

A GCEP Masterclass

The Role of Theory and Uncertainty in Policy Evaluation

Charles Manski, Northwestern University

Kenneth Wolpin, Rice University

March 31-April 1, 2016

This masterclass brings together two highly distinguished economists to examine the role of theory and uncertainty in policy evaluation. It is organized in six sessions. The first session focuses on the use of descriptive statistics. The second session discusses partial identification of the treatment response model using the right-to-carry laws as a case study. The third session considers partial identification of a structural model. The fourth session, complementary to the third, examines ex ante policy evaluation using both parametric and nonparametric approaches. The fifth session discusses the policy use of discrete choice dynamic programming models and will cover both methodological issues and empirical applications. The final session is devoted to a discussion of the importance of (simple) theory in inferential empirical work.

Location

Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies, 640 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20001

Program

Day One: Thursday, March 31, 2016

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| 10:30 – 11:00am | <i>Registration and Coffee</i> |
| 11:00 – 12:30pm | Session 1 (Manski): Communicating uncertainty in official economic statistics |
| 12:30 – 1:45pm | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 1:45 – 3:15pm | Session 2 (Manski): Partial identification of treatment response
<i>(Coffee Break 3:15-3:30)</i> |
| 3:30 – 5:00pm | Session 3 (Manski): Partial identification of structural models. |

Day Two: Friday, April 1, 2016

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| 10 – 10:30am | <i>Coffee</i> |
| 10:30 – 12:30pm | Session 4 (Wolpin): Ex-ante policy evaluation: parametric and nonparametric approaches
<i>(Coffee Break 11:15-11:30)</i> |
| 12:30 – 1:45pm | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 1:45 – 3:15pm | Session 5 (Wolpin): Policy use of discrete-choice dynamic-programming models
<i>(Coffee Break 3:15-3:30)</i> |
| 3:30 – 4:30pm | Session 6 (Wolpin): The limits of inference without theory. |