



**Bachelor's Seminar
in Applied Statistics and Econometrics
Empirical Labor Economics
WS 2024-2025**

General Description

The bachelor's seminar serves as a preparation for the bachelor's thesis, which is written directly after the seminar. During the processing period, students are expected to write an exposé of their bachelor's thesis and to present it at the seminar. The aim of the seminar (and of the bachelor's thesis) is to empirically investigate research questions from labor economics like "are there gender differences in internal promotions" or "does housework affect wages", using the Software package Stata. During the seminar, students are expected to

- become familiar with the literature from the relevant field
- precisely define the research question to be analysed in the bachelor's thesis
- prepare the data for the bachelor's thesis
- present first regression estimates
- present an outlook for the bachelor's thesis (i.e., students specify which further analysis they intend to carry out)

Requirements

While knowledge from the obligatory lectures *Statistik I*, *Statistik II*, and *Empirische Wirtschaftsforschung* is required, further statistical skills are not necessary. Instead, general interest in statistics and empirical economics and the willingness to conduct your own empirical analysis as well as knowledge of Stata are essential. Further information can be found on our homepage:

<https://www.statistics.economics.uni-mainz.de/teaching/bachelor/seminar/>

For further questions, feel free to contact Carl Hase (cahase@uni-mainz.de)

Please note that the seminar will be held in English.

Contact

Prof. Dr. Thorsten Schank (schank@uni-mainz.de)

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Topics Overview

Students are expected to investigate empirically the following topics, based on the cited references:

1. Commuting and the motherhood wage penalty
2. Do immigrants commute more?
3. Working from home, hours worked, wages and job satisfaction
4. The effect of commuting on well-being
5. Overeducation and job satisfaction

Detailed Topics and Literature

1. Commuting and the motherhood wage penalty

It is well-documented that childbirth reduces wages for new mothers---the so-called motherhood wage penalty. At the same time, previous research finds that workers are willing to accept lower wages to reduce their commuting distance. This topic investigates whether changes in commuting distance can explain the motherhood wage penalty. Students will run OLS and Fixed Effects regressions to investigate this topic.

Literature

Skora, T.; Rüger, H.; Stawarz, N. Commuting and the Motherhood Wage Gap: Evidence from Germany. *Sustainability* 12(14), 5692. (2020).

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su12145692>

2. Do immigrants commute more?

A small but growing literature finds that immigrants have longer commuting times than non-immigrant employees. This "commuting penalty" may reflect a spatial mismatch of immigrants' labor supply and demand, or differences in family characteristics, household work, country of origin, or cultural norms. Ultimately, the determinants of the commuting penalty for immigrants are not fully understood and it remains unclear whether the penalty holds in Germany. This topic aims to detect differences in commuting behavior between immigrants and non-immigrants and the potential reasons for this phenomenon. Students are expected to conduct OLS regressions and Oaxaca-Blinder decompositions to investigate this issue.

Literature

Casado-Díaz, J.M., Simón-Albert, R. & Simón, H. Reassessing the commuting penalty for immigrants: new evidence from Spain. *Transportation* 49, 1099–1132 (2022).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-021-10204-5>

3. Working from home, hours worked, wages, and job satisfaction

The practice of working from home (WFH) has become widespread since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, yet prior to the pandemic there was limited research on how hybrid work arrangements impact labor market outcomes. Adoption of WFH may influence working hours by increasing the labor supply, possibly due to the reduction of schedule constraints stemming from personal commitments such as childcare. Additionally, there is evidence that WFH can improve job satisfaction by reducing commuting costs and allowing for more flexibility in work arrangements. This seminar paper aims to investigate the determinants of taking-up of WFH and the impact of WFH on working hours, wages and job satisfaction. Students are expected to conduct OLS regressions and fixed effects regressions to investigate these issues.

Literature

Arntz, M., Yahmed, S. B., & Berlingieri, F. (2022). Working from Home, Hours Worked and Wages: Heterogeneity by gender and parenthood. *Labour Economics*, 76, 102169.

4. **Commuting and subjective well-being**

The relationship between commuting and well-being is increasingly of interest to economists. Some studies find that commuting to work is a stress factor and, hence, lowers overall life satisfaction. Other studies find no evidence that commuting in general is associated with lower life satisfaction. Instead, it appears that longer commutes are only related to lower satisfaction with certain life domains, especially family life and leisure time. This topic uses more current SOEP data to examine the relation between commuting and several components of subjective well-being (e.g., satisfaction with family life, leisure, income, work, health). Students are expected to run pooled OLS and fixed effects regressions.

Literature

Stutzer, A. and Frey, B.S. (2008), Stress that Doesn't Pay: The Commuting Paradox. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 110, 339-366.

5. **Overeducation and job satisfaction**

With higher educational attainment, workers may experience an education-job mismatch, i.e., overeducation, which means that the worker obtains a level of education exceeding what is required for their particular job. Some studies show that overeducated workers are less satisfied with their jobs, and an education-job mismatch leads to lower productivity and profits for firms. In this topic, we are interested in whether overeducation leads to a reduction in job satisfaction in Germany. Students are expected to use Pooled OLS regressions and Logit models to conduct the analysis.

Literature

Bauer, T. K. (2002). Educational mismatch and wages: a panel analysis. *Economics of Education Review*, 21(3), 221-229.

Organisation of the Seminar

You can apply for the seminar via Jogustine. Further information on the registration procedure and the registration period is provided by the *Studienbüro*. You will receive final admission to the seminar from the *Studienbüro*.

All topics will be assigned to groups of two or three students directly after the first meeting (Wednesday, October 30th). Please send a transcript from Jogustine to sekretariat.schank@uni-mainz.de prior to the first meeting to inform us of which courses you have participated in.

Group members present their results jointly on Thursday, December 5th. However, note that each student writes their own exposé independently. The bachelor's thesis is written in the eight weeks following the seminar.

Time Schedule for the Bachelor's Seminar and Bachelor's Thesis

Events	Date	Time	
Introduction, topic assignment and beginning of the processing period	Wednesday, October 30th, 2024	16:00- 18:00	RW 5 (01-114)
Deadline for exposé submission	Thursday, November 28th, 2024	12:00 pm (noon)	<i>Via email to:</i> sekretariat.schank@uni-mainz.de
Exposé presentations	Thursday, December 5th 2024	08:00- 16:00	Rote Infobox (00-001)
Beginning of the processing time for the bachelor's thesis	Friday, December 6th 2024	–	–
Bachelor's thesis submission deadline	Friday, January 31st 2025	12:00 pm (noon)	Official submission to the Studienbüro. Supplementary material via e-mail to sekretariat.schank@uni-mainz.de

Attendance is mandatory for the introductory session (first session) and the exposé presentations. In the case of absence (without presenting valid reasons to the Exam Office), the seminar will not be passed.