Richard Faltings

rfaltings.com

Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor, University of California, San Diego, Rady School of Management   2025 –

Education

Ph.D., Economics, The University of Texas at Austin   2025

M.A., Quantitative Economics and Finance, University of St. Gallen   2018

B.A., Economics, University of St. Gallen   2016

Working Papers

Pricing the Right to Renege in Search Markets: Evidence from Trucking

Abstract: In many markets, advance interim contracts include an explicit right to renege, granting one party the option to switch to more efficient matches that emerge later in the search process. This paper studies the formation and welfare implications of such interim contracts, leveraging novel data from a brokerage firm in the trucking industry. The broker allocates advance shipment contracts to carriers through a dynamic auction mechanism and penalizes cancellations through a reputational mechanism. I develop a theoretical model linking the carrier's bidding problem to the firm's cancellation penalties through a dynamic job-search problem and structurally estimate the model from rich data on bids and cancellations. In counterfactual simulations, I show that the firm is incentivized to lower cancellation penalties as the option value of the right to renege is priced into carrier bids. The results rationalize the large degree of contractual flexibility observed in the trucking industry as an efficient market outcome rather than one constrained by limited enforcement.

Oligopolistic Price Competition in Space and Time: Framework and Distributional Effects

Abstract: I study oligopolistic dynamic price competition between micromobility platforms in Washington, D.C. The model presents a computational challenge due to both the large policy space—optimizing prices across hundreds of origin-destination pairs for eight competing firms—and the large state space of vehicle inventories across different locations. I overcome these computational challenges by performing gradient descent in a simulated dynamic model of the market, an approach proven to be successful in high-dimensional settings by the deep reinforcement learning literature. Using this framework, I compare the current regulation-constrained regime of spatially uniform price competition with counterfactual scenarios with competition on fully flexible prices for each origin-destination pair and time of day, focusing on the distributional impacts of flexible pricing. Matching the heterogenous welfare impacts to trip survey data, I find that welfare gains and losses are evenly distributed across travelers of different incomes, allaying policymakers' concerns of equitable access to transportation under destination pricing.

Works in Progress

Equilibria in the Decentralized Freight Network

(with Nicholas Buchholz and John Lazarev)

Preference Inertia and Superstar Effects: Evidence from Live-streaming

Supported by the Twitch Research Fellowship

(with Alexander Tang)

Publications

Rot-Jaune-Verde. Language and Favoritism: Evidence from Swiss Soccer.

Kyklos, 76(3), 380–406.

(with Alex Krumer and Michael Lechner)

Conference Presentations and Invited Talks

Workshop on Platform Analytics	
International Industrial Organization Conference	
Marketing Science (Scheduled)	
ACM Economics and Computation (Scheduled)	2025
Duke Fuqua	
UCL School of Management	
UCSD Rady	
UCLA Anderson	
SEA Annual Meeting	2024
18th Swiss Economists Abroad Conference (Zurich)	2023
16th Swiss Economists Abroad Conference (Virtual)	
MaCCI Summer School on Platform Economics	2022
15th Swiss Economists Abroad Conference (Virtual)	2020

Honors and Fellowships

Summer Research Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin	2022, 2023, 2024
Graduate Continuing Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin	2021 - 2022
Twitch Research Fellowship	2021
Outstanding Second-Year Paper Award, The University of Texas at Austin	2020
Graduate Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin	2018 - 2021

Professional Service

PhD Student Seminar Coordinator, The University of Texas at Austin	2020 - 2023

Research Experience and Other Employment

University of Texas at Austin, Research Assistant to Eugenio Miravete   2022 - 2023

University of Texas at Austin, Research Assistant to Vasiliki Skreta   2021

University of Texas at Austin, Research Assistant to Jorge Balat   2021

University of St. Gallen, Research Assistant to Stefan Buehler   2017 - 2018

University of St. Gallen, Research Assistant to Michael Lechner   Spring 2017

Intern, Chief Economist Team, DG for Competition, European Commission   2018

Skills

Software: Julia, Python, R, Stata, Matlab, LaTeX

Languages: English (native), French (native), German (fluent)

Updated: June, 2025