

ECO 4810
SENIOR SEMINAR
SPRING 2020

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Office hours: Generally, I am around T,TH 12:30pm-2pm (formal hours). Please also take advantage of email as a convenient form of virtual office visit. Whenever possible, it is best to contact me prior to an office visit so I can schedule an appointment time. I have always been able to find time to help any student with advance notice so that schedules can be coordinated.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

In-depth research and analysis of selected economic issues and problems. Required of all seniors majoring in economics or banking. Students participate in discussions of significant economic problems, theories and policies. Preparation of empirical papers that apply theoretical models and quantitative methods is required. These papers will be presented orally and in writing to the seminar participants. Prerequisites: a minimum grade of "C" in ENG 3100 or BE 3340 (business majors only), ECO 3010, ECO 3020, and senior standing. (WRITING; SPEAKING)

WHAT'S REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN IN THIS COURSE

This course is all about putting together what you've learned in economics to produce, from start to finish, an applied economics research paper. This means you will be choosing a research topic, formulating a research hypothesis, gathering existing data or generating data sufficient to test your hypothesis, analyzing the data, and reporting the results in both written and presentation forms. Some of our course time will be spent discussing topics relevant to your research paper endeavor, but I will not be re-teaching material you should know as a prerequisite to this capstone course (that includes basic methods of statistical analysis and regression methods). I will, however, gladly guide the process for you at the different steps of your research. Ideally, each student should finish this course with a research paper to be proud of, and one that shows your ability to follow through the entire research process.

COURSE TEXTBOOK—nope (necessary materials/readings will be handed out or posted on my Weebly course website (there is a link to this site also on our AsULearn page)

<https://daviddickinsonseconomics.weebly.com/econ-4810-senior-seminar.html>)

GRADING

Your grade in this course will be based on two presentations (10% each), research paper mileposts (annotated bibliography=10%, full paper first draft=15%, full paper final draft=30%), ad hoc assignments or quizzes (15%), and an exit exam (10%).

I use the full pluses and minuses grading scale for calculating final course grades (93=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, etc....below 60% is an F grade).

THE PAPER

Your research paper is what this course is all about, so here's some more details on it.

First, each student will formulate an original hypothesis that will be tested with data that you must either gather or generate. I will allow groups of up to 4 students to work together *on data* if helpful (e.g., if creating a survey or designing an experiment this may be helpful). However, even if you collaborate to get data, each student must formulate and test a **different** hypothesis from that data. Each student will also be writing his/her own research paper, of course. So, to reiterate, **you may collaborate on getting data, but each student must conduct his/her own analysis and write his/her own paper! Importantly, final drafts of papers will be due the 2nd to last week of our semester (this forces papers to be completed prior to when we have final presentations)**

Other paper details:

- All papers will follow a standard format. Title page should include abstract of no more than 150 words. **Maximum main text length** of 10 double-spaced pages (not including tables/figures/reference page, which can occur at the end of the paper). Times New Roman 12 point font, 1-inch margins throughout. Reference style, as well as in-text referencing should follow format you see *American Economic Review* articles. The "full paper first draft" you turn in may be up to 15 double-spaced pages in length, with the remaining editing/revising used to get the paper down to its final 10 pages.
- Suggested **section headings** for your paper might be as follows: Introduction, Background, Data, Results, Conclusions. Note that the length limit implies a target of about two pages per section. Thus, each section of the paper is expected to be tight and well-written to make this work. Any illusions of procrastinating to create a quality research paper of this sort should be set aside. It will take work and multiple edits and revisions of your paper.
- **Data used to test the hypotheses** of your paper can be from publicly available data (e.g., the Bureau of Labor Statistics website has a ton of labor market and wage data), survey data that you gather (e.g., you develop a survey that you administer through something like Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey), or experimental data that you generate (e.g., you design an economics experiment that can generate data to test your hypotheses). Keep in mind that data collection does *not* happen overnight, and you could run into complications so you need to plan ahead.
- You should be **thinking about topics for your paper as soon as possible**. Not a week should go by in my class where you are not doing something to make progress on your paper project. When deadlines get set (which I'll do with ample time), they are hard deadlines and late work will not be accepted.
- Your two course presentations will consist of a prospectus presentation (what you plan to do & some background research), and a final presentation at the end of the semester.

Other Course Stuff

*Please see also <http://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/syllabi> for additional University policy information on Academic Integrity (see also <http://studentconduct.appstate.edu/>), accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities, Student Engagement with Courses, and the Attendance (includes Religious Observance) Policy.

It is the responsibility of the student to be sure s/he is officially registered for this course. Students who are not officially registered should not expect to be added late.