Syllabus for Economics 6209 - Fall Semester 2002

Class meetings: MWF 9-9:50 in Economics Room 2
Office hours: Tuesday and Friday mornings or by appointment (Econ 206a, 303 492-5169)

Course Overview

Economic research at the MA level involves the application of ideas from the courses offered in the first year of the MA program. The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to the skills and tools involved in doing economic research. Unlike the core curriculum courses in economics which use an analytical approach, this course emphasizes writing, verbal presentation and computer-based analysis.

In order to provide a better understanding of how to do economic research, the class focus on completing a research paper. The topic of this analysis will be subject to approval of the instructor, and can be based on a variety of research tools, including econometrics, experimental economics and computational equilibrium analysis.

It is hoped that students in the class will be pursuing independent research projects which will provide a start on an MA thesis. All students will make periodic presentations to the class on their independent work.

Writing is a central element of any economic research project. We will do a good deal of writing as part of this course, and we will spend time talking about large and small issues in grammar and style.

The course will use three books: Research Methodology in Applied Economics by Don Ethridge, Economical Writing by Deirdre McCloskey, The Elements of Style by Strunk and White. The first of these texts is available on closed reserve at Norlin. The second and third are available in paperback. Reading assignments from these texts will be made through the course of the term.

Additional readings will be selected by individual students from published papers or manuscripts. Students will present one journal article or manuscript in class and prepare referee reports on two other papers.

Requirements

- Weekly short writing assignments (4 in total).
- Initial research proposal (2 pages) and bibliography.
- Midterm exam on research methods and writing
- Class presentation (30 minutes) of a published paper or manuscript.
- Referee reports (2 x 3 pages) on papers being presented by others in the class.
- Initial drafts of research papers (20 pages)
- Class presentation (30 minutes) of research paper
- Final drafts of research papers.

Evaluation

- Short writing assignments (20%)
- Midterm examination (20%)  
- Class presentations (20%)
- Final research paper (35%)
- Final examination (5%) (Fri., Dec. 13, 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services (DS) early in the semester so that your needs may be addressed. DS determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, http://debreu.colorado.edu/6209/syllabus.htm
I will accommodate all students who must be absent from classes or miss scheduled exams in order to observe religious holidays, provided that I am notified well in advance of the scheduled conflict. (See http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

A revised student honor code has recently been adopted at CU and can be viewed on the CU web site. Plagiarism will not be tolerated, particularly in student writing assignments. We will discuss in class how plagiarism is defined and how it relates to internet-based information.