Jorge D. Ballestero

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Education

Columbia University & Sciences Po Paris *2022 – 2026*
Dual BA, Economics and Political Philosophy — GPA: 4.03/4.00

- Dean's List; GS Honors Society; Ilse S. Mintz Scholar; Cum Laude Honors (Sciences Po Paris)
- Relevant Coursework: Econometrics (A), Statistics (A), Research Seminar (A+), Behavioral Economics (A), Game Theory (A), Linear Algebra (A+)
- **Columbia Business School,** *Concentration in Business Management*: Corporate Finance, Strategy Formulation

Research Experience

Research Assistant – Macroeconomics Textbook Climate Resilience *Feb 2026 – Present*
Columbia University — Supervisor: Jeffrey Sachs

- Supporting development of macroeconomics textbook for government officials in Small Island Developing States, translating technical economic concepts into policy frameworks for decision-makers navigating climate resilience and sustainable development trade-offs under resource constraints
- Conducting background research in macroeconomics, climate economics, and development policy, synthesizing academic literature, policy reports, and case studies into accessible educational content for policymakers and global practitioners
- Preparing empirical examples, figures, and tables using R, Excel, and LaTeX, connecting abstract macro models to real-world policy interventions and institutional constraints facing small-state governments in Latin America and the Caribbean

Research Assistant – IPOs, Information Environment, and Cost of Capital *Jan 2026 – Present*
Columbia University — Supervisor: Ankit Bhutani

- Building automated cost of equity estimation models processing portfolios of 20+ firms using Compustat, CRSP, and IBES datasets, developing regression pipelines in R and Python based on Easton (2004) and Hou, van Dijk, and Zhang (2012) methodology
- Cleaning, merging, and validating large-scale panel datasets across multiple financial data sources, ensuring consistency and accuracy in high-dimensional empirical analysis
- Translating mathematical models and estimation procedures from academic finance literature into efficient, reproducible code for systematic firm-level valuation analysis

Research Assistant – Decision-Making Under Uncertainty *Feb 2025 – Oct 2025*
Columbia University — Supervisor: Ricardo Pommer Muñoz

- Designed and programmed 2 incentive-compatible experiments in oTree with 100+ participants examining how reference points and information framing shift contract evaluation and choice behavior under uncertainty
- Built stochastic simulations calibrated to historical data to generate experimental treatments, enabling identification of how shifts in probabilistic thresholds alter perceived contract value and willingness to accept
- Developed automated R pipelines for data validation and econometric analysis preparation; translated experimental findings into insights on how information architecture and reference dependence shape decision quality in high-stakes contexts

Selected Research Projects

Anchoring & Reference Dependence in Sequential Evaluation – Behavioral Economics *Jan 2025 – May 2025*
Columbia University, ECON GU4840 Behavioral Economics

- Developed a formal behavioral model of dynamic anchoring and expectation-based salience in sequential screening, formalizing how reference points established early in an evaluation sequence become disproportionately influential in subsequent judgment—with applications to hiring, procurement, and high-stakes allocation decisions
- Designed an experimental framework to test anchoring persistence, decoy spillovers, and context-dependent reference shifts, examining how the structural features of choice environments distort judgment quality and exploring conditions under which information design can reduce decision fragility

Climate Vulnerability and Sovereign Debt – Panel Cointegration Analysis *Jan 2026 – Present*
Columbia University, ECON GU4918 Senior Seminar in Econometrics

- Constructed a panel dataset across 27 Small Island Developing States using ND-GAIN vulnerability scores, EM-

DAT disaster damage data, and World Bank WDI/IMF WEO macroeconomic indicators to test whether structural climate vulnerability drives long-run debt accumulation

- Implementing three-step panel cointegration strategy: Im-Pesaran-Shin unit root tests, Johansen trace test for cointegrating rank, and panel VECM estimation with structural break allowances at the 2008 GFC, 2014–16 commodity shock, and 2020–21 COVID episode

AI Misinformation & Institutional Trust – Policy Analysis *Jan 2023 – Mar 2024*
Sciences Po Paris, Reims, France

- Assessed institutional and regulatory risks from AI-generated misinformation in Latin American contexts, producing policy recommendations emphasizing cross-platform governance frameworks and institutional safeguards
- Synthesized complex technical, legal, and behavioral trade-offs into structured recommendations accessible to non-technical policymakers

Social Norms & Behavioral Conformity – Applied Quantitative Analysis *Jan 2023 – May 2023*
Sciences Po Paris, Reims, France

- Conducted quantitative analysis examining relationship between social norms and observed behavior using regression modeling to estimate how socially observable variables shape individual choices
- Communicated empirical findings in written reports for non-technical audiences, translating statistical results into interpretable insights

Leadership & Service

Dual BA Representative – GS Student Council *Sep 2024 – May 2025*
Columbia University

- Launched peer mentorship program supporting 50+ international students navigating dual-degree academic systems, securing administrative buy-in and organizing 5+ academic panels and community-building events

Technical Skills & Languages

- **Programming & Statistical Analysis:** Python, R, Stata, SQL, oTree (experimental economics platform), MATLAB (basic)
- **Econometric Methods:** Panel data methods, causal inference, program evaluation, experimental design, regression analysis, hypothesis testing
- **Tools:** Excel (advanced), LaTeX, Git, Microsoft Office Suite
- **Languages:** English, Spanish, French (native); Portuguese (fluent); Russian, German, Italian (conversational)

Additional Information

- Research interests: Development economics, behavioral economics, political economy, causal inference, program evaluation, experimental design, applied microeconomics