

Seminar “Topics in Policy Evaluation”

(Winter Term 2025/26)

Focus on Educational Policies

Outline

In the winter term 2025/26, the seminar will focus on the evaluation of educational policies. The course provides an introduction to educational policy issues with an emphasis on their rigorous quantitative evaluation. The design of education policies is a much-debated topic on the political agenda. Therefore, assessing their causal effects 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. By focusing on one specific paper, students will familiarize themselves with common analytical tools for policy evaluation in general (e.g., randomized controlled trials, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables). 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 four general topics:

1. Early Childcare and Education
2. Returns to Schooling and School Policies
3. School Resources and Classroom Environment
4. Higher Education

Instructor

Dr. Andreas Leibing. Office hours by appointment (andreas.leibing@tu-dresden.de)

Requirements

A basic understanding of statistics and microeconomics is necessary. Knowledge of causal inference methods (e.g., as taught in the modules Empirical Economics, Advanced Topics in Applied Economics, or Empirical Labor Economics) is highly recommended.

Important dates

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| 1) Application deadline: | Friday, October 31, 2025, 23:59 |
| 2) Introductory session: | Tuesday, November 4, 2025, 13:00-14:30, room HÜL S390 |
| 3) Submission deadline: | Friday, December 19, 2025, 23:59 |
| 4) Seminar presentations: | Tuesday, January 13, 2026, TBA |

Application

Please apply by email to andreas.leibing@tu-dresden.de by October 31, 2025. The application should include your name, matriculation number, degree program, and up to three paper choices (in order of preference). Participation is limited to 15 students. Given that there are still slots available, we will invite you to the introductory session ASAP after your application.

The list of available topics and corresponding papers is provided in a separate document in the respective course in OPAL. The final assignment of papers will take place during the introductory session, after which students can start working on their seminar paper.

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

Grading

In order to pass the module, students have to pass both the presentation and the seminar paper. The language of both examinations is English. More evaluation criteria will be shared in the class.

(a) Seminar paper (2/3 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 12-15 pages in Times New Roman, 12pt font, and 1.5-line spacing.

The seminar paper must be submitted as a PDF file by email to the instructor of the course before the deadline.

(b) Presentation and Discussion (1/3 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. The exact length will depend on the number of students participating. All participants are expected to contribute constructively to the discussion of each paper presented.

Modules

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