

## **Econ 8219: Research Methods Spring 2024 Course**

### **Professor Tania Barham**

**Office:** Economics 114

**Email:** tania.barham@colorado.edu

**Office Hours:** W: 11am – 12:00, 15 min. after each class, and by appointment. (tentative)

**Class:** M/W 12:45 - 2:00pm

### **Course Goals**

This is the second course in a two-course sequence designed to transition students to the research phase of the PhD program in economics. The primary goal of the workshop is to produce a substantial research product suitable for a dissertation. By the end of the class it is expected that students will complete the comprehensive oral exam proposal and defend it. In addition, students will make several presentations related to ongoing research in economics and their own research.

The second semester of the research methods class gives opportunities for students working on their orals proposals to discuss and present their ongoing work. By the end of the class it is expected that most students will complete the comprehensive oral exam proposal and defend it. We will also be focusing on making short conference presentations, useful descriptive statistics, and editing your own work as well as others.

### **Oral Comprehensive Exam Guidelines**

The oral comprehensive exam is a 1-hour presentation based on the student's third year paper. The presentation is open to anyone but is typically attended by three faculty members designated as examiners for the student. In addition to the main advisor, the student should select a second committee member in consultation with the instructor. The instructor will serve as the final member of the committee. A student is deemed ready to present if, in the opinion of their advisor(s), s/he has a substantial research product. The final paper with a complete list of references must be distributed to the committee at least two weeks in advance. If this deadline is not met, the comprehensive exam must be rescheduled.

### **Course Content**

Students will participate in the following activities:

1. *Detailed Abstract of Research Proposal:* Students will be given guidelines for generating a 2-4 (double spaced) page detailed abstract of their research proposal. It will cover basic motivation, main research question, the contribution of their research to the literature, and perhaps key points of their methodology. It is important that the research question match your methodology. We will have an individual meeting where we discuss your research proposals and needs for the semester.
2. *Group Editing of Detailed Abstract:* Students will be sent draft detailed abstracts in advance of class to their group members and be expected to edit the detailed abstracts. In class the students must go over the edits in details with the group/author and the group should discuss how the author can improve their work.

3. *Short Presentations*: Students will make a short (15 minute) conference style presentation of their research. See more details below.
4. *Group Editing of Most Sections of the Proposal*: Students will send drafts of different sections of their proposals at different points in the semester. They will send the draft in advance of class to their group members and are expected to come to class with detailed edits for each group member. In class the students must go over the edits in details with the group/author and the group should discuss how the author can improve their work.
5. *Final Papers/Presentations*: The final product of the semester is a draft of the student's comprehensive exam proposal. The proposal should be written in the style of a journal article including all citations. Since this is a proposal if the research is not complete the authors can have a next steps section. Presentations will weeks of class. Most students are expected to use this presentation as their oral comprehensive exam and this is the goal of the class; those doing so will have the first pick of dates at the end of the semester. *Note that a complete draft must be provided 2 weeks in advance of the presentation if it is serving as a comprehensive exam.* Final papers are due on the last day of class. In many cases the paper you handed in for your comprehensive exam will suffice as your final paper for the class and I will let you know that at the end of the comprehensive exam. See below for more details regarding the guidelines for the oral comprehensive exam.

### **Grading**

Peer Grading of edits and my class participation grade	10%
Short Presentation	10%
Conference Presentation	10%
Final Presentation	35%
Final Proposal/Paper	35%

### **Short Presentation (20 min presentation and 5 minutes of questions)**

The purpose of the 20 min presentation is to give you practice at a short conference-style presentation. **All students are expected to attend all presentations.** The presentation should be composed of 12-15 slides and approximately 20 minutes. Your slides should have the following headings: **Motivation, Research Question, Contribution, and Methodology.** If you have results, you may present those, but you need to keep it short. Where possible you should use an anecdote, figure, table, etc, as part of your motivation. State any relevant (e.g., identification) assumptions clearly.

### **Presentation Methodology and Results (20 min presentation)**

The purpose of this presentation is to get feedback on your methodology and results from the class. Present the research question, methodology and results (if you have them). Make sure the research question and your methodology match. Be clear on any identifying assumptions and what sort of robustness checks you can do to test those assumptions.

### **Conference Presentation (20 minute total)**

The purpose of the 20 min presentation is for you to give a condensed version of your full research. **All students are expected to attend all presentations.** The presentation should be composed of 10-12

slides and approximately 15 minutes leaving 5 minutes for questions and comments. Your slides should have the following headings: **Motivation, Research Question, Contribution, Methodology, Results, Next Steps/Conclusion.**

### **Final Presentations**

One hour presentation for those doing their comprehensive oral exam; half an hour otherwise. **All students are expected to attend any presentations that are not for the comprehensive exam.**

It is best to schedule the comprehensive exam before **April 24**, so you have time to address any comments if needed by the time your final proposal is due.

**Campus Policies:** I will adhere to all campus policies with respect to disabilities, religious observances, appropriate behavior, discrimination and harassment, and academic conduct. See <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/>

**Tentative Class Schedule: Dates may change depending on class progress with papers**

WEEK OF	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 – Jan 15		Introduction / Detailed Abstract / Paper Advice / Create groups
2 – Jan 22	Presentation Advice / Descriptive Data Analysis Draft Due “Detailed Abstract” – email to group by 4pm.	Group Edit: Detailed Abstracts  Revise and email me detailed abstract by 10pm on Thursday.
3 – Jan 29	Individual meetings (4/day)	Individual meetings (4/day)
4 – Feb 5	Discussion: JMP, introductions, presentations	Short presentation (3/day)
5 – Feb 12	Short presentation (3/day)	Short presentation (3/day)
6 – Feb 19	Short presentations (1) Class: catch-up and JMP presentations	JMP presentations
7 – Feb 26	JMP presentations Draft due to group “Data/Methods – empirical strategy, model outline or set up” Email group by 4pm or decide on a different time	Group Edit: Data/Methods (Model set up) -revise this section of your paper after these edit.
8 – Mar 4	No Class work on results Draft Due to group “Results” Email group by 4pm on Thursday or decide on a different time.	Group Edit: Results -Note we may push back a day if enough people don’t have results ready
9 – Mar 11	Presentation methods/results -Schedule Comp exam	Presentation methods/results -Schedule Comp exam
10– Mar 18	Presentation methods/results	Conference Presentation (20 min)
11 – Mar 25	March Break	
12 – Apr 1	Conference Presentation (20 min)	Conference Presentation (20 min)
13 – Apr 8	Final Presentations/Comp. Exam	Final Presentations/Comp. Exam
14 – Apr 15	Final Presentations/Comp. Exam	Final Presentations/Comp. Exam
15 – Apr 22	Final Presentations/ Comp. Exam	
16 – Apr 29	Final Proposals Due if not doing comp (print & email)	