Economics 8000-03

Topics in Microconomic Theory: Information, Beliefs and Learning

Fall 2022

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Lecture. TR 10:15-11:45am

This is an advanced topics course about information, beliefs and learning. We will study the basic underpinnings of how people form beliefs, value information, and learn from their peers, public and private information. We will use these models to study how model misspecification, which can capture many common behavioral biases such as overconfidence and correlation neglect, impacts learning and connect recent theoretical advances to the empirical literature documenting such biases. We will use these frameworks to study markets for information, including how to design, price and customize information. If time allows, we will conclude with a brief discussion of information aggregation.

The goal of the course is to deepen your understanding of recent developments in several active areas of research in microeconomic theory, and to provide you with tools and techniques to transition from coursework to research.

Course Content

All course material will be posted on Canvas.

Reading. Readings will consist of journal articles (there is no text for the course). You should read all of the papers that we cover in class. Reading papers at this stage is a great way to help you think about how to ask and answer research questions, and exposit your ideas.

Participation. Discussion will be an essential part of the course. These discussions will focus on the readings, including critiquing the model and results, discussing the conceptual contributions of the papers, and evaluating their contributions relative to the existing literature. In order to actively participate in these discussions, it is important to read and think through the material before class. Each week, there will also be discussion prompts on Canvas to either submit your thoughts and questions on a paper we will discuss before class or reflect on a topic after class.

Assignments. *To be added.*

Prerequisites

You should have taken the first year Ph.D. sequence in the Economics department or have received consent from me. In general, you should be comfortable with real analysis, probability theory, and standard equilibrium concepts.