***Ceteris paribus*** or ***caeteris paribus*** is a [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) phrase, literally translated as "with other things the same," or "all other things being equal or held constant." It is an example of an [ablative absolute](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ablative_absolute) and is commonly rendered in English as "all other things being equal." A prediction, or a statement about [causal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causal_relation) or logical connections between two states of affairs, is qualified by *ceteris paribus* in order to acknowledge, and to rule out, the possibility of other factors that could override the relationship between the [antecedent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antecedent_(logic)) and the [consequent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consequent).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceteris_paribus#cite_note-Schlicht000-0)

A ***ceteris paribus* assumption** is often fundamental to the *predictive* purpose of scientific inquiry. In order to formulate scientific laws, it is usually necessary to rule out factors which interfere with examining a specific causal relationship. Under scientific experiments, the *ceteris paribus* assumption is realized when a scientist controls for all of the [independent variables](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_variable) other than the one under study, so that the effect of a *single* independent variable on the [dependent variable](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dependent_variable) can be isolated. By holding all the other relevant factors constant, a scientist is able to focus on the unique effects of a given factor in a complex causal situation.

Such assumptions are also relevant to the *descriptive* purpose of [modeling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operationalization) a theory. In such circumstances, analysts such as [physicists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physicists), [economists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economist), and [behavioral psychologists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Behavioral_psychologist) apply simplifying assumptions in order to devise or explain an analytical framework that does not necessarily prove cause and effect but is still useful for describing fundamental concepts within a realm of inquiry.