

Fall 2020 MD4SG Inequality Working Group Syllabus

Website: <http://md4sg.com/workinggroups/inequality.html>

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Overview: This document contains the fall 2020 syllabus for the MD4SG Inequality Working Group. The theme of the semester was *targeting and provision of social services and benefits* and each week followed a sub-theme.

Week 1: History of Social Service Provision

Main Reading:

- Mahoney, James, and Kathleen Thelen, eds. *Advances in comparative-historical analysis*. Cambridge University Press, 2015. Chapter 3.

Related Readings:

- Esping-Andersen, Gosta. *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Eubanks, Virginia. *Automating inequality: How high-tech tools profile, police, and punish the poor*. St. Martin's Press, 2018.
- Nadasen, Premilla. *Rethinking the welfare rights movement*. Routledge, 2012.
- Sandermann, Philipp. *The End of Welfare as We Know It?: Continuity and Change in Western Welfare State Settings and Practices*. Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2014.

Week 2: Universalism and Origins of Social Preferences

Main Readings:

- Alesina, Alberto, and George-Marios Angeletos. "Fairness and redistribution." *American economic review* 95, no. 4 (2005): 960-980.
- Lévy-Garboua, Louis, Claude Meidinger, and Benoit Rapoport. "The formation of social preferences: Some lessons from psychology and biology." *Handbook of the economics of giving, altruism and reciprocity* 1 (2006): 545-613.

Related Readings:

- Alesina, Alberto, and Eliana La Ferrara. "Preferences for redistribution in the land of opportunities." *Journal of public Economics* 89, no. 5-6 (2005): 897-931.
- Benabou, Roland, and Efe A. Ok. "Social mobility and the demand for redistribution: the POUM hypothesis." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116, no. 2 (2001): 447-487.

- Besley, Timothy, and Stephen Coate. "Public provision of private goods and the redistribution of income." *The American Economic Review* 81, no. 4 (1991): 979-984.
- Imai, Katsushi. "Targeting versus universalism: An evaluation of indirect effects of the Employment Guarantee Scheme in India." *Journal of Policy Modeling* 29, no. 1 (2007): 99-113.
- Mkandawire, Thandika. "Targeting and universalism in poverty reduction." (2005).

Week 3: Measurement Challenges

Main Readings:

- Grusky, David B., and Kim A. Weeden. "Do Disciplinary Boundaries Keep Us from Asking the Right Questions about Inequality." (2016).

Related Readings:

- Bandalos, Deborah L. *Measurement theory and applications for the social sciences*. Guilford Publications, 2018. (Intro)
- Abebe, Rediet, Jon Kleinberg, and Andrew Wang. "Understanding and Measuring Income Shocks as Precursors to Poverty."

Week 4: Robustness

Main Readings:

- Bierbrauer, Felix, Axel Ockenfels, Andreas Pollak, and Désirée Rückert. "Robust mechanism design and social preferences." *Journal of Public Economics* 149 (2017): 59-80.
- Carroll, Gabriel. "Robustness in mechanism design and contracting." *Annual Review of Economics* 11 (2019): 139-166.

Related Readings:

- Bergemann, Dirk, and Stephen Morris. "Robust mechanism design." *Econometrica* (2005): 1771-1813.
- Bierbrauer, Felix, Axel Ockenfels, Andreas Pollak, and Désirée Rückert. "Robust mechanism design and social preferences." *Journal of Public Economics* 149 (2017): 59-80.

Week 5: Personalization

Main Readings:

- Bhattacharya, Debopam, and Pascaline Dupas. "Inferring welfare maximizing treatment assignment under budget constraints." *Journal of Econometrics* 167, no. 1 (2012): 168-196.

Related Readings:

- Bertsimas, Dimitris, Vivek F. Farias, and Nikolaos Trichakis. "The price of fairness." *Operations Research* 59, no. 1 (2011): 17-31.
- Björkegren, Daniel, Joshua E. Blumenstock, and Samsun Knight. "Manipulation-Proof Machine Learning." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2004.03865* (2020).
- Camacho, Adriana, and Emily Conover. "Manipulation of social program eligibility." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 3, no. 2 (2011): 41-65.
- Gupta, Vishal, Brian Rongqing Han, Song-Hee Kim, and Hyung Paek. "Maximizing intervention effectiveness." *Management Science* (2020).
- Heckman, James J., Jeffrey A. Smith, and Christopher Taber. *What do bureaucrats do? The effects of performance standards and bureaucratic preferences on acceptance into the JTPA program*. No. w5535. National Bureau of Economic Research, 1996.
- Kasy, Maximilian. "Partial identification, distributional preferences, and the welfare ranking of policies." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 98, no. 1 (2016): 111-131.
- Munro, Evan. "Learning to Personalize Treatments When Agents Are Strategic." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2011.06528* (2020).
- Wager, Stefan, and Susan Athey. "Estimation and inference of heterogeneous treatment effects using random forests." *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 113, no. 523 (2018): 1228-1242.