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Olmsted Hall 420

April 9<sup>th</sup> 2019

3:45-4:45pm

*Reception in Olmsted 1331  
at 3:15 P.M.*

**“On Self-Presentation: The  
Relational Versus Transactional  
Dimensions of Job Seeking in a  
Technologically Mediated Labor  
Market”**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SEMINAR, VISIT [STATISTICS.UCR.EDU/COLLOQUIA.HTML](http://STATISTICS.UCR.EDU/COLLOQUIA.HTML)

# Abstract

This paper presents a novel investigation of job seeking in a contemporary technology-mediated labor market. Job seeking is conceptualized as a form of self-presentation, normatively circumscribed by three components: the applicant, employer, and task. Self-presentation by job applicants to employers will therefore vary along relational (applicant to employer) and transactional (applicant to task) dimensions. Successful self-presentation along these two dimensions will differ as a function of the job seeker's demonstrable ability. When the applicant lacks cues of their ability to perform the job being considered for, relational presentation is disadvantageous. Instead, transactional presentation are more successful because they ameliorate ability concerns. Conversely, relational presentations are preferred under conditions of demonstrable ability. Support is provided through unsupervised machine learning and sentiment analyses of over 9.6 million written job proposals by over 300,000 applicants on an online platform for gig-economy freelancers. Regression analyses demonstrate that relational presentations improve the likelihood of being hired among applicants with established ability. This relationship reverses among applicants with no prior work experience: they are less likely to be hired if they are more relational while being transactional increases their likelihood of being hired. Contributions to hiring, technology mediated markets and linguistic text-analysis are discussed.

# Biography

I study careers, hiring, and labor markets, and in particular, issues pertaining to diversity and discrimination in the workforce. My empirical emphasis is in innovative, contemporary platform markets (such as virtual freelancing, mobile gig-economy work, and crowdfunding) which provide granular data requiring sophisticated analytical tools. I am particularly interested in understanding the role of technology in reshaping how organizations hire and promote. My research is characterized by the use of cognitive theories and categorization processes to explain hiring and promotion outcomes.