

American University
Department of Public Administration and Policy
Fall 2017 Research Seminar Series

September 7

Liz Cascio, Associate Professor of Economics, Dartmouth College

Does Universal Preschool Hit the Target? Program Access and Preschool Impacts.

Are programs for the poor really "poor programs"? I explore the validity of this conventional wisdom using the rich cross-state variation in access to state-funded pre-kindergarten programs as a laboratory. My findings suggest that, relative to targeted preschools, universal preschools offer a higher-quality learning experience for low-income children that is not reflected in standard quality metrics.

September 14

James E. Wright II, PhD. Candidate, DPAP

Caught on Camera: Law Enforcement Agencies and Body-Worn Cameras

Several recent high profile incidents of police brutality against people of color, have further strained the relationship between communities of color and police officers. In an attempt to minimize these tensions and other outputs related to policing, scholars, practitioners and police departments have suggested the implementation of body-worn cameras (BWC). Wright II finds that the introduction of BWC in Washington D.C. leads to a 9 percent reduction in property crimes.

September 21

Umut Özek, Principal Researcher, American Institutes for Research

Unwelcome Guests? The Effects of Refugees on the Educational Outcomes of Incumbent Students

Does a large refugee influx have an effect on incumbent students? We find no adverse effects of refugees on a multitude of educational outcomes including test scores, disciplinary problems, and high school graduation in the two years that follow. These findings hold true regardless of economic status, and family and household attributes of incumbent students.

September 28

Meghan Doughty, PhD. Candidate, DPAP

The Indian Child Welfare Act is a federal law, enacted in 1978, which protects the right of an Indian child to be placed in an Indian home. Doughty examines the implementation of ICWA in 2015 focusing on whether Indian children placed with Indian families have more stable foster care placements than other children.

October 5

Michael Hatch, PhD. Candidate, DPAP

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has generated considerable political controversy, at the same time it has significantly reduce the number of uninsured Americans. This study analyzes the impact of the law in Colorado on measures of health care access, utilization, and health status.

October 19

Gregg G. Van Ryzin, Professor, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University – Newark

Experiments in Public Management Research

Experimental methods are becoming more popular in public management research, in part because they provide strong evidence about important cause-effect relationships. This talk outlines the motivation and logic of experimentation, with empirical examples from experimental studies of government performance, citizen satisfaction, and representative bureaucracy. The potential as well as limitations of experimental methods are discussed.

October 26

Scott Robinson, Henry Bellmon Chair of Public Service and Associate Professor, Department of Political Science - University of Oklahoma

Threat Intensity and the Public Use of Warning Information: A Quasi-experimental Assessment of the New Ecology of Weather Information

Government organizations are vital to the provision of safety information in a variety of context, including extreme weather. We use a survey deployed soon after a series of tornadoes in Oklahoma in 2015 to assess how people receive and share weather information.

November 16

Adán Silverio Murillo, Professorial Lecturer/Postdoctoral Fellow, DPAP

November 30

Nora Gordon, Associate Professor at Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy

Seminars convened on Thursdays from noon to 1:15 p.m. in Kerwin Hall, unless otherwise noted. Please contact Khaldoun AbouAssi at abouassi@american.edu or Erdal Tekin at tekin@american.edu with any questions. Please feel free to bring a bag lunch.