

Police and Crime Policy Seminar
Spring 2022
Jon Klick
R: 1:40-3:35
Classroom 210 (when in person)
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- Overview:** The purpose of this course is to learn the basics of policy analysis, including regression analysis (focusing on causal inference), basic microeconomics, and cost benefit analysis, as they apply to current issues in crime policy. Policing in particular will receive special attention.
- Grading:** There will be two components of your grade. A final paper, described below, will constitute 80 percent of your grade. The remaining 20 percent will be based on completion of 2 one-page brainstorming papers also described below.
- Final Paper:** There are basically two options here: a low-risk, low reward literature review and a high-risk, high-reward empirical paper. The literature review would discuss some major empirical papers on a crime topic that is not covered in class. The review should describe the studies, critically evaluate them, and also suggest some research ideas that would be good to pursue in this literature (but don't actually pursue them). This kind of paper will likely generate a grade no higher than a B+. The high-risk, high-reward paper will propose a crime policy relevant hypothesis, describe why the research question is interesting/important, collect data relevant to testing the hypothesis, analyze the data, interpret your results, and discuss short-comings of the study. I do not expect someone to run regressions in such a paper (though feel free to do so, but it will not improve your grade on its own); comparing means before and after a policy change, for example, would be fine (and also doing so for a comparison jurisdiction as well would be even better). This paper will be graded based on the quality of the hypothesis, the ability to find data to test the hypothesis, interpretation, and self-critiques. It does not matter if you find statistically significant results or even if the results go in the predicted direction. Either type of paper is due by 11:59 pm on April 29, 2022.
- One-Pagers:** Two times in the semester, you need to propose a hypothesis related to the topic being studied that week, discuss why the research question is important, discuss what kind of data would be useful to test the hypothesis, and predict any difficulties with carrying out the analysis. These reports should be no longer than a single page, and they will receive full credit (10 points each) as long as a good faith effort is shown. These papers are due one hour before the class period of the week where the relevant topic is being discussed.
- Meetings:** I will be available upon request for Zoom meetings as well as meetings on the Thursday and Friday of the weeks of our in-class meetings.

Schedule

January 6 **In Person** – Basics of Microeconomics and Cost Benefit Analysis

January 13 **Zoom** – Basics of Statistical Analysis

Optional Reading: Federal Judicial Center's Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence, Chapters on Statistics and Multiple Regression (available for free at https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=13163&page=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Fdownload%2F13163)

January 20 **Zoom** – Police and Deterrence

Levitt, Steven D. "Using Electoral Cycles in Police Hiring to Estimate the Effect of Police on Crime." The American Economic Review 87, no. 3 (1997): 270–90.

Klick, Jonathan, and Alexander Tabarrok. "Using Terror Alert Levels to Estimate the Effect of Police on Crime." The Journal of Law & Economics 48, no. 1 (2005): 267–79.

Aaron Chalfin, Justin McCrary; Are U.S. Cities Underpoliced? Theory and Evidence. The Review of Economics and Statistics 2018; 100 (1): 167–186.

January 27 **Zoom** – Police Misconduct

Rozema, Kyle, and Max Schanzenbach. 2019. "Good Cop, Bad Cop: Using Civilian Allegations to Predict Police Misconduct." American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 11 (2): 225-68.

Ouss, Aurelie, and John Rappaport. 2020. "Is Police Behavior Getting Worse? Data Selection and the Measurement of Policing Harms," Journal of Legal Studies, 49(1): 153-198.

Makowsky, Michael D., and Thomas Stratmann. "Political Economy at Any Speed: What Determines Traffic Citations?" The American Economic Review 99, no. 1 (2009): 509–27.

February 3 **Zoom** – Race and Police

Knowles, John, Nicola Persico, and Petra Todd. "Racial Bias in Motor Vehicle Searches: Theory and Evidence." Journal of Political Economy 109, no. 1 (2001): 203–29.

Grogger, Jeffrey, and Greg Ridgeway. "Testing for Racial Profiling in Traffic Stops from behind a Veil of Darkness." *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 101, no. 475 (2006): 878–87.

Ba, Bocar, Dean Knox, Jonathan Mummolo, and Roman G. Rivera. "Diversity in Policing: The Role of Officer Race and Gender in Police-Civilian Interactions in Chicago," *Science*, 371(6530): 696-702 (2021).

February 10 **Zoom** – Police Alternatives

John M. MacDonald, Jonathan Klick and Ben Grunwald. "The Effect of Private Police on Crime: Evidence from a Geographic Regression Discontinuity Design," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A*, 179(3): 831-846 (2016).

Marco Fabbri and Jonathan Klick. "The Ineffectiveness of 'Observe and Report' Patrols on Crime," *International Review of Law and Economics*, 65: 105972 (2021).

Aaron Chalfin, Benjamin Hansen, Jason Lerner, and Lucie Parker. "Reducing Crime Through Environmental Design: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment of Street Lighting in New York City," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*.

February 17 **Zoom** – Punishment and Deterrence

Helland, Eric, and Alexander Tabarrok. "Does Three Strikes Deter? A Nonparametric Estimation." *The Journal of Human Resources* 42, no. 2 (2007): 309–30.

Jonathan Klick and John MacDonald, "Deterrence and Liability for Intentional Torts," *International Review of Law and Economics*, 63(1): Article 105926 (2020).

John Donohue and Justin Wolfers, "Uses and Abuses of Empirical Evidence in the Death Penalty Debate," *Stanford Law Review*, 58(3): 791-846 (2010).

February 24 **In Person** – The Bail System

David Arnold, Will Dobbie, Crystal S. Yang, "Racial Bias in Bail Decisions," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(4): 1885-1932 (2018).

Paul Heaton, Sandra Mayson, and Megan Stevenson, "The Downstream Consequences of Misdemeanor Pretrial Detention," *Stanford Law Review*, 69(3): 711-794 (2017).

Helland, Eric, and Alexander Tabarrok. "The Fugitive: Evidence on Public versus Private Law Enforcement from Bail Jumping." *The Journal of Law & Economics*, vol. 47, no. 1: 93–122

March 3 **Zoom** – Intergenerational Aspects of Crime

Hjalmarsson, Randi, and Matthew J. Lindquist. "Like Godfather, Like Son: Exploring the Intergenerational Nature of Crime." *The Journal of Human Resources* 47, no. 2 (2012): 550–82.

Samuel Norris, Matthew Pecenco, and Jeffrey Weaver, "The Effects of Parental and Sibling Incarceration: Evidence from Ohio," *American Economic Review*, 111(9): 2926–2963(2021).

Will Dobbie, Hans Grönqvist, Susan Niknami, Mårten Palme, and Mikael Priks, "The Intergenerational Effects of Parental Incarceration," NBER Working Paper 24186 (2018).

March 10 **Zoom** – Immigration and Crime

Aaron Chalfin, "What is the Contribution of Mexican Immigration to U.S. Crime Rates? Evidence from Rainfall Shocks in Mexico," *American Law and Economics Review*, 16(1): 220–268 (2014).

Thomas Miles and Adam Cox, "Does Immigration Enforcement Reduce Crime? Evidence from Secure Communities," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 57(4): 937-973 (2014).

Aaron Chalfin and Monica Deza, "Immigration enforcement, crime, and demography Evidence from the Legal Arizona Workers Act," *Criminology and Public Policy*, 19(2): 515-562(2020).

March 17 No Class (Spring Break)

March 24 **In Person** – Alcohol and Crime

Jonathan Klick and John MacDonald, "Sobering Up After the Seventh Inning: Alcohol and Crime Around the Ballpark," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 37(3): 813-834 (2021).

Paul Heaton, "Sunday Liquor Laws and Crime," *Journal of Public Economics*, 96(1-2): 42-52 (2012).

Benjamin Hansen and Glen Waddell, "Legal access to alcohol and criminality," *Journal of Health Economics*, 57: 277-289(2018).

March 31 **In Person** – Education, Employment, and Crime

Lochner, Lance, and Enrico Moretti. 2004. "The Effect of Education on Crime: Evidence from Prison Inmates, Arrests, and Self-Reports." *American Economic Review*, 94 (1): 155-189.

Andrew Bacher-Hicks, Stephen B. Billings, and David J. Deming, "The School to Prison Pipeline: Long-Run Impacts of School Suspensions on Adult Crime," NBER Working Paper: 26257(2019).

Mikko Aaltonen, John M. Macdonald, Pekka Martikainen, and Janne Kivivuori, "Examining the Generality of the Unemployment–Crime Association," *Criminology*, 51(3): 561-594(2013).

April 7

Zoom – Explaining Crime Trends in the US

Levitt, Steven D. "Understanding Why Crime Fell in the 1990s: Four Factors That Explain the Decline and Six That Do Not." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 18, no. 1: 63–90 (2004).

Tanaya Devi and Roland G. Fryer Jr, "Policing the Police: The Impact of "Pattern-or-Practice" Investigations on Crime," NBER Working Paper: 27324(2020).