

Syllabus
AGRODEP Training Course
Experimental Methods for Impact Assessment
May 26-27, 2014

Dr. Angelino C. G. Viceisza
Spelman College, Economics
Email: aviceisz@spelman.edu
Personal webpage: <https://sites.google.com/site/viceisza/>

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1 Course overview

The term experiment has become quite popular in economics. Examples of experiments abound in many subfields of the economics literature, in particular, experimental, behavioral, and development economics. Despite the growing use of the term experiment and of the experimental approach in economics, the methodology of experimentation has not yet found its way into the typical economist's (and researcher's) toolkit.

This mini-course will provide an overview of game theory and its relation to behavioral, experimental, and development economics.

2 Course limitations

This course will not be comprehensive, but should give the participant a flavor for (1) why and how we conduct experiments, particularly in economics, and (2) what we can take away from experimental findings.

The course will primarily be aimed at surveying some of the literature on experiments in development. As such, depth will be traded off for breadth.

3 Course readings

Please see the AGRODEP course page for the course readings.

1. Course notes [CN].
2. Viceisza, A. C. G. 2012. *Treating the field as a lab: A basic guide to conducting economics experiments for policymaking*. Food Security in Practice Technical Guide 7, Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute [V12].
3. Viceisza, A. C. G. 2013. "Creating a Lab in the Field: Economics Experiments for Policymaking." *Journal of Economic Surveys (Under Revision)* [V13].
4. Harrison, Glenn W., and John A. List. 2004. "Field Experiments." *Journal of Economic Literature* 42 (4), 1009–1055 [HL04].

4 Course activities

Note: This is a suggested plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Day 1

- 09:00 – 09:30 Introduction: Getting to know each other
- 09:30 – 10:00 Application 1: Guessing game
- 10:00 – 10:30 Game theory, taxonomy of experiments (CN; V13; HL04)
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – 11:15 Behavioral vs. experimental economics, behavioral game theory (CN)
- 11:15 – 12:00 Application 2: Coordination game
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lunch
- 13:00 – 13:30 Application 2 (continued): Evidence and discussion
- 13:30 – 14:30 Experimental design, protocol, and implementation (V12, chapter 2)
- 14:30 – 14:45 Break
- 14:45 – 15:45 Experimental design, protocol, and implementation (continued)
- 15:45 – 16:30 Review Day 1

Day 2

- 09:00 – 09:30 Application 3: Risk experiment
- 09:30 – 10:00 Application 4: Time experiment
- 10:00 – 10:30 Discussion (V12, chapter 3; references in V13)
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – 11:15 The role of lab like field experiments (V13 and references within)
- 11:15 – 12:00 Role 1: theory testing (V13)
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lunch
- 13:00 – 13:30 Role 2: parameters (V13)
- 13:30 – 14:30 Role 3 and 4: heterogeneous impacts and methodology (V13)
- 14:30 – 14:45 Break
- 14:45 – 16:30 Discussion: ways forward, open research questions, participant remarks, etc.