

## **Economics 4848- Applied Econometrics Spring 2019, T/Th 12:30-1:45, Humanities 1B45**

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### **Course Materials**

On Canvas

### **Office Hours**

T 10:00-11:30 W 10:00-11:30

It is very easy to schedule appointments outside of office hours with me—I am usually in my office during normal business hours. The best way to set up an appointment is by email.

### **Course Prerequisite**

This class requires previous completion of Economics 3818, Intro to Statistics, or the equivalent.

### **Course Description**

The goal of this course is to teach you how to analyze data in order to obtain meaningful inferences, in other words, to use data to say something informative about interesting questions. Because these are skills that are best learned by doing, this requires that students develop facility with a statistical software package. In this course, we will use STATA, a package particularly well suited for empirical economics analysis. While students will exert a fair amount of energy mastering STATA in order to follow the lectures and complete the assignments in this course, it is important to remember that learning STATA commands is only a means to an end, and that the key focus of this course is develop skills in econometric analysis and interpretation.

### **Course Materials**

#### *Textbook:*

A course pack developed by Prof. Brian Cadena serves as an informal textbook. It is available in electronic form on the course website.

#### *Software:*

Students are not required to purchase their own copies of STATA, as it is available in the computer lab in the basement of the economics building. Note that the economics building is closed on weekends, but remains open until 10pm on weekdays.

You can find a list of other campus labs with STATA at:

<http://webdata.colorado.edu/labs/softwaresearch/>

(Simply enter STATA as both the software developer and name in the search fields).

Purchasing your own copy of STATA will provide the convenience of working on class material outside of university computer labs. If you chose to purchase your own copy of STATA, you qualify for a substantial discount through the University's GradPlan. Information is available at: <http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/>

Please note that **Small Stata is insufficient for this course, you should purchase STATA/IC instead**. Current price for Stata/IC license for 6 months is \$45.

*Hardware:*

You will need a USB memory device to store copies of data and log files from our work in class.

## Course Requirements

*Attendance:* Attendance is absolutely crucial to success in this class. In order to re-enforce the importance of attendance, it will be factored into final grades. **Attendance will be taken regularly and any student missing more than 20% (3 weeks of class, or 6 class meetings) of the course's scheduled classes will receive a failing grade.** To be clear, these absences are intended to cover both valid (illness, car breaking down) and invalid reasons for missing class. Excused absences will therefore not be granted. I reserve the right to record an absence for students who spend substantial class time on non-class activities.

*Homework:* Students will regularly work on ungraded exercises during class time to practice course material. Graded homework assignments are not given. Students should, however, plan on taking time outside of class each week to: a) Review log file, class notes and in-class exercises from that week's classes. b) Use STATA and the data files to independently perform the analysis conducted in class in order to review STATA commands, interpretation of output, and key concepts from class lecture and c) Use STATA and the data files to perform additional data analysis beyond class examples to further test mastery of course content.

*Exams:* Two midterms and a final exam. The first midterm is scheduled for **Tues, Feb 19**. The second midterm is scheduled for **Thurs, Mar 21**. The final is scheduled for **Sat, May 4 1:30-4**.

*Research Paper:* The goal of this course is to train you to perform and interpret original analyses of economic data. To that end, you will complete one independent research project, using the skills taught in this course. You will write a paper (roughly 8 pages, double-spaced, including figures and tables) on a topic of interest to you, focusing on original analysis of relevant data. Some course time will be spent teaching you how to download and analyze U.S. Census data, and many students will formulate a research question that can be investigated using Census data. Students are, however, free to pursue other data sources on topics of interest. I will hold individual meetings the week of April 9 to make sure that you have found an appropriate topic and data set and provide some individual guidance (class will be cancelled during the week to allow for individual meetings during class time). The research paper is due, in both electronic and hard copy, on the last day of classes, **Thurs, May 2, by 5 pm**.

## **Grades**

Grades will be based on:

20% Midterm 1 (Tues Feb 19)

20% Midterm 2 (Thurs Mar 21)

30% Final Research Project (Due Thurs, May 2, 5 pm)

30% Final Exam (Sat, May 4, 1:30-4)

Letter grade standards: I evaluate work in this course from the perspective of an employer. An A on an exam or on the final project means that an employer would consider the student a desirable hire. Standards for other letter grades are based on degree of departure from this standard.

## **Course Specific Policies**

*Material from a Missed Class:* If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining the material you missed. You should arrange to obtain log file and notes from a classmate and work through these on your own to review the missed material. Ungraded in-class exercises are posted on the course website for students who miss class to complete on their own. You are always welcome to ask questions in office hours once you have reviewed the notes and completed any missed in-class exercises on your own.

*Missed Exams:* Make-up exams for the midterms will not be given. Midterm exam absences will only be excused for compelling circumstances (generally family emergencies or documented illness), in which case the other course material will be re-weighted. Students anticipating conflict with an exam date due to religious observance or over-scheduling (3 or more exams on the same day) should bring these to my attention within the first 3 weeks of class.

*Class Disruptions:* Computers should not be used for non-class activities during class time and cell phones should be stored away during class time.

*Academic Integrity:* All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of the University of Colorado at Boulder ([www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html) and [www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/](http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/)). All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council. I particularly encourage students to avoid plagiarism (portrayal of another's work or ideas as one's own) and therefore to conscientiously identify and cite all ideas or language borrowed from any other work.

## How Can I Do Better?

I often have students show up in office hours to discuss the fact that they are dissatisfied with their performance in the class so far and to ask advice about how to improve. My answer is always the same. So I now put the advice here so that everyone has it from the first day of class!

***Material in this class is advanced and highly cumulative. Material must be practiced multiple times to master. Mastering one week's material is crucial to understanding the next week's material.***

0) Attend every day. Put your cell phone away. Only have class material open on your computer.

1) *Mentally engage in class.* Material is not learned by passively typing in commands and writing down what is written on the board without thinking. Are you concentrating on following and understanding the material? Can you answer the questions I am asking in class?

2) *Review previous class material before each class.* Course material is highly cumulative. You will learn much better in class if you have already mastered the material from the previous lecture. Review previous material so that it is fresh in your mind for the next lecture.

3) *Replicate data work from lecture outside of class.* Use your log file and the course data sets to re-do the analysis conducted during lecture and reinforce your understanding of the relevant concepts. Try to first interpret the output on your own before reading the answer from your notes.

4) *Focused effort during in-class exercises is crucial.* Review class material before coming to class so you are prepared for in-class exercises. Focus on the exercise without distraction. After completing the exercise, check over your work carefully by referring back to your course notes and log file.

5) *Practicing for exams must include working on new problems, not just reading over old problems.* Simply reading over your in-class exercises before an exam **will not** be sufficient! It is important to first actually re-work the class exercises. But, even more important, you must then practice the skills further by applying them to new variables. For example, using the class data sets, conduct a different t-test, a different nonlinear regression, a different categorical variable regression, etc than the ones already done in class. You only master the material by working new problems you have not already seen.

## Course Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 15, Jan 17): Introduction and Getting Started in STATA

Week 2 (Jan 22, Jan 24): Summarizing Continuous Data

Week 3 (Jan 29, Feb 31): Categorical Data

Week 4 (Feb 5, Feb 7): Hypothesis Testing

Week 5 (Feb 12, Feb 14): Simple Regression

Week 6: **Tues, Feb 19- 1<sup>st</sup> Midterm**  
Feb 21: Non-linear Models

Week 7 (Feb 26, Feb 28): Categorical Variables, Multiple Regression

Week 8 (Mar 5, Mar 7): Interaction Models

Week 9 (Mar 12, Mar 14): Omitted Variable Bias, Standard errors and Multicollinearity

Week 10 (Mar 19, Mar 21) **Thurs, Mar 21- 2<sup>nd</sup> Midterm**

Week 11: Spring Break

Week 12 (Apr 2, Apr 4): IPUMS Tutorial (How to do the project)

Week 13 (Apr 9, Apr 11): Individual meetings during class time to discuss final projects

Week 14 (Apr 16, Apr 18): Advanced topics: Logit Model

Week 15 (Apr 23, Apr 25): Advanced Topics: Fixed-Effects Models

Week 16 (Apr 30, May 2): Advanced Topics: Difference-in-Differences Models

**Thurs, May 2, 5 pm, Final Papers Due**  
**Sat, May 4, 1:30-4, Final Exam**

## University Policies

*Accommodation for Disabilities:* If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

*Classroom Behavior:* 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 race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. 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. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

*Honor Code:* All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

### *Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation*

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#). Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

*Religious Holidays:* 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. In this class, absences for religious observance fall within the course policy of six allowed absences for the semester. Students with religious observance conflicts with scheduled midterm exams will be excused from the midterm and remaining course assignments will be re-weighted, consistent with the excused midterm exam policy for the course.