

Deniz Selman

Curriculum Vitae

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Citizenship: U.S. and Turkey

Education: Ph.D., Economics, University of Pennsylvania, expected May 2009.
B.A., Economics and Mathematics, *with Highest Distinction*, University of Virginia, May 2000.

Job Market Paper: “Optimal Sequencing of Presidential Primaries”

Abstract: The American presidential nomination process consists of a series of elections (primaries) in which states vote at different times. This paper focuses on the problem faced by a political party that wants to choose the *optimal temporal structure* for its primaries. I consider an environment in which a sequential election may generate *voter herding*, and address both when and how the party can benefit from social learning to maximize the probability of selecting the *highest quality candidate*. By choosing whether to have a sequential election and--if so--the actual sequence in which states vote, the party can control whether momentum effects will be present and guarantee that any voter herding will be ex ante beneficial to the goal of selecting the highest quality candidate. When candidates are expected to have equal partisan support, simultaneous voting outperforms all sequential elections. When one candidate has more partisan support, a sequential election can outperform simultaneous voting; under this condition, voter herding compensates for the partisan imbalance. This result is a novel example of a beneficial information cascade, in contrast with the socially inefficient cascades in the standard herding literature. In a sequential election, it is optimal for the states voting early in the primary season to be those which: (i) are smaller, (ii) have fewer partisans, (iii) have more informed voters, and (iv) display more voter diversity.

Committee: Antonio Merlo (Chair), Andrew Postlewaite, Alvaro Sandroni and Philipp Kircher

Research Interests:

Political Economy, Public Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Search Theory, Auction Theory

Teaching Interests:

Major: Public Economics, Political Economy, Game Theory, Applied Microeconomics

Minor: Microeconomic Theory, General Equilibrium

Research Papers and Publications:

“Optimal Sequencing of Presidential Primaries”, Job Market Paper, University of Pennsylvania, 2008.

“Political Knowledge and the 2004 Presidential Election”, joint with E. Harvill, *mimeo*, University of Pennsylvania, 2008.

“Coordination Frictions and Heterogeneity in Markets with Bidding”, *mimeo*, University of Pennsylvania, 2007.

“Voting”, joint with A. Sandroni, J. Pogach, M. Tincani and A. Penta, in *The Encyclopedia of Complexity and System Science*, Robert A. Meyers (Editor-in-Chief), Springer, New York, forthcoming.

Honors and Awards:

Graduate Fellowship, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Pennsylvania, 2006-2007.
 Joel Popkin Graduate Student Teaching Prize in Economics (awarded for outstanding teaching performance by a Teaching Assistant in Economics), University of Pennsylvania, April 2005.
 Fellowship, Center for Analytical Research in Economics and Social Sciences, University of Pennsylvania, September 2003.
 Prize for Highest Distinction, Distinguished Majors Thesis, Department of Economics, University of Virginia, May 2000.
 Echols Scholar, University of Virginia, 1996-2000.
 National Merit Scholar, 1996.

Conference and Seminar Presentations:

“Optimal Sequencing of Presidential Primaries”:
 Political Economy Seminar, University of Pennsylvania, 2008.
 Microeconomic Theory Club, University of Pennsylvania, 2008.
 “Political Knowledge and the 2004 Presidential Election: Explaining the disconnect between voters’ ideology and their voting behavior” (presented by co-author):
 Society of Economic Dynamics (SED) Annual Meeting, Cambridge, MA, 2008.
 “Coordination Frictions and Heterogeneity in Markets with Bidding”:
 Conference of the Society for the Advancement of Economic Theory (SAET), Kos, Greece, 2007.
 Search and Matching Seminar, University of Pennsylvania, 2007.
 Microeconomics Club, University of Pennsylvania, 2007.

Professional Activities:

Referee, *International Economic Review*, *Games and Economic Behavior*.
 Chair, Graduate Economic Society, University of Pennsylvania, 2004-2005.
 Representative, Graduate Student Associations Council, University of Pennsylvania, 2004-2005.

Teaching Experience (University of Pennsylvania Economics Department unless noted):

Head Teaching Assistant, Managerial Economics, Prof. Bruce Allen (Business and Public Policy Department, The Wharton School), Spring 2008.
 Undergraduate Recitation Instructor, Introductory Microeconomics, Dr. Uri Spiegel, Spring 2007.
 Undergraduate Recitation Instructor, Introductory Microeconomics, Dr. Rebecca Stein, Spring 2004, Spring 2005, Spring 2006.
 Teaching Assistant, Game Theory (Honors Section), Prof. Steven Matthews, Fall 2003, Fall 2004, Fall 2005, Fall 2006.
 Teaching Assistant, Game Theory, Prof. Alvaro Sandroni, Fall 2006.
 Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Microeconomics (Honors Section), Prof. Steven Matthews, Fall 2004, Fall 2005.
 Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Microeconomics (Honors Section), Prof. George Mailath, Fall 2003.

Other Teaching Related Activities (University of Pennsylvania):

Organizer, Graduate Student Teaching Workshop Series, Center for Teaching and Learning, 2006-2007.
 Graduate Student Teaching Observer, 2006-2007.
 Tutor, Economics Department, 2003-2006.

Additional Skills:

Languages: English (native), Turkish (native), French (basic)
 Proficient in MATLAB, STATA and Maple

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University of Pennsylvania

Employment Interests:

Academic, Research Organization

Date of Availability:

June 2009

References:

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Professor Philipp Kircher

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