



Causaliteit en ontbrekende gegevens (C002881)

Cursusomvang (nominale waarden; effectieve waarden kunnen verschillen per opleiding)

Studiepunten 5.0 Studietijd 150 u Contacturen 62.5 u

Aanbodssessies en werkvormen in academiejaar 2017-2018

A (semester 2)	Engels	werkcollege: PC-	20.0 u
		werkcollege: geleide	2.5 u
		hoorcollege	22.5 u
		groepswork	17.5 u

Lesgevers in academiejaar 2017-2018

Vansteelandt, Stijn	WE02	Verantwoordelijk lesgever
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Aangeboden in onderstaande opleidingen in 2017-2018

Master of Science in Statistical Data Analysis	5	A
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Onderwijstalen

Engels

Trefwoorden

Causal inference, Experimental studies, Missing data, Observational studies, Selection bias

Situering

To enable the master to

- recognize diverse forms of bias, due to missing data, confounding and selection bias, in statistical analyses
- avoid such biases through study design
- correct for such biases through statistical data analysis.

This course provides an excellent training in scientific thinking.

This course builds on 'Analysis of continuous data'

Inhoud

This course offers a thorough investigation of statistical methods for causal inference from experimental and observational data. This methodology has wide applications in epidemiology, clinical studies, public health, agriculture, sociology, pedagogy, demography, economics...

In the first part of this course, a general causal theory will be introduced which will enable a systematic study of different important types of bias in the statistical analysis of experimental and observational data. Epidemiological concepts such as direct causal effect, indirect causal effect, confounding, selection bias and intermediate variables will be formally defined using potential outcomes and made intuitive using causal diagrams. Biases due to missing data in empirical studies and due to inappropriate adjustment for intermediate variables and time-dependent confounders will be studied as special cases of this general causal theory rather than as separate cases.

Next, several techniques for confounding adjustment in point treatment studies are discussed: standard regression adjustment, standardisation and propensity score based methods that use subclassification, matching, regression or inverse weighting. The third part of the course focuses on mediation analysis. It discusses controlled direct effects, natural direct and indirect effects, the mediation formula, natural effect models and finally techniques for handling time-varying confounding: inverse weighting and G-estimation.

In the fourth part of this course, we will introduce marginal structural models for the analysis of time-dependent exposures in the presence of time-dependent confounders. Finally, the problem of incomplete data will be studied in more detail. The classical missing data taxonomy (missing (completely) at random, missing not at random) will be

described and its plausibility evaluated in different settings. Imputation methods are discussed in detail; the EM-algorithm and inverse probability weighted estimators are only briefly mentioned. The importance of sensitivity analyses will be stressed. If time allows, instrumental variable methods will be discussed and illustrated in the context of imperfect randomized studies (e.g. randomized clinical trials with noncompliance). The different concepts and techniques will be illustrated using real data sets from epidemiology, sociology and economics.

Begincompetenties

Having successfully completed the course 'Analysis of continuous data' or having acquired otherwise the corresponding competences.

Eindcompetenties

- 1 Make the fundamental distinction between association analysis and causal analysis.
- 2 Recognize the impact of missing data on a statistical analysis.
- 3 Correct for selection bias and information loss due to missing data in standard statistical analyses.
- 4 Understand the assumptions underlying different standard methods to correct for selection bias and information loss due to missing data in statistical analyses.
- 5 Correct for measured (time-dependent) confounders in statistical analyses.
- 6 Understand the assumptions underlying different standard methods to correct for measured (time-dependent) confounders in statistical analyses.
- 7 Correct for unmeasured confounders in statistical analyses, when an instrumental variable has been measured.
- 8 Detect and model interaction terms.

Creditcontractvoorwaarde

Toelating tot dit opleidingsonderdeel via creditcontract is mogelijk mits gunstige beoordeling van de competenties

Examencontractvoorwaarde

Dit opleidingsonderdeel kan niet via examencontract gevolgd worden

Didactische werkvormen

Groepswerk, hoorcollege, werkcollege: geleide oefeningen, werkcollege: PC-klasoefeningen

Toelichtingen bij de didactische werkvormen

Exercises: written exercises and PC-labs using SAS and R.

Leermateriaal

Scientific (review) papers and extended slides will be posted on Minerva. Cost: 5 EUR

Referenties

Little RJ and Rubin DB (1987). Statistical Analysis with Missing Data. New York: Wiley.
Pearl J (2000). Causality: Models, Reasoning, and Inference. Cambridge University Press.
van der Laan MJ and Robins JM (2002). Unified Methods for Censored Longitudinal Data and Causality. Springer-Verlag: New-York.

Vakinhoudelijke studiebegeleiding

The students will frequently exercise the concepts and methods explained during the lectures, by analyzing realistic data sets during the practical sessions, where students will be closely supervised, and while making their project work. Besides the questions that students can ask before, during or after each lecture, there are several possibilities for asking questions: interactive support via Minerva (forum) and, in case of larger numbers of questions, personal coaching after electronic appointment.

Evaluatiemomenten

periodegebonden en niet-periodegebonden evaluatie

Evaluatievormen bij periodegebonden evaluatie in de eerste examenperiode

Schriftelijk examen met open vragen, openboekexamen, mondeling examen

Evaluatievormen bij periodegebonden evaluatie in de tweede examenperiode

Schriftelijk examen met open vragen, openboekexamen, mondeling examen

Evaluatievormen bij niet-periodegebonden evaluatie

Werkstuk

Tweede examenkans in geval van niet-periodegebonden evaluatie

Examen in de tweede examenperiode is mogelijk

Toelichtingen bij de evaluatievormen

(Goedgekeurd)

Theory: oral (open book)

Exercises: written (open book)

Project: written reporting

The entire exam assesses the student's insight into the basic principles of causal inference and incomplete data analysis and his/her ability to actively apply the statistical methods in the course. The exam will consist almost entirely of exercises (e.g. questions to examine whether the student is able to critically read scientific papers that involve causal questions or suffer from missing data, practical insight may also be tested via interpretation of given software-output).

Eindscoreberekening

Theory: periodic

Exercises: periodic and permanent (project work)

Two projects will be assigned: one involving the analysis of a dataset with incomplete data, the other involving estimation of the effect of an exposure on an outcome in the presence of confounding. The final project must be orally defended.

Calculation of the total score: exam 70%, first project 15%, second project 15%.

A second examination chance for the project is possible. Non-participation to at least one of the project works implies a maximum score (exam + project) of at most 7/20, regardless of the score obtained on the final exam.