ECO 4935, Empirical Research in Economics Seminar
Fall 2017, Michelle A. Phillips

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Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:35-11:30 am (periods 3-4) at GER 0228
Office: Matherly Hall 334 (3rd floor)

Office Hours: My office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9-9:30am and Monday and Wednesday from 1:40-2:40pm in Matherly 334. You can also contact me by email (michellephillips@ufl.edu). Daniel Wagner will be assisting with this course. He will hold office hours Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:40-11:30am in Matherly 341. You can also make an appointment with me via email.

Course Description
This course introduces students to the development and testing of economic models. We will learn about empirical methodologies/statistics (including the use of statistical software) and examine empirical papers. Students will then apply the material learned to test their own economic model. Each student will present his/her work to the class throughout the semester. *Prerequisites:* ECO 2013 and ECO 2023

Readings and Supporting Material
1. "Doing Economics" (Greenlaw). Note: spiral version or paperback version
2. Readings will be available on Canvas. A brief tutorial on how to use Canvas is available here https://resources.instructure.com/courses/32

Statistical Program
The empirical analysis required for this course can be done using MS Excel. You are welcome to use R, Stata (available through UF Apps and at UF library computers) or other statistical software if you prefer. I will go over how to do this (no prior knowledge is required).

Grading
Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following:
A. Class participation   13%
B. Proposal (written and presentation)   16%
C. Description and Analysis of Empirical Work (written and presentation) 16%
D. Final Paper (written)   55%

Class participation:
You will be graded on class participation. I will send an email each week detailing what you are expected to read before class. This will include assigned empirical papers and the papers your classmates will be presenting. You must come to class and be ready to provide comments or answer questions about the papers to get full credit for class participation. Constructive comments are an important part of research.

Proposal:
Each student will submit a proposal which develops the hypothesis to be tested and describes the manner in which you will test your hypothesis. Important: You need to make sure that your project is feasible. Please discuss your topic with me at least a week before you start writing your proposal. You can do this either by coming to office hours, talking to me after class, or emailing me. A good/feasible proposal requires: (1) Making sure you can answer your question using the tools we learn in class and (2) Having the data required to test your hypothesis (enough variables and observations). Your proposal should

include: (a) an introduction that motivates the project, (b) a description of your sample, (c) a description of each variable, (d) information on sources you will use for data, (e) for each independent variable you must provide the economic analysis that underlies your prediction about the effect of the independent variable on your dependent variable.

You will present your proposal in class. Your proposal will be distributed to your classmates who will read it before you present it in class in order to be able to provide you with constructive criticism. Note: The bulk of your grade is based on the written portion of your proposal, not on how you present it. The main purpose of presenting your work is to engage in a discussion with your classmates during which they can provide you with feedback to help improve your paper. However, if you do not show up to the presentation, you will get 0 points for the entire proposal (written part included).

A sample proposal and rubric will be available on Canvas. These should give you an idea of what is expected. Due date: See "schedule" section. **There is a penalty for being late** that is described in the "penalties" section of this syllabus.

Description and Analysis of Empirical Work

Each student will present a complete description and analysis of their empirical results. Important: Doing empirical research and describing your results takes time. The earlier you get started on this, the better. You will not be able to get this done the day before it is due. I highly suggest that you give yourself as much time as you can to test your research question. This paper has the following requirements: (a) introduction, (b) description of your sample, (c) for each variable, indicate how it was constructed and report summary statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum), (d) for each independent variable, develop the prediction and discuss whether your results support or refute your hypothesis and whether the variable has a big impact on the dependent variable. Important: Your grade is not affected by whether your hypotheses have been confirmed. As with the proposal, the bulk of your grade will be based on the written portion but you will get 0 points for the entire section if you don't show up to your presentation. The main purpose of the presentation is to gather feedback from your classmates. **A sample and rubric will be available on Canvas.** Due date: See "schedule" section. **There is a penalty for being late** that is described in the "penalties" section.

Final Paper

You must submit your double-spaced paper to me (electronic and hardcopy) on the date listed in the "schedule" section. For the hardcopy: Do not include a binder or special folder. Your font should be a standard font (Arial, Times New Roman, Calibri, etc) of size 12. Your hardcopy can be printed on one or both sides (duplex) of the paper. Please make sure you staple your paper rather than use a clip. Your final paper will develop the model and discuss how the data were gathered, how the model was tested, and how revised results relate to the model.

A sample final paper and rubric will be available on Canvas. Due date: See "schedule" section. **There is a penalty for being late** that is described in the "penalties" section. You are welcome to submit the final paper earlier than the deadline, as long as you have already presented the "description and analysis of empirical work" to your classmates and incorporated relevant feedback from that.

Exams: This class does not have exams.

Penalties
Important: **If you miss the deadline for submitting your work, you will be penalized by 50%. If you miss a presentation you will get a grade of 0 for that entire section (whether it is the proposal or description/analysis). No exceptions. If you are late on submitting your final paper, your grade will fall by 10% each day it is late. An assignment (proposal, description/analysis of empirical work, final paper) is considered late if it is turned in after 1 pm on Canvas the day it is due. No exceptions.**

The following scale will be used to determine your final grade:

A 93 and above   A- 90 to 92.99   B+ 87.5 to 89.99   B 84 to 87.49
B- 80 to 83.99   C+ 77.5 to 79.99   C 72.5 to 77.49   C- 70 to 72.49
D 65 to 69.99   E 0 to 64.99

Office Hours
If the office hours listed above are not convenient due to class or work conflicts, I will work with you to find a better solution. The easiest way to schedule office hours by appointment is to email me.

Contacting Me
The best way to contact me is via e-mail. If you haven't received a response within 72 hours, please assume I didn't receive your email and re-send it. If you want to discuss your research ideas or papers, you can either come to my office, email me or call my office phone number. I expect to be able to answer most emails within 1 business day, but I may not be able to answer emails sent a few hours before an assignment is due on time.

Course Website
We will be using Canvas. The address is: http://elearning.ufl.edu/. You log-in using your Gatorlink ID and password and the course should automatically appear as one of your e-learning options. If it does not, check to make sure you are properly registered for the course. If that is not the issue, contact the UF Computing Helpdesk at: http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/. Do not contact me about access issues. I cannot help you and the help you do need will only be delayed if you do. If you need an extra copy of any materials made available during class, this is the place to check. Your grades will be made available via this website.

Academic Honesty You are expected to abide by the University's rules for academic honesty. These are available for your review at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr. Cheating, plagiarism and any other action that violates these rules will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. I use turnitin. Submitting a research paper that you copied/pasted from a previous research paper you wrote for another class will result in a grade of 0. You can, however, transform the paper from this class into your honors thesis. You can also expand on ideas you have explored in papers for other classes.

Students with Special Needs
If you are a student with special needs and you require additional resources to participate in this course, please contact me immediately. The Dean of Students makes special accommodations for students as needed. After approval by the Dean of Students, the appropriate paperwork will be forwarded to me and accommodations can be made.

Schedule (and deadlines)   T = Tuesday   H = Thursday M = Monday

T Aug 22   Introduction
H Aug 24   Lecture 1
T Aug 29   Lecture 2
                - For students completing honors thesis in CLAS and graduating this semester: you must talk to me to set up a meeting with the thesis committee soon (please have the meeting set up by the 4th week of the semester).

H Aug 31	Lecture 3
T Sept 5	Lecture 4
	- Sign up for Proposal and Analysis/Description presentation dates (select your 3 most preferred times). This is done during the lecture. If you do not sign up, I will assign dates to you.
H Sept 7	Lecture 5
T Sept 12	
	- For students completing honors thesis in CLAS and graduating this semester: you should have a meeting with the committee members set up by the end of this week. More information is available on the "Honors" section, under Liberal Arts.
H Sept 14	Lecture 7
T Sept 19	Lecture 8
	- Make sure you have discussed your topic with me (during office hours, via email or after class)
H Sept 21	Lecture 9
T Sept 26	Lecture 10
H Sept 28	Lecture 11
T Oct 3	Lecture 12
	- Submit proposal paper electronically by 1pm on Canvas (if you are late there's a penalty which is explained earlier in the syllabus).
H Oct 5	Proposal Day 1
T Oct 10	Proposal Day 2
H Oct 12	Proposal Day 3
T Oct 17	Proposal Day 4
H Oct 19	Proposal Day 5
T Oct 24	Proposal Day 6
H Oct 26	Proposal Day 7
T Oct 31	Proposal Day 8
	- Submit description and analysis paper by 1pm on Canvas (if you are late there's a penalty which is explained earlier in the syllabus).
H Nov 2	Description and Analysis Day 1
T Nov 7	Description and Analysis Day 2
H Nov 9	Description and Analysis Day 3
T Nov 14	Description and Analysis Day 4
H Nov 16	Description and Analysis Day 5
M Nov 21	**- For students completing honors thesis in CLAS and graduating this semester: Deadline to submit copies of final paper to thesis committee and provide me with copies of honors thesis submission form.**
T Nov 21	Description and Analysis Day 6
H Nov 23	**HOLIDAY**
T Nov 28	Description and Analysis Day 7
H Nov 30	Description and Analysis Day 8
T Dec 5	(Optional) Office hours (at my office) instead of class for last minute questions.
W Dec 6	**Final paper due by 1 pm on Canvas (if you are late there's a penalty which is explained earlier in the syllabus).**

HONORS

Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS)
Those who take this course and who have a 3.3 average in all economics work and a 3.5 upper division GPA will be considered for magna cum laude or summa cum laude. If your paper is approved by the economics department's undergraduate committee, you will receive summa if your economics GPA is above 3.5 and your upper division GPA is above 3.7 and magna otherwise.

By the <u>fourth week in the semester you graduate</u>, you must schedule a 20-minute presentation to the Undergraduate Committee of what you propose to do in your honors thesis. This committee will determine whether your thesis is acceptable, so take the committee's suggestions seriously! Anyone graduating this semester must turn in four copies of the final paper by <u>Monday, November 20th</u> at noon for grading by the Undergraduate Committee. Also leave me 3 copies of the honors thesis submission form, which can be downloaded from www.honors.ufl.edu. "Type" your answers onto the form as you complete the form.

Business Administration (WCBA)
Students can satisfy the thesis requirement for high or highest honors by taking this course instead of ECO 4970. To receive magna cum laude, a 3.7 GPA is required in all UF coursework, the Business Core courses, and all Economics courses. To receive summa cum laude, a 3.9 GPA is required in all three categories. Candidates for magna or summa must give me one copy of their papers. Also leave me 2 copies of the honors thesis submission form, which can be downloaded from www.honors.ufl.edu. "Type" your answers onto the form as you complete the form.

Turning the Paper into a Thesis.
I would be glad to work with you after this course ends as you do any additional work to turn the paper into an honors thesis. See me for comments on your final paper in this course as you begin this process.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLICATION
It is difficult (but not impossible) to publish in economics journals. There are some outlets specifically for undergraduate papers in economics:
Econ.Sources.com Best Undergraduate Paper Competition sponsored by International Atlantic Economic Sources (July 1 deadline) and FIU Undergraduate Journal of Global Business and Community. See Canvas for more information.

**** I highly recommend that you browse the Files section on Canvas to fully understand what this class is about and what is required of you before Add/Drop ends.****