An important practical objective of empirical research is to predict the consequences of alternative public policies. Researchers combine data with assumptions to draw conclusions about policy impacts. The strength and credibility of these conclusions depend on the data and assumptions brought to bear, as well as on the analytical methods used. This course studies basic methodological problems in policy analysis and presents applications.

Prerequisites are courses in microeconomics at or above Economics 310-1 and econometrics at or above Economics 281, preferably Econometrics 381. Instruction includes lectures and class discussion. Examination of methodology and applications occurs throughout the course. Grading is based on multiple short essays/problems (10 points), a midterm briefing paper on an assigned topic in policy analysis (30 points), and a student-initiated final research paper that assesses some aspect of policy research (60 points).

The specifics of this course syllabus are subject to change in the case of unforeseen circumstances. Instructors will notify students of any changes as soon as possible. Students will be responsible for abiding by the changes.

Instruction in this course seeks to promote academic freedom of expression, as discussed in the 2007 report of the AAUP on Freedom in the Classroom: [https://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/A/class.htm](https://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/A/class.htm)

Texts
C. Manski, *Identification for Prediction and Decision* (IPD), Harvard University Press, 2007 (required)
C. Manski, *Patient Care under Uncertainty World* (PCU), Princeton University Press, 2019 (required)

**Tentative Syllabus**

*Communicating Uncertainty in Policy Analysis* (1/3, 1/8)

*Predicting Policy Outcomes* (1/10, 1/17, 1/22, 1/24)
IPD Chapters 1, 2, 7

*Patient Care under Uncertainty* (1/29, 1/31, 2/5, 2/7, 2/12, 2/14, 2/19, 2/21, 2/26)
PCU Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
IPD Chapter 11, 12
applications in journal articles (see next page)

*Climate Policy under Uncertainty* (2/28, 3/4)

Midterm Essay Due: Sunday February 4, 5:00 PM

Final Paper Due: Sunday March 10, 5:00 PM
Tentative Lecture Schedule

The topics to be discussed in the sections will be chosen as the course progresses.

1/3 - introduction to course

1/8 - communicating uncertainty in policy analysis (PNAS article)

1/10 - conditional prediction (IPD chap. 1)

1/17 - missing outcomes (IPD chap. 2)

1/22 - analysis of treatment response (IPD chap. 7)

1/24 - analysis of treatment response (IPD chap. 7)

1/29 - patient care under uncertainty: introduction, clinical guidelines, personalized medicine (PCU chap. 1)

1/31 - clinical guidelines or clinical judgement (PCU chap. 1)

2/5 - wishful extrapolation from trials, except hypothesis testing (PCU chap. 2)

2/7 - credible use of evidence to inform patient care (PCU chap. 3)

2/12 - reasonable care under uncertainty (PCU chap. 4, IPD chap. 11)

2/14 - population health perspective on reasonable care (PCU chap. 6, IPD chap. 11)

2/19 - diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis


2/21 - Using measures of race to make clinical predictions


2/26 - treatment choice with sample data (PCU chap. 5, IPD chap.12)


2/28, 3/4 - climate policy under uncertainty


3/6 - wrapup discussion

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