

FRANCISCO SILVA

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Office Contact Information:

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Academic Positions:

Assistant Professor, Instituto de Economía, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2016 - present

Education:

PhD, Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 2016
Msc, Economics, Catholic University of Portugal, 2010
Bsc (Licenciatura), Economics, University of Porto, 2008

Research Interests:

Mechanism design, game theory.

Teaching Experience:

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (2016-present)

Intermediate Microeconomics
Mechanism design (PhD course)

University of Pennsylvania (2010 to 2016)

Intermediate Microeconomics (instructor)
Introduction to Micro and Macro Economics and its applications (teaching assistant)
Economic Analysis of the Public Sector (teaching assistant)
Introduction to Macroeconomics (teaching assistant)

Universidade Católica Portuguesa (2008 to 2010)

Intermediate Microeconomics (teaching assistant)

Publications:

"The importance of commitment power in games with imperfect evidence". *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics*, 12.4 (2020) : 99-113.

"Euthanasia: the fear of becoming a burden" (coauthored with Rodrigo Harrison). *Economic Inquiry* 58.2 (2020): 745-763.

"If we confess our sins." *International Economic Review* 60.3 (2019): 1389-142.

"Renegotiation proof mechanism design with imperfect type verification." *Theoretical Economics* 14.3 (2019): 971-1014.

"Inducing overconfidence." *Economic Inquiry* 55.1 (2017): 451-460.

Working papers:

"Optimal assignment mechanisms with imperfect verification" (joint with Juan Pereyra)

Abstract: Objects of different quality are to be assigned to agents. Agents can be assigned at most one object and there are not enough high-quality objects for every agent. The social planner is unable to use transfers to give incentives for agents to convey their private information; instead, she is able to imperfectly verify their reports. We characterize a mechanism that maximizes welfare, where agents face different lotteries over the various objects, depending on their report. We then apply our main result to the case of college admissions. We find that optimal mechanisms are, in general, ex-post inefficient and do strictly better than the standard mechanisms that are typically studied in the matching literature.

"Self-evaluations"

Abstract: Firms and other institutions frequently evaluate their employees. Some firms ask for their employees to complete self-evaluation reports (SERs). The consensus in the business literature is that SERs are not credible and should only be used as a developmental tool. I discuss when SERs are useful and when they are not for a firm that wishes to reward only its good workers: SERs are useful when the job requires multidimensional skills or when the employees have private information about the quality of their evaluators; they are not useful when the job description is unidimensional.

"The social value of fake experts" (previously circulated as "An informational Ponzi scheme")

Abstract: Fake experts have no intrinsic ability or knowledge; they only know what they are told. Oftentimes, fake experts pretend to be real experts for personal gain, thus generating uncertainty over which experts are real and which experts are fake. I argue that i) fake experts are able to sustain a permanent reputation of being real even though all agents are assumed to have rational expectations and ii) uncertainty over whether each expert is fake or real might make the agents better off.

"Should the Government provide public goods if it cannot commit?"

Abstract: I compare two different systems of provision of binary public goods: a centralized system, ruled by a benevolent and inequality averse dictator who has limited commitment power; and a decentralized system, based on voluntary contributions, where agents can communicate but cannot write contracts. I show that any allocation which is implementable in a centralized system and is ex-post individually rational, is also implementable in the decentralized system. This suggests that when the public good provision problem is merely an informational one, as is the case with binary public goods, a decentralized system performs better.

“On the superiority of the simultaneous timing to model firm decisions” (joint with Samir Mamadehussene)

Abstract: I compare two different systems of provision of binary public goods: a centralized system, ruled by a benevolent and inequality averse dictator who has limited commitment power; and a decentralized system, based on voluntary contributions, where agents can communicate but cannot write contracts. I show that any allocation which is implementable in a centralized system and is ex-post individually rational, is also implementable in the decentralized system. This suggests that when the public good provision problem is merely an informational one, as is the case with binary public goods, a decentralized system performs better.

Presentations:

2020: Universidad de Chile, Universidad Diego Portales.

2019: Southern Economic Association meeting (Fort Lauderdale), Latin America workshop in economic theory (Bogota), Universidad de Chile.

2018: Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Universidad de Santiago, Portuguese economic journal meeting (Lisbon), Spanish Economic Association meeting (Madrid).

2017: PUC Chile, Universidad de Chile, Universidad Diego Portales, Stony Brook game theory festival, Econometric Society meeting (St. Louis), Econometric Society meeting (Barcelona).

2016 and before: University of Pennsylvania, PUC Chile.

Honors and Fellowships:

Fondecyt Iniciación (Government of Chile). Project: The role of information in collective decisions, 2020.

Edward Mansfield Prize for best performance of a recitation instructor in Intro Economics, Honorable Mention, University of Pennsylvania, 2014.

University of Pennsylvania PhD fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2010-2015.

Refereeing activity:

American Economic Review, Economic Inquiry, American Economic Journal:
Microeconomics, Games and Economic Behavior.

Languages:

Portuguese (native), English (fluent), Spanish (fluent), French (basic).