

ECONOMICS 4960H. RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION & COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will expose you to research in economics. Research falls into two categories: research into existing work and original research. Most of your research experiences have probably been into existing work. The objective of this course is to provide a first step toward doing original research, which can be developed into a senior / honors thesis. The course also has the sub-objectives of improving your data analysis, writing, and presentation skills. These objectives course will be achieved in two ways. The first is to give you a sense of what important original research is. The second is to give you an opportunity to (1) review the economic literature in an area of interest to you, with the eye to identifying a valuable, novel research question, (2) design a strategy to address that question, including identify datasets and performing some preliminary analyses; and (3) present that work in writing and in front of class participants. By the end of the course you will be positioned to write a senior thesis.

EXPECTATIONS

As you will see, most of the course work is independent research work. There will be a few readings to give you a sense of what research is, but most of the work will be your own. You will be expected to come to each class and discuss the questions that interest you and the research that you have done. In addition to discussing where you are in your work informally, you will present your work formally in the last three classes.

READINGS

I recommend *Economical Writing* by Dierdre McCloskey and *Mostly Harmless Econometrics* by Josh Angrist and Steve Pischke. These and other readings are below.

RESOURCES

Among the many resources you may find useful are ECONLIT and JSTOR, which are both available through the University Library; www.nber.org (go to publications and then working papers) and <http://repec.org/>. <http://www.undergraduateresearch.osu.edu/> - OSU's Undergraduate Research Office

GRADING

There will be three major components to the class: class discussions (25%), a paper (50%), and a presentation (25%). Your paper will be due at or before noon on Friday, December 12th.

COURSE PLAN

Week	Wednesday (Discussion day)	Friday
1, Aug 21	Intro and What are you're interested in?	Research Designs – OLS and Fixed Effects; Quasi-experiments Weinberg, Reagan, and Yankow; Ashenfelter and Kruger (Glance at); Jacob
2, Aug 28	Investigate literature, Refine ideas Think more about areas that interest you and specific questions that interest you. Look into the literature to see what others have done. Come to class prepared to discuss your ideas, what others have done, and open to reformulating your interests.	Proposal Writing
3, Sep 4	Research Designs – Experiments Katz, Kling, and Liebman (pp. 620-625); Chetty, Hendren, and Katz	Research Designs – Regression Discontinuity Lee and Lemieux
4, Sep 11	Joni Barnard on research on Human Subjects	Research Designs – Differences in Differences; Decompositions Card and Krueger
5, Sep 18	Work on data and research design, Refine ideas Think about how to approach your topic and feasibility. Consider how others are approaching similar questions, including the data they are using and the ways they are using it. Again be prepared to discuss what you have uncovered and open to reformulating your question.	3-4 Page Proposal Due Outside presenter
6, Sep 25	Read the other proposals. Be prepared to offer comments and prepared to discuss what you saw for yourself in them.	Writing McCloskey
7, Oct 2	Begin Analysis. Have data in hand. Clean / code data. Discuss things that you have discovered in your data.	A Little Big Data for Economists Chang et. al.
8, Oct 9	Continue Analysis Have data in hand. Clean / code data. Discuss things that you have discovered in your data.	Break (Autumn Break)
9, Oct 16	Continue Analysis Conduct analysis; generate figures; statistical analyses. Consider identification strategies. Discuss challenges / progress.	Network Analysis for Economists
10, Oct 23	Continue Analysis, Begin writing Continue analysis, and begin writing. Discuss challenges / progress.	Discussions with Junior Researchers
11, Oct 30	Continue Analysis, writing Discuss challenges / progress.	Presenting CSWEP Documents
12, Nov 6	Continue Analysis, writing, develop presentation Discuss challenges / progress.	No Class (Veteran's Day)
13, Nov 13	Presentations Continue analysis, writing, and work on your presentation while others present.	Presentations
14, Nov 20	Break (Thanksgiving)	Break (Thanksgiving)
15, Nov 27	Presentations Continue analysis, writing, and work on your presentation while others present.	Presentations
16, Dec 4	Presentations Continue analysis, writing, and work on your presentation while others present.	Semester Over
Finals	No Exam. Paper due by Noon, Eastern, December 14th.	

Readings

- Angrist, Joshua D. and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. 2009 *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricists Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Card, David and Alan B. Krueger. 1994. "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast-Food Industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania." *American Economic Review* 84 (No. 4, September): 772-793.
- Chang, Wan-Ying; Ahmad Emad; Julia Lane; Josh Tokle; and Bruce A. Weinberg. 2016. "Linking Data: New Techniques." Working Paper.
- Chetty, Raj; Nathaniel Hendren; and Lawrence F. Katz. 2016. "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *American Economic Review* 106 (No. 4, April): 855-902. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1257/aer.20150572>
- Jacob, Brian. "Public Housing, Housing Vouchers and Student Achievement: Evidence from the Public Housing Demolitions in Chicago." *American Economic Review* 94 (No. 1, March 2004): 233-58.
- Katz, Lawrence F., Jeffrey R. Kling, and Jeffrey B. Liebman. "Moving to Opportunity in Boston: Early Results from a Randomized Mobility Experiment." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116 (No. 2, May 2001): 607-654.
- Lee, David S. and Thomas Lemieux. 2010. "Regression Discontinuity Designs in Economics." *Journal of Economic Literature* 48 (June): 281-355. <http://www.aeaweb.org/articles.php?doi=10.1257/jel.48.2.281>
- McCloskey, Dierdre N. 2000. *Economical Writing, Second Edition*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.
- McCloskey, Donald N. 1985. "The Poverty of Economic Modernism." Chapter 1 in *The Rhetoric of Economics*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. pp. 3-19.
- McKelvey, Richard D. and Palfrey, Thomas R. (1992) *An Experimental Study of the Centipede Game*. *Econometrica*, 60 (4). pp. 803-836. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2951567>
- Weinberg, Bruce A; Patricia B. Reagan; and Jeffrey J. Yankow. "Do Neighborhoods Affect Work Behavior? Evidence from the NLSY79." *Journal of Labor Economics* 24 (no. 4, 2004): 891-924.

Disability Statement

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Student Services Information:

Code of Student Conduct:

www.studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp

Code of Student Conduct:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT)

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an 'excuse' for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

The Committee on Academic Misconduct:

www.oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html

Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity:

www.oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html

Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity:

www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html