TEACHING TEAM
Prof. Dr. Sebastian Vollmer, Email: svollmer@uni-goettingen.de, Room: Oec 2.147 / Waldweg 26 (Altbau) 1.117
Office hours: By appointment.

Maja Marcus, Email: maja-emilia.marcus@uni-goettingen.de, Room: Waldweg 26 (Altbau) 1.118
Office hours: By appointment.

Cara Ebert, Email: cara.ebert@wiwi.uni-goettingen.de, Room: Waldweg 26 (Altbau) 1.118
Office hours: By appointment.

DETAILS
The course deals with common quasi-experimental approaches for measuring causal effects in developing economics. The content focuses on the distinction between correlation and causality and provides students with a statistical toolkit which will allow them to plan and conduct their own independent research. Special attention will be paid to the specific assumptions necessary for each technique to measure causal effect and common threats to identification (such as selection bias). Students will learn how to use quasi-experimental techniques in a very practical manner by solving assignments in Stata and writing referee reports.

GRADING
- Referee Reports & Problem Sets 50%
- Exam 50%
BACKGROUND LITERATURE:


TOPICS AND MANDATORY READING

It is required to read the topic’s specific chapter of the background literature and the listed readings beforehand. Each topic starts with a theoretical introduction of a quasi experimental method. Acquired knowledge is consolidated in class discussions of the method’s assumptions at the example of the compulsory readings listed below. The topic concludes with a demonstration of an empirical application of the respective method in Stata.

- Introduction to quasi experiments and the counterfactual problem (20.10.2017)
- Difference-in-differences and fixed effects models (3.11.2017)
  - Compulsory readings:
  - Further readings:
- Instrumental Variables (17.11.2017)
  - Compulsory readings:

- **Further readings:**

**Regression Discontinuity Design (01.12.2017)**

- **Compulsory readings:**

- **Further readings:**

**Matching (22.12.2017)**

- **Compulsory readings:**

- **Further readings:**

**Standard error issues (19.01.2018)**

- **Compulsory readings:**

- **Further readings:**
  - tba
TIME SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type of class</th>
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<tr>
<td>20 October</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Raum 0.211, Gebäude Waldweg 26, Altbau</td>
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<td>27 October</td>
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<td>3 November</td>
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<td>2 February</td>
<td>Exam</td>
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Note: There will be **no class on December 15**.

ASSIGNMENTS

Referee reports

- For each quasi experimental method students are expected to write one referee report.
- Papers to be refereed and deadlines will be announced in class.
- Referee reports should focus on discussing identifying assumptions.
- Referee reports may not exceed one page.
- It should be written in English.
- Use font style “Times New Roman”, font size 12, 1.5 spacing, margins each 2.5cm.
- Sent your report to Maja. Please name the document as follows: “Report”X”_Surname_Firstname”.

Problem Sets

- For each quasi experimental method students are expected to apply the respective method using the statistical software STATA in a problem set.
- Assignments and deadlines will be announced in class.
- Students will be allocated to small groups and only one solution per group may be turned in.
- The solution must be in the format of commented do-files.
- Comments should be written in English.
• Sent your solutions to Maja. Please name the document as follows: “PS”_Surname_ Surname_ Surname_...

• Contribution to group solutions will be testified in personal appointments with Maja or Cara.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

- We expect you to be present during all meetings of the seminar and to participate in class discussions. If you are unable to attend please do not register for this seminar.

- There are no stupid or improper questions, and you should not be afraid of a negative evaluation. Though, it is important for a fruitful discussion that you have read the mandatory reading and have your own thoughts about it.