Omer Ali

https://sites.google.com/site/omeraaali

Updated: December 2016

Contact Details

Department of Economics, 8283 Bunche Hall, Los Angeles, CA 90095

omerali@ucla.edu — +1 424-279-2527

Interests

Contract Theory, Matching, Political Economy

Education

PhD in Economics — (expected) 2017
University of California, Los Angeles

MSc in Interdisciplinary Mathematics (with distinction) — 2011
MSc in Economics (with distinction) — 2009
University of Warwick

BSc in Economics — 2006
University of Nottingham

References

Ichiro Obara	iobara@econ.ucla.edu
Professor of Economics	UCLA Department of Economics
Marek Pycia	pycia@ucla.edu
Associate Professor of Economics	UCLA Department of Economics
Maciej Kotowski	maciej_kotowski@hks.harvard.edu
Associate Professor of Public Policy	Harvard Kennedy School of Government
Romain Wacziarg	wacziarg@ucla.edu
Professor of Economics	UCLA Anderson School of Management

Research Papers

Disclosure in Multistage Projects (Job Market Paper)

Abstract: I study a dynamic game between a sender (she) and a receiver (he). The receiver incurs a cost in every period in which he chooses to stay on the project. If he quits, the game ends and both players receive a continuation payoff of zero. The project is completed when two successes occur, at which point the game ends and both players receive positive continuation payoffs. Only good projects yield successes, and neither player knows the project's type at the beginning. Only the sender observes the first success, and she chooses when (and how) to share this information with the receiver. When she commits to revealing the first success as soon as it arrives, the receiver's beliefs about the quality of the project decline rapidly as he waits for news, leading him to quit prematurely. The main results show that the sender can sometimes incentivize the receiver to stay in the project by promising to reveal information with a delay.

Stability in a many-to-one Matching Model with Positive Externalities among Colleagues

Abstract: I study a non-transferable utility, many-to-one matching model with externalities among workers at the same firm (colleagues). Firms have preferences over workers, while workers have preferences over the firm they join as well as the number of workers employed by that firm. I show that when workers prefer to join firms with more employees, and firms have responsive preferences with no capacity constraints, a stable matching exists only when there are two firms in the market. Relaxing any one of these conditions yields a counter-example with no stable matchings.

A Simple Model of Party Formation

Abstract: I study a simple three player model of legislative bargaining over ideological and distributive dimensions. When preferences are quasi-linear, there exists a symmetric equilibrium, in which the median legislator randomizes between proposing to either extreme legislator, and the extreme legislators always propose to the median. I also show that there exist asymmetric equilibria for values of the ideal policy of the median legislator in the neighborhood of 1/2. Finally, I define and characterize stable parties.

Work in Progress

Matching between Donors and Congressmen (with Imil Nurutdinov)

Abstract: We model the strategic decisions of donors (whom to contribute to) and legislators (whom to accept funds from) as a transferable utility matching game in which legislators are lobbied away from their preferred policy position by donors. Donors, on the other hand, care about the return to spending on the average policy position of the chamber. We look for stable matchings and study their properties.

The Effect of Ethnic Heterogeneity on Conflict: Evidence from Afghanistan (with Andrew Beath)

Abstract: In 2008, Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program provided a randomly selected sample of communities up to $60,000 in grants to be spent in a manner decided by the communities themselves. We investigate whether heterogeneous communities responded differently to the availability of discretionary resources. Using the random assignment of grants to half of the 500 unit sample, we leverage questionnaire responses from 10,000 individuals, collected in 2008, 2010 and 2012, to assess whether indicators of social capital (trust and cooperation) and conflict incidence responded differently across heterogeneous and homogeneous communities.

Fellowships

UCLA Department of Economics Graduate Fellowship,	2012-15
Marvin Hoffenberg Research Fellowship,	2013-14
UCLA University Fellowship,	2011-12

Research Experience	Research Assistant to Marek Pycia	Summer 2014 - present
	Research Assistant to Romain Wacziarg	Spring 2016
	Research Assistant to Paola Giuliano	Spring, Summer 2013
Teaching	Instructor	
	• Intermediate Microeconomic Theory	Summer 2015
	Teaching Assistant	
	• Microeconomic Theory (PhD)	Spring 2013
	• Designed Markets	Winter 2014, Spring 2015
	• Introduction to Econometrics	Winter 2013, Summer 2014
	• Statistics for Economists	Fall 2012, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Winter 2015
Conferences	Southwest Economic Theory Conference (UC Riverside)	March 2016
	Midwest Economic Theory Conference (Penn State)	October 2015
Programs	Mathematica, STATA, R , Matlab, LaTeX	