Topics in Behavioral Economics

Course concept: This seminar is aimed at Masters students interested in Behavioral Economics. Students will conduct independent research and prepare a literature review. In addition, each student will present one research article in detail at our block seminar.

Registration: (deadline: April 20)

- You must register by Monday, April 20. No exceptions.
- Use the attached form and return it to Freya Schadt or via Email: fiwi[at]uni-heidelberg.de

Organizational meeting: (Wed, April 22)

- You must attend the organizational meeting in order to participate. No exceptions.
- The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 22nd, at 5pm in Room 02.036

Requirements (All requirements and deadlines are mandatory. No exceptions.)

- Complete the background readings and the assigned readings for your topic.
- Prepare a short (1 page) summary of each assigned paper (deadline: May 13th)
  - What is the main problem or question it deals with?
  - What method (theoretical, empirical, experimental) is used?
  - What is the main result or conclusion?
  - (Why) is it important or interesting?
- Conduct independent research
  - Browse many articles that deal with a common issue that you find exciting.
    * Use google scholar to conduct backward and forward searches. (Articles cited by, and articles citing those you find interesting.)
    * Begin with the abstract. If it looks relevant, read the introduction, only browse the rest.
    * The introduction and related literature sections will usually point to related articles.
    * Take special note of recurrent themes, articles that are often cited, etc.
    * Try to classify articles according to appropriate criteria. (pro vs. contra; theory vs. empirical; lab vs. field;...)
    * Identify the most important contributions in each category.
  - Identify the most important articles from among those you have found. (You should have at least four.)
– Study each of these articles *carefully*.
  * Read it several times.
  * Take notes. Ask questions.
  * Read it again.
  * Summarize it (see above).

• Write a brief (10-15 page) **literature review** (deadline: **July 4th**)
  – Clearly identify the common issue that your articles deal with.
  – Motivate why this is interesting and important.
  – Try to *categorize* articles in a systematic way.
  – Briefly summarize each article. (Don’t reuse your prior summaries. Write fresh, better.)
  – Explain how the articles relate to one another.
  – Provide a synthesizing conclusion.
  – Identify at least one interesting question worthy of further research.

• Give a **presentation** (20 minutes) at the block seminar (**Fri, July 11th**)
  – Concentrate on *one* of the papers you worked on (20 minutes)
  – Follow the guidelines in the handout ‘presenting a research paper’
  – Lead the subsequent discussion (10 minutes)
  – **Upload** your paper at least one week prior to the seminar!

**LITERATURE**

• **All** of the literature is available for download through moodle. Password: sembeheco15

**Book:**


**Background readings:** *(All students must complete these readings!)*


  *BGT* Chapter 1 ‘Introduction’

  *BGT* Chapter 2 ‘Dictator, Ultimatum, and Trust Games’

  *BGT* Chapter 5 ‘Dominance-Solvable Games’
**Topics and introductory literature**

(1) Probabilistic judgements


(2) Reference dependence, loss aversion, prospect theory


(3) Intertemporal choice, hyperbolic discounting, self control


(4) Herding and information cascades


(5) Strategic reasoning and cognitive hierarchies


(6) Social preferences and moral behavior


**Topic Numbers**  
(please give a sorted preference for 3 of the topics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonenumber:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Studies: | □ Master  
□ Others  
□ Erasmus |
| Terms of Study |   |
| First or Second Seminar: |   |
| Matrikel: |   |

**Deadline for application: April 20, 2015**