

# Jorge D. Ballestero

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## Education

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### Columbia University & Sciences Po Paris

Dual BA, Economics and Political Philosophy — GPA: 4.03/4.00

Sep 2022 – May 2026

(Graduated 05/20/2026)

- Phi Beta Kappa; 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

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### Research Assistant – Macroeconomics Textbook Climate Resilience

Columbia University — Supervisor: Jeffrey Sachs

Feb 2026 – May 2026

- 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 L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, 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

Columbia University — Supervisor: Ankit Bhutani

Jan 2026 – May 2026

- 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

Columbia University — Supervisor: Ricardo Pommer Muñoz

Feb 2025 – Oct 2025

- 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

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### Anchoring & Reference Dependence in Sequential Evaluation – Behavioral Economics

Columbia University, ECON GU4840 Behavioral Economics

Jan 2025 – May 2025

- 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

Columbia University, ECON GU4918 Senior Seminar in Econometrics

Jan 2026 – May 2026

- 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**

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### **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**

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- **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), L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Git, Microsoft Office Suite
- **Languages:** English, Spanish, French (native); Portuguese (fluent); Russian, German, Italian (conversational)

## **Additional Information**

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