables. The interesting question is always whether these correlations are *spurious*, or whether they do tell us something about the underlying *causal* link of the different variables involved?

In this course we review and organize the rapidly developing literature on causal analysis in economics and econometrics and consider the conditions and methods required for drawing causal inferences from the data. Empirical applications play an important role in this course. The very recent literature on causal machine learning will be (partly) included as well.

Active participation of PhD students participating in this course is expected. During the second part of the course, participants will conduct their own empirical study and present their results.

Course structure

General structure and rules

Students activities

Active participation of the students in this course is the key to its success. Students are expected to do the following:

- 1) Read the papers shown as 'compulsary reading' in the reading list BEFORE the lecture concerned with the topic.
- 2) Each morning students will present a paper (10-30 minutes each; depending on the number of participants) and there will be some general discussion about these papers. Students not presenting will be expected at least to sketch the papers to be able to participate in the discussion.



3) Small groups of students (group size depends on number of participants) will conduct an independent empirical study (using Software of their own choice; GAUSS or STATA is recommended). In the empirical project students will show that they understood the basic concepts and are able to apply them to a 'real life' situation.

Grades

Written Exam about 4 weeks after the last lecture (2 hours) (40%).

Students' active participation in general discussions during lectures and presentations (20%).

Presentation of papers (20%).

Empirical project (based on two presentations; 20%).

Prerequisites

As defined for the econometrics specialisation of PEF.

Exchange students

... are welcome if they fulfill the prerequisites. Same rules apply as for PEF students. If it can be organised in a way that seems to be appropriate by the lecturer, exchange students may do the written exam outside of St. Gallen.

Course literature

To be published shortly before the lecture.

Additional course information

Only for PhD students of the University of St.Gallen

PEF students may register via regular bidding for the courses offered together by PEF and Global School in Empirical Research Methods (GSERM). Enrolment in a course is binding: students have to attend the course and take the exam. The credits will be shown on the scorecard.

All other PhD students should register for the courses offered by Global School in Empirical Research Methods (GSERM), **both via bidding and via GSERM** for:

-courses for the curriculum and

-optional courses **with** an examination. These will be listed on the scorecard under optional work (**only possible if all required elective courses have already been completed**).

Please register **only via GSERM** for:

-optional courses **without** an examination and

-optional courses **if not all required elective courses have been completed** (not shown on the scorecard)

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Written examination (40%)

Remark



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Examination-aid rule

Extended Closed Book

The use of aids is limited; any additional aids permitted are exhaustively listed under "Supplementary aids". Basically, the following is applicable:

- At such examinations, all the pocket calculators of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and mono- or bilingual dictionaries (no subject-specific dictionaries) without hand-written notes are admissible. Any other pocket calculator models and any electronic dictionaries are inadmissible.
- In addition, any type of communication, as well as any electronic devices that can be programmed and are capable of communication such as notebooks, tablets, PDAs, mobile telephones and others, are inadmissible.
- Students are themselves responsible for the procurement of examination aids.

Supplementary aids

No additional aids.

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

2. Examination sub part (2/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

3. Examination sub part (3/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English



4. Examination sub part (4/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (individual) (20%)

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Empirical work, literature, contents of lecture

Examination relevant literature

To be defined during the lecture

Please note

Please note that this fact sheet alone is binding and has priority over any other information such as StudyNet (Canvas), personal databases or faculty members' websites and information provided in their lectures, etc.

Any possible references and links within the fact sheet to information provided by third parties are merely supplementary and informative in nature and are outside the University of St.Gallen's scope of responsibility and guarantee.

Documents and materials that have been submitted no later than the end of term time (CW51) are relevant to central examinations.

Binding nature of the fact sheet:

- Information about courses and examination time (central/decentral) and examination type starting from the beginning of the bidding on 22 August 2019
- Information about examinations (examination aid regulations, examination content, examination-relevant literature) for decentral examinations after the 4th semester week on 14 October 2019
- Information about examinations (examination aid regulations, examination content, examination-relevant literature) for central examinations as from the starting date for examination registration on 4 November 2019

Please consult the fact sheet again after these deadlines have expired.