

Seminar “Topics in Policy Evaluation”

(Winter Term 2026/27)

Focus on Technology and the Labor Market

Outline

In the winter term of 2026/27, the seminar will focus on the evaluation of policies related to technology and the labor market. The course provides an introduction to the economics of technological change with an emphasis on rigorous quantitative evaluation. The impact of technology on labor markets, innovation, and economic growth is a central topic on the political agenda. Therefore, assessing the causal effects of technology-related policies is crucial for evidence-based policymaking.

The goal of this course is to discuss the existing empirical evidence on the effects of selected policy interventions and technological developments. By focusing on a single paper, students will become familiar with common analytical tools for policy evaluation (e.g., randomized controlled trials, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables, regression discontinuity). Along the way, we will discuss the challenges of proper study design so that by the end of the course, students will be able to judge the quality of quantitative research. There are five general topics:

1. Internet and Broadband
2. Technology, Automation, and Labor Markets
3. Innovation, R&D and Patents
4. Technology, Work Organization, and Platforms
5. Artificial Intelligence

Instructor

Prof. Dr. Kamila Cygan-Rehm, office hours: Tuesday, 1:30-2:30 pm, HÜL N308

Requirements

A basic understanding of statistics and microeconomics is necessary. Knowledge of causal inference methods (e.g., as taught in the modules Empirical Economics or Current Topics in Applied Economics) is not required but will be helpful. For a refresher, see the open-access textbook "Causal Inference. The Remix" by Scott Cunningham (<https://mixtape.scunning.com/>).

Important dates

- 1) Application deadline: October 25, 2026
- 2) Introductory session: October 28, 2026, 1:00-2:30 pm, room HÜL S390
- 3) Seminar presentations: mid-January 2027 (exact dates will be announced via email).
- 4) Submission deadline: February 7, 2027

Application

Please apply by email to empirics.wiwi@tu-dresden.de between October 1 and October 25, 2026. The application should include your name, matriculation number, degree program, and up to three paper choices (in order of preference). Participation is limited to 16 students. Topics are generally assigned in the order that registrations are received. As the seminar is typically oversubscribed, we recommend submitting your application early.

The list of available topics is provided in a separate document in the respective course in [OPAL](#). Students should familiarize themselves with the papers before applying. The final assignment of topics will take place during the introductory session. The instructor will send an email to registered students confirming the final topic assignment shortly after the first session.

Do not forget to register for the seminar in HISQIS/Selma within the applicable registration period.

Grading

The language of examination is English. Details on evaluation criteria will be shared in the introductory session.

(a) Presentation and Discussion (1/2 of final grade)

The presentation should provide a summary and a brief critical discussion of the seminar paper. It must not exceed 20 minutes, followed by a discussion of about 10 minutes. Students are expected to present freely and answer questions only based on their slides as visual aids. Additional notes are not allowed. Participants are expected to contribute constructively to the discussion of each paper presented in their respective general topic group.

(b) Seminar paper (1/2 of final grade)

The seminar paper must provide an accurate summary and a critical discussion of the assigned paper. Students are also expected to discuss the paper and its contribution in the light of the broader literature on the topic. The maximum length of the seminar paper (excluding references, tables, figures, etc.) should be 12 pages in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, and 1.5-line spacing.

The seminar paper must be submitted as a PDF by email to empirics.wiwi@tu-dresden.de before February 7, 2027, at 11:59 pm.

Modules

MA-WW-ERG-3803, D-WW-ERG-3803, WW-MA-PIE-TPV: Topics in Policy Evaluation