

Seminar “Topics in Policy Evaluation”

Summer semester 2025

Focus: **Evaluation of socio-economic impacts of natural disasters**

Outline

In the summer semester 2025, the seminar will focus on the evaluation of economic and social consequences of natural disasters. The course provides an overview of the empirical literature on the socio-economic impacts of environmental extremes such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and heat waves. The emphasis is on rigorous quantitative evaluation of their effects on labor market outcomes, educational attainment, political outcomes, mobility, economic growth etc. Assessing such impacts is important for understanding how we can better recover from environmental shocks, and is therefore crucial for evidence-based policymaking.

The aim of this course is to discuss the selected empirical evidence on the economic and social impacts of natural disasters. On the other hand, students will be introduced to common analytical tools for impact evaluation in general (e.g. fixed effects, 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. Throughout the course, we will discuss 15 papers, focusing on methods used to assess causal effects.

Instructor

Prof. Dr. Kamila Cygan-Rehm
Office hours: Tue, 2:50 – 4:20 pm, HÜL 308

Modules

MA-WW-ERG-3803/WW-MA-205-TPEV, D-WW-ERG-3803/WW-D-205-TPEV, WW-MA-PIE-TPV:
Topics in Policy Evaluation

Requirements

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

Schedule

Introductory session: April 30, 2025, 9:20-10:50, room HÜL S390.
Seminar presentations: July 2025 (to be coordinated with the participants).
Deadline for the submission of seminar papers: August 11, 2025 (hard copy and pdf via email).

Application

Please apply by email to wiiw-econometrics@tu-dresden.de (secretary) between April 7 and 27, 2025. The application must include your name, matriculation number, degree program, and up to three topic choices (in order of preference). Participation is limited to 15 students.

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.

You can still attend the seminar if you missed the introductory session. Please email the instructor to see if there are still topics available. All participants must register for the seminar in HISQIS or SELMA within the regular registration period.

Exam

(a) Presentation and discussion (pass/failed)

The presentation should provide a summary and a brief critical discussion of the seminar paper. It should not exceed 20 minutes, followed by a general discussion of about 10 minutes. All participants are expected to contribute constructively to the discussion of each paper presented.

(b) Seminar paper (will be graded)

The seminar paper must provide an informative summary and a critical review of the empirical literature on the assigned topic. Specifically:

- Present the content of the assigned paper with an emphasis on the evaluation method used
- Provide a broader literature review of approximately 4-6 (earlier and later) empirical papers on the topic
- Position the assigned paper within this broader literature, compare the studies, and critically discuss the quality of the available research on the topic
- Critically discuss the contribution of the assigned paper to the literature
- Draw general conclusions and policy recommendations (What do we generally learn about the specific impact from the available empirical evidence?)

The maximum length of the seminar paper (text w/o references, tables, figures, etc.) should be 13 pages in Times New Roman, 12pt font, and 1.5-line spacing. Please check out the Faculty's internal "Guidelines for Scientific Writing" available [here](#).

The seminar paper must be submitted as a hard copy and as a pdf file by e-mail to the secretary of the chair (P.O. box, HÜL 317, email: wiiw-econometrics@tu-dresden.de).

The language of both examinations is English.

Introductory literature

Ferreira, S. (2024). Extreme Weather Events and Climate Change: Economic Impacts and Adaptation Policies. *Annual Review of Resource Economics*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-resource-101623-095314>