

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Department of Economics

**ECON4309–801:
ECONOMICS HONORS SEMINAR 1**

Fall 2015

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Objective

The main objective of this course (and of the companion course *ECON 4339–801 Economic Honors Seminar 2*) is to help you write a successful undergraduate honors thesis in economics. A successful undergraduate thesis embodies the results of well executed, original, and significant research in economics. The thesis must show a proficient use of the tools of economics. It must contain independent and creative work (which precludes plagiarizing previous research). The thesis must be important. The judges of the execution, originality, and importance of the thesis will be your advisor and the other members of the defense committee.

The thesis must be defended by 5 April 2016 to graduate in Spring 2016. Until then, you will have to accomplish a number of tasks. These include:

1. Identify a research topic.
2. Find a willing faculty advisor.
3. Identify an interesting and answerable research question.
4. Write a review of the literature relevant to your research question.
5. Write a research proposal that describes your question, the methodology required to answer the question, and the required data.
6. Collect and organize the required data.
7. Perform the necessary analysis to answer your question.
8. Write and present a working paper version of your thesis.
9. Write the final version of the thesis.
10. Defend your thesis.

Adequate progress toward the completion of your thesis requires that you be somewhere between tasks 6 and 7 at the end of *ECON 4309*.

Prerequisites and Texts

Course enrollment is granted by the Economics Honors Program only. To be considered, the students must have a high cumulative and economics GPA. In most cases, the tools required to complete the thesis are presented in your undergraduate economics courses. Past experience however suggests a number of areas where students need further emphasis.

Doing: This text offers research guidelines:

Greenlaw, S.A. (2005) *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Writing: The following texts offer writing guidelines:

McCloskey, D.N. (1999) *Economical Writing*, Second Edition. Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc.

Strunk, W. and E.B. White (2000) *The Elements of Style*, Fourth Edition. New York: Longman.

Econometrics: The vast majority of undergraduate thesis in economics use the tools of econometrics. So, it is strongly recommended that students complete *ECON 4818 Introduction to Econometrics* and *ECON 4848 Applied Econometrics*. Students can also learn viable and useful tools to complete their thesis in both *ECON 4858 Financial Econometrics* and *ECON 4868 Simulation Modeling in Microeconomics*.

Evaluation

Critical Reviews	10 %
Literature Review	15 %
Development Reports	10 %
Research Proposal	25 %
Presentations	20 %
Class Participation	20 %

Evaluative Criteria: To earn a passing grade in the course, you must complete and turn in your research proposal by the last day of class. There will be no exceptions to this requirement. Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled classes.

Honors Program

The Honors Program has a website with useful information:

<http://www.colorado.edu/honors/>

The Honors Program stores past theses. To access them:

<http://www.colorado.edu/honors/honorsthesisarchive>

University Policies

You should familiarize yourself with the following University of Colorado policies:

1. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor 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 Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

2. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See full details at

http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

3. 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, veterans 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 semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at

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

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

4. 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/>

5. 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>

<http://honorcode.colorado.edu>