Speaker:  Mike Baiocchi, Stanford Prevention Research Center

Title:  Developing a testing framework for open-response questions

Abstract:
Open-response questions are designed to allow the respondent to reply with a broad range of responses, across many different domains. Compare: “What did you think of the candidate?” vs “Please rank the candidate’s technical abilities, compared to peers, on a scale of 0 to 10.” The proposed framework is motivated by the need to estimate the effect of behavioral interventions which shift how participants prioritize their attention in complex situations. Leveraging work from natural language processing (e.g., word embeddings) we propose a simple randomization framework for testing using open-response questions. We will discuss how this framework developed as a means for testing the causal pathways responsible for a highly successful sexual assault prevention. But we will spend most of our time discussing a proof-of-concept randomized trial we are running on mTurk this summer; the data from this study will be anonymous and available for public use. Time permitting, we will discuss proposed extensions to observational data settings (e.g., estimating the effect of an exposure using tweets).