

Frontiers AED Econ (Workshop)

Frontiers in Environmental and Health Economics

Syllabus

AEDECON 8200-1010
Spring 2024

Course Information

- **Course times and location:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:50 p.m.-3:40 p.m. in Stillman 235. Course meets from 8 January 2024 to 23 February 2024.
- **Credit hours:** 2
- **Mode of delivery:** In Person

Instructor

- **Name:** Alex Hollingsworth
- **Email:** hollingsworth.126@osu.edu
- **Phone Number:** +1 (614) 292-3500
- **Office location:** Agricultural Administration Building, #318
- **Office hours:** Wednesdays 2:00pm via calendly. Use calendly link to sign up for office hours even if you will attend in person. Link: <https://calendly.com/alex-hollingsworth/office-hours>
- **Preferred means of communication:**
 - My preferred method of communication for questions is to talk with you in person. Email works too.
 - My class-wide communications will be sent through the Announcements tool in CarmenCanvas. Please check your [notification preferences](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) (go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) to be sure you receive these messages.



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College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development

Course Prerequisites/Co-Requisites

There are no prerequisites for this class

Course Description

Critical discussion of seminal and innovative scholarly research in agricultural, environmental, and development economics. In this class we are going to focus on three goals.

1. How to figure out what is actually going on in an applied paper
2. How to communicate what is going on in applied paper to others
3. What is the current state of the literature in applied papers that relate to environmental and health topics.

Course Learning Goals and Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Figure out what is actually going on in an applied paper. As a result, students will be able to identify the main identification strategy and threats to validity in an applied paper (or for student's own proposed research designs).
2. Communicate what is going on in applied paper to others. As a result, students should be able to clearly and simply explain the main idea, contribution, research design, and findings of any applied paper
3. Finally, students will learn the current state of the literature in applied papers that relate to environmental and health topics. As a result, students will be able to assess where their own (and other ideas) fit in recent literature.



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How This Course Works

Mode of delivery:

This course is taught in person. Students are expected to attend class during the scheduled meeting sessions. Each week some student(s) will present the focus paper and every other student will write a referee report on that paper. We will discuss the paper in class. Where all students are expected to participate. We will have some side assignments where we dive into the empirical topics using code and simulation.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a 2 credit-hour course. According to [Ohio State bylaws on instruction](https://go.osu.edu/credithours) (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 2 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 4 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of [C] average.

Attendance and participation requirements: Research shows regular participation is one of the highest predictors of success. With that in mind, I have the following expectations for everyone's participation: Participation and attendance in class is essential for your understanding of the material. While attendance of course is not explicitly graded, participation is graded. It will be graded via in-class discussion, demonstrating that one has done the reading, Canvas polls, questions, and other similar activities will explicitly count towards your grade. Course Materials, Fees and Technologies

Required Equipment

- **Computer:** current Mac (MacOS), PC (Windows 10), or Unix machine with high-speed internet connection.

If you do not have access to the technology you need to succeed in this class, review options for [technology and internet access](https://go.osu.edu/student-tech-access) (go.osu.edu/student-tech-access).

Required Software

- Access to recent version of R and RStudio or Stata.

CarmenCanvas Access

You will need to use [BuckeyePass](https://buckeyepass.osu.edu) (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you do each of the following:



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- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the [BuckeyePass - Adding a Device](https://go.osu.edu/add-device) (go.osu.edu/add-device) help article for step-by-step instructions.
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new codes** button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes, good for 365 days, that can each be used once.
- [Install the Duo Mobile application](https://go.osu.edu/install-duo) (go.osu.edu/install-duo) on all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service.

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

Technology Skills Needed for This Course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- [Navigating CarmenCanvas](https://go.osu.edu/canvasstudent) (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- [CarmenZoom virtual meetings](https://go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings) (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)
- [Recording a slide presentation with audio narration and recording, editing and uploading video](https://go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide) (go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide)

Technology Support

For help with your password, university email, CarmenCanvas, or any other technology issues, questions or requests, contact the IT Service Desk, which offers 24-hour support, seven days a week.

- **Self Service and Chat:** go.osu.edu/it
- **Phone:** [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu



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Grading and Faculty Response

How Your Grade is Calculated

Assignment Category	Points
In-class participation	25
Presentation	25
Referee reports and other assignments	50

See Canvas Page
for specific due
dates

Descriptions of Major Course Assignments

In-class participation

Description: Participation and attendance in class is essential for your understanding of the material. While attendance of course is not explicitly graded, participation is graded. It will be graded via in-class discussion, demonstrating that one has done the reading, Canvas polls, questions, and other similar activities will explicitly count towards your grade. Course Materials, Fees and Technologies

Presentation

Description: Each week at least one student will present one of our focus papers. Students may present multiple times. The goal of the presentation is to present the paper clearly and simply. You will need to present the paper as if you are the author in an academic conference setting where you have 30 minutes to present. A successful presentation will cover why we should care about the paper, the research setting, the research design, the findings, the limitations, the identifying assumptions, and room for future research. This should be done with as many figures and as little jargon as possible. A good goal is to be able to explain the big part of a paper in just a few seconds to a smart high schooler. This sounds easy, but it's really hard. To be confident that you are explaining the nuances of a paper correctly you really need to understand the pros/cons of the method they used. I will also provide feedback on the quality of the presentation itself, slides tone, audience engagement, etc.



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Referee reports and other assignments

Description: Each week every student will write a referee report on a paper as well as a letter to the editor. There may also be other coding assignments where we code simple simulations designed to show how / why a particular method works and when the method may not work so well.

Academic integrity and collaboration: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, must be your own original work. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in but no one else should revise or rewrite your work. Don't cheat.

Late Assignments

Please refer to Carmen for due dates. Due dates are set to help you stay on pace and to allow timely feedback that will help you complete subsequent assignments. I will not accept late work without an accepted excuse. An accepted excuse is one that I have approved before the assignment is due.

Instructor Feedback and Response Time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. Remember that you can call [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357) at any time if you have a technical problem.

- **Preferred contact method:** If you have a question, please contact me first through my Ohio State email address. I will reply to emails within **48 hours on days when class is in session at the university**.
- **Class announcements:** I will send all important class-wide messages through the Announcements tool in CarmenCanvas. Please check [your notification preferences](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) (go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) to ensure you receive these messages.
- **Grading and feedback:** For assignments submitted before the due date, I will try to provide feedback and grades within **14 days**. Assignments submitted after the due date may have reduced feedback and grades may take longer to be posted.]

Grading Scale

93–100: A

90–92.9: A-

87–89.9: B+



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83–86.9: B
80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70–72.9: C-
67–69.9: D+
60–66.9: D
Below 60: E

Other Course Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

See [Descriptions of Major Course Assignments](#) for specific guidelines about collaboration and academic integrity in the context of this online class.

Ohio State's Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.



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Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- [Committee on Academic Misconduct](http://go.osu.edu/coam) (go.osu.edu/coam)
- [Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity](http://go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions) (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)
- [Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity](http://go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules) (go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules)

Copyright for Instructional Materials

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Diversity

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity of people and ideas. We believe in creating equitable research opportunities for all students and to providing programs and curricula that allow our students to understand critical societal challenges from diverse perspectives and aspire to use research to promote sustainable solutions for all. We are committed to maintaining an inclusive community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among all members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach their own potential. The Ohio State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment.

To learn more about diversity, equity, and inclusion and for opportunities to get involved, please visit:

- <https://odi.osu.edu/>
- <https://odi.osu.edu/racial-justice-resources>
- <https://odi.osu.edu/focus-on-racial-justice>
- <https://cbesc.osu.edu/>

In addition, this course adheres to **The Principles of Community** adopted by the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. These principles can be found at <https://cfaesdei.osu.edu/about-us/cfaes-principles-community>. For additional information on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in CFAES, contact the CFAES Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://cfaesdei.osu.edu/>). If you have been a victim of or a witness to harassment or discrimination or a bias incident, you can report it online and anonymously (if you choose) at <https://equity.osu.edu/>.

Your Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available 24/7 **by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.**

For students in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, David Wirt, wirt.9@osu.edu, is the CFAES embedded mental health counselor on the Columbus campus. To contact David, please call 614-292-5766. Students should mention their affiliation with CFAES if interested in speaking directly with David.

Religious Accommodations

It is Ohio State's policy to reasonably accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of all students. The policy permits a student to be absent for up to three days each academic semester for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief.

Students planning to use religious beliefs or practices accommodations for course requirements must inform the instructor in writing no later than 14 days after the course begins. The instructor is then responsible for scheduling an alternative time and date for the course requirement, which may be before or after the original time and date of the course requirement. These alternative accommodations will remain confidential. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all course assignments are completed.

Weather or other short-term closing

Should in-person classes be canceled, I will notify you as to which alternative methods of teaching will be offered to ensure continuity of instruction for this class. Communication will be via CarmenCanvas announcement.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Requesting Accommodations

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are isolating while waiting for a COVID-19 test result, please let me know immediately. Those testing positive for COVID-19 should refer to the Safe and Healthy Buckeyes site for resources. Beyond five days of the required COVID-19 isolation period, I may rely on Student Life Disability Services to establish further reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Disability Services Contact Information

- Phone: [614-292-3307](tel:614-292-3307)
- Website: slds.osu.edu
- Email: slds@osu.edu
- In person: [Baker Hall 098, 113 W. 12th Avenue](#)



Accessibility of Course Technology

This online course requires use of CarmenCanvas (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations as early as possible.

- [CarmenCanvas accessibility](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility) (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- [CarmenZoom accessibility](https://go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility) (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- R, <https://www.r-project.org>
- RStudio, <https://posit.co>



Course Schedule

Refer to the CarmenCanvas course for up-to-date due dates. In every class at least one student will present and all students will do referee reports.

Week	Topics
1	Vanilla regression (a fancy mean) and fixed-effects (a fancier mean)
2	Simple difference-in-differences (comparing four means)
3	All the new difference-in-differences stuff you feel like you should know but don't
4	Regression discontinuities
5	Just what are synthetic controls and when can I use them?
6	Instrumental variables
7	Learning about machine learning

