E390  Research in Economics
Sect. 12893; MW 2:30 pm -3:45 pm; BH 307

Description

This course is for students interested in conducting original research in economics. In my view, the best way to learn how to do research is to do research. I will help you with the choice of research topics, primary sources, data sources, and research methods. The primary activities in the course will be oral presentations, the preparation of a paper, and providing constructive feedback on classmates' research projects.

Objective

The goal of this course is to give students an opportunity to do their own research and obtain experience in communicating it effectively to others. The course aims at creating a collaborative forum that helps students formulate economic hypotheses, test them rigorously and communicate the results orally and in writing. The workshop format will provide an opportunity to present ideas and solicit suggestions from peers as well as the professor. The interaction with your peers is an important part of the course. The end result should be a high quality, original economics research paper. Most likely, the main component of the paper will be empirical but theoretical projects are also allowed.

Required Texts:  There are no required texts but there will be some papers assigned for topic 4 in order to illustrate different research designs

Optional Texts:

Requirements and grading

The main project for the course will be a paper that should be at least 10-15 pages of text (1.5 lines spaced 12 point Times New Roman or Calibri with 1 inch margins), plus tables and figures. The paper will be the result of original economics research that you perform over the course of the semester. There will be a number of opportunities to make presentations based on your research throughout the course of the semester.

You are allowed to co-author a paper with one of your fellow students, but then I would expect a more substantial paper from two co-authors than from a single author. Also, if you work with another student, both co-authors would need to participate in the presentations.

Grades are based on participation in all aspects of the course. The specific breakdown is:

- Participation in class discussions & comments on classmates’ research: 15%
- Presentation of preliminary ideas for the project: 7%
- Outline of the paper (2-3 pages): 10%
- Presentation of the main literature and data sources: 8%
- First draft of the paper: 15%
- Paper presentation: 15%
- Final paper: 30%

**Class participation** will be evaluated based on its frequency and quality of comments and questions, although **erroneous comments will not lower your score** for participation. You are allowed to miss one class without a valid excuse. After that each class missed without my permission obtained in advance will result in a 3 percentage points reduction in your grade.

Other matters

The best way to contact me to set up an appointment, to ask a question, etc., is by e-mail. I check it several times a day.

Standard IU policies will be followed with respect to special needs accommodation.
Course Outline
(time allotted for each topic is approximate)

1. Introduction (0.5 weeks).
2. Introduction to Stata (0.5-1 week)
3. Choosing and researching a topic (0.5 weeks)
   
   PD, Part II; NJ, Part Three
4. Basics of empirical work and research design (1-1.5 weeks)


5. Presentation and discussion of students’ topics (1 week)
6. Writing an empirical paper (0.5 weeks)

   PD, Part IV
7. Doing a literature review (0.5 weeks)
8. Presentation and discussion of the literature on the topic and data sources (2-2.5 weeks)

   **Feb. 14: Outline of the paper is due**
9. Discussion of projects as they are developed (3 weeks)

   **March 28: First draft of the paper is due**
10. Paper presentations (3-4 weeks)

   **April 27: Final paper is due**