

ECONOMICS 590: TUTORIAL IN RESEARCH PROJECT DESIGN

This course has four goals:

1. Learn about strategies to conduct research.
2. Improve your writing and oral exposition skills.
3. Improve your ability to give and receive constructive criticism.
4. Learn something about the world, by completing an original research project. This project may serve as a stepping stone towards a senior honors thesis (Economics 681/682) or senior paper (Economics 699).

To achieve these goals, students will have to take an unusually active role. You will have to take the initiative in:

- choosing a topic that interests you
- selecting a style of research that suits your interests, abilities and training
- seeking out the resources that you need to support your research
- responding to the ideas and comments of your classmates

For much of the course, students will take the role of instructor. You will be presenting critiques of research by others (both students and professional economists). You will be making constructive comments and suggestions on presentations by your classmates. And you will be presenting drafts of your own research paper.

There is no textbook for the course. Some journal articles will be discussed, to illustrate research. All readings will either be available on the web, or be distributed in class. Thus there is no reading packet.

Communication from me will sometimes take place via email. Please add your name to the class email list. Copies of handouts will be on my web site: <www.ssc.wisc.edu/~kwest>, follow the links to Econ 590.

Requirements. Each student must

- (1)Select and critique, both in (a)writing and (b)an in-class presentation, an undergraduate thesis (5% of grade).
- (2)Select and critique, both in (a)writing and (b)an in-class presentation, a journal article (5% of grade);
- (3)Write a 10 -12 page original research paper. This involves writing and making an in-class presentations on an initial 3 page outline (15% of grade) and a 10-12 page rough draft (15% of grade). It is expected (but not required) that presentations will use a PC computer package such as PowerPoint. The final copy of the paper counts for 50% of the grade.

Class participation accounts for the remaining 10% of the grade.

All written work must be word-processed, double spaced, with one inch margins, in 10 or 12 point font.

Schedule. Attached.

ECON590 SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative, and subject to revision. The number of days devoted to student presentations depends on the number of students in the course, and adjustments may be made once enrollment is finalized.

	CLASS ACTIVITY	WRITTEN WORK DUE FROM STUDENTS
1/21	Organizational meeting	<i>questionnaire</i>
1/26	What is a research paper? / Example of student research (Rocio Sanchez-Moyano)	<i>1 page description of research interests</i>
1/28	Discussion of interests / Understanding economic data	
2/2	DISC / Microcomputer Lab, 3218 Social Science	<i>title of thesis that you will critique</i>
2/4	Example of student research (Devon Phillips) / example of calibration	<i>title + 1 paragraph on research project</i>
2/9	Oral critique of undergraduate thesis	<i>3 page critique of thesis</i>
2/11	Oral critique of undergraduate thesis	
2/16	Oral critique of undergraduate thesis	
2/18	Oral critique of undergraduate thesis	<i>citation for journal article for critique</i>
2/23	Review of statistics concepts	
2/25	Oral presentation on journal article	<i>3 page critique of journal article</i>
3/2	Oral presentation on journal article	
3/4	Oral presentation on journal article	
3/9	Oral presentation on journal article	
3/11	Discussion of research projects	<i>title + 1 para. on research project (revised)</i>
 (spring break)		
3/23	Review of regression concepts	
3/25	First presentation on research topic	<i>3 page overview of research project</i>
3/30	First presentation on research topic	
4/1	First presentation on research topic	
4/6	First presentation on research topic	
4/8	First presentation on research topic	
4/13	Second presentation on research topic	<i>10-12 page draft of research paper</i>
4/15	Second presentation on research topic	
4/20	Second presentation on research topic	
4/22	Second presentation on research topic	
4/27	Second presentation on research topic	
4/29	Second presentation on research topic	
5/4	open	
5/6	Recapitulation	<i>10-12 page research paper</i>