

Seminar in Environmental Economics (M.Sc.)

Course requirements	Students should have knowledge of intermediate level mathematics, microeconomics, and empirical methods.
Short comment	<p>The seminar in environmental economics will focus on the following topic: The Private Provision of Public Goods</p> <p>The preparatory meeting for the seminar is on Friday, April 21 from 16:00 to 17:30. The seminar event is currently scheduled for July 13 & 14.</p> <p>The venue is Seminar Room #215, Bergheimer Str. 20.</p>
Comment	Many public goods are provided privately rather than by government or quasi-governmental organizations. Typical examples are charities (think 'Red Cross'), rewards for academic excellence (think 'Nobel Prize'), or open-source software (think 'Linux'). Economists have spent considerable effort trying to understand more about the private provision of public goods, its potential as well as its limitations. Will the public good be provided in the right quantity? How do you fundraise successfully? Should government use taxpayers' money to support non-governmental organizations? It makes for exciting reading.
Content	<p>Students will choose a particular public good that is privately provided. Ideally, you will bring a couple of ideas to the preparatory meeting. Based on a core set of readings and own literature search, students will try to develop the economics of their specific example. As an illustration, previous installments of this seminar have seen students explore the economics of Wikipedia, of tax-deductible wildlife conservation programs, of alumni organizations, etc.</p> <p>The deliverable of the seminar is a research paper that develops a thoroughly analytical angle on the provision situation that you are examining, underpinned by a good understanding of the existing literature. The best papers will have developed a well-defined research question that would allow testing a theoretical hypothesis against evidence from your chosen setting.</p>

Examination rules	Your performance will be evaluated based on the following assignments: 1. Research paper (“Seminararbeit”) on your topic. Maximum length: 4000 words. Weighting: 50 percent. 2. Seminar presentation. Duration: 20 minutes. Weighting: 30 percent. 3. Written referee report constructively critiquing the research paper of a fellow participating student and 3 minute presentation thereof. Maximum length: 1000 words. Weighting: 20 percent
Language	This course runs in English.