

Offer of Theses Topics by the Jean-Baptiste Say Institute Berlin							Programme(s)							
Supervisor	Mentor	Title or topic	Short Description	Literature	Prerequisites	Comment	Bachelor	MiM	MISM	SustM	MEI	MSDB	MSc track MBA	EMDIEL
Mauer	Braun	Uncertainty as an antecedent to entrepreneurial action	Uncertainty is a theoretical construct that the economist Frank Knight (1921) defines as a probability situation in which there is no base for classifying potential outcomes, as in situations of risk.. A common presumption in entrepreneurship theory is that uncertainty is an antecedent for entrepreneurial strategy or action (e.g. Wiltbank et al. 2006). However, the link from uncertainty to entrepreneurial behavior has recently been questioned (e.g. Jiang and Tornikoski 2019). The student is asked to revisit the relationship of uncertainty and entrepreneurial action.	Jiang, Yi, and Erno T. Tornikoski. 2019. "Perceived Uncertainty and Behavioral Logic." Journal of Business Venturing 34(1): 23–40. Knight, Frank. 1921. Risk, Uncertainty and Profit. ed. August M. Kelley. New York. Wiltbank, Robert, Nicholas Dew, Stuart Read, and Saras D. Sarasvathy. 2006. "What to Do next? The Case for Non-Predictive Strategy." Strategic Management Journal 27(10): 981–98.		Encouraged method: Structured literature review	X						X	X
Mauer	Braun	How can effectuation be described as a process that can be adopted by other practitioners than expert entrepreneurs?	Effectuation theory describes that entrepreneurs build artifacts by focusing on their means, design them without pre-configured goals, view contingencies as opportunities, and create processes with interdependent and independent parts (Sarasvathy 2003). It builds on empirical evidence from expert entrepreneurs, who use this special decision making logic intuitively because of their experience and expertise in building organizations (Dew et al. 2009). However, it struggles with describing effectuation as a process that can be adopted by practitioners in various	Dew, Nicholas, Stuart Read, Saras D. Sarasvathy, and Robert Wiltbank. 2009. "Effectual versus Predictive Logics in Entrepreneurial Decision-Making." Journal of Business Venturing 24(4): 287–309. Gupta, Vishal K., Todd H. Chiles, and Jeffery S. McMullen. 2016. "A Process Perspective on Evaluating and Conducting Effectual Entrepreneurship Research." Academy of Management Review 41(3): 540–44.	German language skills	The student will be part of a research project in which we collect data from an organization that is teaching effectuation to professionals in a specialized curriculum since 2015.							X	X

			organizational contexts (Gupta, Chiles, and McMullen 2016).	Sarasvathy, Saras D. 2003. "Entrepreneurship as a Science of the Artificial." Journal of Economic Psychology 24(2): 203–20.															
Mauer	Braun	When and why do other practitioners than expert entrepreneurs apply effectuation?	Effectuation theory describes that entrepreneurs build artifacts by focusing on their means, design them without pre-configured goals, view contingencies as opportunities, and create processes with interdependent and independent parts (Sarasvathy 2003). Researchers have trouble in pinpointing when and why entrepreneurs use effectuation, as the simple idea that higher uncertainty leads to more effectual behavior has recently been empirically contested (Jiang and Tornikoski 2019; Welter and Kim 2018).	Jiang, Yi, and Erno T. Tornikoski. 2019. "Perceived Uncertainty and Behavioral Logic: Temporality and Unanticipated Consequences in the New Venture Creation Process." Journal of Business Venturing 34(1): 23–40. Sarasvathy, Saras D. 2003. "Entrepreneurship as a Science of the Artificial." Journal of Economic Psychology 24(2): 203–20. Welter, Christopher, and Sungho Kim. 2018. "Effectuation under Risk and Uncertainty: A Simulation Model." Journal of Business Venturing 33(1): 100–116.	German language skills	The student will be part of a research project in which we collect data from an organization that is teaching effectuation to professionals in a specialized curriculum since 2015.												X	X

Mauer	Braun	(Social) entrepreneurship in times of increased uncertainty and crisis	This topic focuses on (social) entrepreneurs who start a business in terms of increased uncertainty and/or crisis: What do their motivation, processes and strategies look like? This question might be applied to the case of COVID-19, but various ideas can be discussed. In the past a similar question has been successfully applied to the case of Colombian FARC ex-combatants. This study might help us to clarify the role of political or economic uncertainty as an antecedent to entrepreneurial action.	Jiang, Yi, and Erno T. Tornikoski. 2019. "Perceived Uncertainty and Behavioral Logic: Temporality and Unanticipated Consequences in the New Venture Creation Process." Journal of Business Venturing 34(1): 23-40. Knight, Frank. 1921. Risk, Uncertainty and Profit. ed. August M. Kelley. New York. Wiltbank, Robert, Nicholas Dew, Stuart Read, and Saras D. Sarasvathy. 2006. "What to Do next? The Case for Non-Predictive Strategy." Strategic Management Journal 27(10): 981-98.	Method: Qualitative case study	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Mauer	Braun	Psychological factors that influence how entrepreneurs handle uncertainty	In entrepreneurship research, uncertainty is usually discussed on the level of the environment (e.g. Duncan (1972)). This seems to omit important psychological factors that have an impact on how entrepreneurs handle uncertainty, as well as uncertainties that 'hit' entrepreneurs on a individual psychological level. Factors that could be studied include: Resilience, intuition, self-efficacy, tolerance for ambiguity, overconfidence, trust. The student is encouraged to dive into research on uncertainties and entrepreneurs in psychology and to feed this knowledge to	Alaszewski, A. & Coxon, K. (2009) Uncertainty in everyday life: Risk, worry and trust, Health, Risk & Society, 11:3, 201-207 Duncan, Robert B. 1972. "Characteristics of Organizational Environments and Perceived Environmental Uncertainty." Administrative Science Quarterly 17(3): 313. Schmitt, A., Rosing, K., Zhang, S. X., & Leatherbee, M. (2018). A Dynamic Model of Entrepreneurial	Encouraged method: Structured literature review	X	X	X	X	X	X		

			entrepreneurship theory. This should preferably be done in a structured literature review, but other methodological approaches can be discussed.	Uncertainty and Business Opportunity Identification: Exploration as a Mediator and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy as a Moderator. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 42(6), 835–859.												
Mauer	Tigges	Artificial Intelligence: Facial Recognition Systems	One, if not the most important trend in Entrepreneurship & AI with potentially massive impacts on civil society and organizations. Which use cases are already in service, which are in test mode, which are in preparation for a roll out in the next 5 years?	Brey, Philip. "Ethical aspects of facial recognition systems in public places." Journal of information, communication and ethics in society (2004). Milligan, Christopher S. "Facial recognition technology, video surveillance, and privacy." S. Cal. Interdisc. LJ 9 (1999): 295.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Tigges	Artificial Intelligence: Image/Video Processing Systems	Big Data analysis has the potential to reshape private and business lives. What is the current state, how is it used in practice and how's the outlook? Special focus on racial/gender bias?				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Tigges	Artificial Intelligence: Advanced Spyware Software (e.g. Pegasus)	Spying on citizens and employees is getting more and more common, whilst being an extremely promising field for aspiring entrepreneurs. Why does it matter and what are the implications?	Marczak, Bill, et al. HIDE AND SEEK: Tracking NSO Group's Pegasus Spyware to operations in 45 countries. 2018. Deibert, Ronald J., et al. "The Citizen Lab." (2019).			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Tigges	Artificial Intelligence in Music	What are the trends and impacts of AI in various aspects of music (e.g. composition, production, mixing/mastering etc.)? Potentially qualitative research within the Berlin entrepreneurial ecosystem.	Holland, Simon. "Artificial intelligence, education and music." Unpublished PhD thesis, IET, Open University, UK (1989): 28-62.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Mauer	Tigges	Business Ethics: Simplicity/Productivity vs Privacy/Security in modern software solutions (e.g. Zoom, Google Suite, Facebook, etc.)	Many tools are greatly loved by users but also potentially risky. Research how companies design their policies to balance gaining more users vs protecting their privacy, possibly interviewing expert entrepreneurs in Berlin and beyond.	Tan, Justin, and Anna E. Tan. "Business under threat, technology under attack, ethics under fire: The experience of Google in China." Journal of business ethics 110.4 (2012): 469-479. Bodle, Robert. "Privacy and participation in the cloud: ethical implications of google's privacy practices and public communications." The ethics of emerging media: Information, social norms, and new media technology (2011): 155-174.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Tigges	Business Ethics: How to (re-) distribute the gains from technological progress?	Technology can make our lives tremendously easier, yet who benefits? Will it be used to make the rich richer or to decrease working hours/raise employees' income?	Stirling, Andy. "Direction, distribution and diversity! Pluralising progress in innovation, sustainability and development." (2009).			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Tigges	Business Ethics: Multi-case study on the impacts of quasi-tech monopolies in existing markets	Amazon, Google, Apple etc. dominate respective markets from a powerful position. Why is this problematic and what are ways to deal with this? Look for historic examples or propose novel frameworks.	Hovenkamp, Herbert. "Technology, Politics, and Regulated Monopoly: An American Historical Perspective." Tex. L. Rev. 62 (1983): 1263.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Mauer	Ipert	The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial performance: an assessment of ESCP entrepreneurs	Entrepreneurship education is gaining momentum and generally speaking, entrepreneurship courses aim at optimizing the entrepreneurial performance on the long run. Some studies show that Entrepreneurial Education has a positive influence on entrepreneurial income, probability to start a venture but no effect on survival rate. Based on a database of ESCP entrepreneurs, assess the impact of entrepreneurship - specialized cursus on entrepreneurial success.	von Graevenitz et al., 2010 G. von Graevenitz, D. Harhof, R. Weber The effects of entrepreneurship education J. Econ. Behav. Organ., 76 (2010), pp. 90-112 // Fayolle, 2000 A. Fayolle Exploratory study to assess the effects of entrepreneurship programs on French student entrepreneurial behaviors J. Enterp. Cult., 8 (2000), pp. 169-184 // Elert, N., Andersson, F. W., & Wennberg, K. (2015). The impact of entrepreneurship education in high school on long-term entrepreneurial performance. Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 111, 209-223.		Suggested method: quantitative analysis of ESCP entrepreneurs that can be complemented by in depth interviews of some entrepreneurs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Ipert	Empirical study of startup financing and blockchain based on transaction costs	Blockchain technology has been used to finance new ventures via the ICO mechanism. Subsequently, other financing mechanisms emerged, such as STO. If entrepreneurial financing ecosystems are not totally efficient due to certain transaction costs (search, specialization of investors...), blockchain technology reduce drastically transaction costs. The study adopts a transaction costs perspective to determine whether transaction cost minimization is a factor in investment decisions made by system stakeholders.	Fisch, Christian. "Initial coin offerings (ICOs) to finance new ventures." Journal of Business Venturing 34.1 (2019): 1-22 // Ahluwalia, Saurabh, Raj V. Mahto, and Maribel Guerrero. "Blockchain technology and startup financing: A transaction cost economics perspective." Technological Forecasting and Social Change 151 (2020): 119854. // Williamson, O. E. (2010). "Transaction cost economics: an overview." The Elgar Companion to		Suggested method: in depth interviews of investors	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

				Transaction Cost Economics, Aldershott.										
Mauer	Ipert	Convergence amid Artificial intelligence, Internet of Things and blockchain in entrepreneurship	Blockchain, AI and IoT are much stronger when combined together. As an example, the health industry expects great development in terms of supply chain tracking, data management, privacy and in the end diagnosis. This topic aims at finding empirical evidence of the combination of blockchain / AI / IoT in recent entrepreneurial ventures	Parker, Brian, and Christian Bach. "The Synthesis of Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things." European Journal of Engineering Research and Science 5.5 (2020): 588-593.	Engineering background would be a plus	Suggested method: case studies or interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Ipert	Blockchain commercial use cases & limitations within music industry	Even though blockchain has been outlined as a potential disruptor for various industries, there is still a lack of commercial use cases available. The topic aims at finding empirical evidence of the current debates within industry and academia on the barriers to implementation and the likely specific use case trajectory.	APA Hughes, L., Dwivedi, Y. K., Misra, S. K., Rana, N. P., Raghavan, V., & Akella, V. (2019). Blockchain research, practice and policy: Applications, benefits, limitations, emerging research themes and research agenda. International Journal of Information Management, 49, 114-129.		Suggested method: case studies &/or interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mauer	Ipert	Blockchain commercial use cases & limitations within real estate industry					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X