

Economics 8209: Economics Research Methods Workshop I

Fall 2015

MW 10:30-11:45AM

Room: ECON 5

Class Website through Desire2Learn (D2L): <https://learn.colorado.edu/>

No Class: Sep 7 (Labor Day), Nov 23-25 (Fall Break)

Professor Francisca Antman

Office: Economics 102

Office Hours: MW 1:00-1:30 PM, F 9:00-11:00 AM, and by appointment

Email: francisca.antman@colorado.edu (preferred method of contact)

Course Description

This is the first course in a two course series that forms the 3rd year research methods workshop for Ph.D. students in economics. This course provides an introduction to the practice of research in economics and a learning environment conducive to preparing a research proposal that will culminate in the required paper and comprehensive examination typically taken at the end of the 3rd year of the Ph.D. program. Together we will discuss what quality research looks like and the components of a research paper including introduction, literature review, and methodologies. You will receive extensive feedback on the drafts you produce and provide extensive feedback on the work of your classmates. You will also have many opportunities to present your work and thus develop your presentation skills.

Class Components:

Introductory Lectures: We will discuss practical matters such as the timeline to a Ph.D. and the job market for economists. We will also discuss how to choose a research topic and find an advisor. Students will also form small groups based on their research interests and background which will be used for peer-editing (see details below).

Reading & Discussing Set of Introductory Papers: I will assign a set of prominent economics papers from general interest journals on the first day of class. You will read these to get a sense for the components of a good research paper and the writing style common in economics. Together we will discuss what a good introduction and literature review look like and how appropriate methodologies are selected to answer proposed research questions.

Research Question Presentation: Together we will discuss the formulation of a good research question. You will come prepared to informally discuss your proposed research question, your proposed methodologies to address it and, if appropriate, any data sets you will use in your analysis. The class will offer feedback. You will continue to discuss your research question and methodology with me in individual meetings. Finally, you will make one computer-based presentation on your research question to the class. You will have up to 5 minutes of uninterrupted time for your presentation followed by 5-10 minutes of class discussion. You must give a draft of your presentation slides to your peer-editor(s) one week prior to your presentation. Your editor(s) will then give you written comments no less than three days prior to your presentation. You may incorporate their comments into your final presentation at your

discretion. You should plan to email your slides out to the class in PDF format by 5PM on the day prior to your presentation. A hard copy will be due on the day of your presentation.

Paper Presentation: You will make one computer-based presentation on a paper closely connected to your research question. Your presentation should summarize the main components of the article focusing primarily on the research question, empirical strategy, and results, along with any background information you think necessary. Ideally, you should also link your own research question or area of interest with the paper you present so that it is clear how the two are related. You may also raise questions, critiques, and extensions on the article, and thus provide the basis for a critical discussion of the article in class. While you may consult with other classmates regarding your presentation, I expect that the presentation slides will be your work alone. If you have presented or are planning to present a similar presentation in another class, you must discuss this with me first to determine whether it will be eligible for credit in this class. We will follow conference-style rules for this presentation, meaning that you will have up to 15 minutes of uninterrupted time for your presentation followed by 5-10 minutes of class discussion. You must give a draft of your presentation slides to your peer-editor(s) one week prior to your presentation. Your editor(s) will then give you written comments no less than three days prior to your presentation. You may incorporate their comments into your final presentation at your discretion. You should plan to email your slides out to the class in PDF format by 5PM on the day prior to your presentation. A hard copy will be due on the day of your presentation.

Literature Review Draft & Presentation: You will write a 3-5 page literature review which specifies your research question and situates it within the most relevant literature. You will also make a computer-based presentation to the class on the literature that is most closely related to your research question. Both your presentation and manuscript should make it very clear what your research question is and how it will make a contribution to this literature. We will follow conference-style rules for your presentation, meaning that you will have up to 15 minutes of uninterrupted time for your presentation followed by 5-10 minutes of class discussion. You must give a draft of your literature review to your peer-editor(s) one week prior to your presentation. Your editor(s) will then give you written comments no less than three days prior to your presentation. You may incorporate their comments into your final draft and presentation at your discretion. You should email your final draft and PDF slides to the entire class by 5PM on the day prior to your presentation. Hard copies will be due on the day of your presentation.

Methodology Draft & Presentation: You will write a 3-5 page paper detailing the (theoretical and/or empirical) methodology you will use to address your research question. You should be as specific as possible and include any actual equations, background information, or data limitations necessary to understand your methodological approach. You will also make a computer-based presentation to the class on your methodology. Both your presentation and manuscript should make it very obvious what your research question is and how your methodology will answer it. We will follow conference-style rules for your presentation, meaning that you will have up to 15 minutes of uninterrupted time for your presentation followed by 5-10 minutes of class discussion. You must give a draft of your literature review to your peer-editor(s) one week prior to your presentation. Your editor(s) will then give you written comments no less than three days prior to your presentation. You may incorporate their comments into your final draft and

presentation at your discretion. You should email your final draft and PDF slides to the entire class by 5PM on the day prior to your presentation. Hard copies will be due on the day of your presentation.

Final Research Proposal & Presentation: You will write an 8-12 page final research proposal based on your literature review draft, methodology proposal, and any feedback you have received. The proposal should (1) specify your research question in detail along with any background information needed to understand the context, (2) situate your work within the existing literature and explain the contribution your work would make to that literature, (3) present the theoretical model/framework (if any) that previews the expected results or motivates the empirical strategy, and (4) discuss the empirical strategy used to answer the question. Your proposal may also review details of the data set you expect to use in the analysis and present preliminary results or discuss expected results, if you have already advanced to those stages of research. You will also make a 30 minute computer-based presentation of your final research proposal to me and your advisor. We will offer feedback at your presentation and I will later meet with you individually to discuss your presentation and how your manuscript is progressing before it is due. You must give your peer editor(s) a copy of your final research proposal one week before your presentation so that your peer editor can respond with comments no less than three days prior to your presentation. Your final research proposal manuscript (2 hard copies) will be due to me on the date specified below. You should also provide a copy to your advisor at the end of this semester.

Participation (including peer-to-peer edits and comments in class): You will provide written comments to one of your group members on each of the following: (1) research question presentation, (2) paper presentation, (3) literature review draft, (4) methodology draft, and (5) final research proposal. You should coordinate within your group to ensure that you receive comments from every one of your group members at some point in time. This feedback may take the form of comments written on a hard copy or separate written remarks. These comments will be due no less than three days prior to the recipient's presentation as specified above. In addition to the written comments you provide to your group members, you should also be prepared to provide comments to the rest of your classmates following their presentations. At the end of the term, I will ask each of you to comment on the quality of the feedback you received from your peer editors.

Advisors: You should identify an advisor for your 3rd year paper as soon as possible so that they may offer any feedback on your research question, literature review, and methodology proposal while you are developing them. **You should plan to match with an advisor no later than the end of September.** Note that this requires the advisor's consent, so you must directly ask him or her if he/she is willing and able to advise you.

Grading

Research Question Presentation: 5%

Outside Paper Presentation: 5%

Literature Review Draft & Presentation: 10%

Methodology Draft & Presentation: 10%

Participation (including peer-to-peer edits and comments in class): 10%

Final Research Proposal & Presentation: 60%

Class & University Policies

All students must attend all classes and presentations unless otherwise noted in the course schedule.

Please hand in an assignment cover sheet with all written assignments. It is available at:
<http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/AcademicIntegrityAgreement.pdf>

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please review the course schedule at the beginning of the semester and see me as soon as possible regarding any conflicts due to religious observances.

See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please provide me with a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website (<http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/>) and discuss your needs with me.

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the term so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at

http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or

harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/>

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://honorcode.colorado.edu>

Please note that the following schedule is tentative and subject to change if necessary throughout the term. Consequently, please maintain the M/W 10:30-11:45AM class time open and free from any outside conflicts throughout the semester, regardless of whether there is currently the expectation that no class will be held on a specific date.

ECON 8209 Tentative Course Schedule Fall 2015		
Monday	Wednesday	Notes
24-Aug Introductory Lectures	26-Aug Introductory Lectures	Timeline to a Ph.D. How do you find an advisor? What do you need to know about the job market for economists?
31-Aug Discuss introductory papers	2-Sep Discuss introductory papers	What makes good research? What makes a good introduction? What makes a good literature review?
7-Sep Labor Day—No Class	9-Sep No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
14-Sep No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	16-Sep Research Questions Discussion	Students will informally discuss their proposed research questions and methodologies with the class.
21-Sep No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	23-Sep No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
28-Sep Research Question Presentations	30-Sep Research Question Presentations	Presentation slides (hard copy) due in class on the date of your presentation.
5-Oct Paper Presentations	7-Oct Paper Presentations	Presentation slides (hard copy) due in class on the date of your presentation.
12-Oct Paper Presentations	14-Oct No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
19-Oct Literature Review Presentations	21-Oct Literature Review Presentations	Literature Review draft & slides (hard copies) due in class on the date of your presentation.
26-Oct Literature Review Presentations	28-Oct No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
2-Nov No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	4-Nov No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
9-Nov Methodology Presentations	11-Nov Methodology Presentations	Methodology draft and slides (hard copies) due in class on the date of your presentation.
16-Nov Methodology Presentations	18-Nov No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
23-Nov No Class--Fall Break	25-Nov No Class--Fall Break	

30-Nov	No Class--Final Presentations	2-Dec	No Class--Final Presentations	Final Presentations may be scheduled during or outside of class depending on availability of your advisor. Bring a hard copy of your presentation slides to your presentation.
7-Dec	No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	9-Dec	No Class in lieu of Individual Meetings	Note that individual meetings may be scheduled on alternate dates.
14-Dec	Final Proposal (2 hard copies) due by noon Monday, December 14.			Please send additional copy of your proposal to your advisor.