

## Seminar in Applied Economics

**Professor Jason Barr**

**Email:** jmbarr@newark.rutgers.edu

**Office Hours:** Via zoom appointment (email me to set up a time).

**Course website:** Blackboard

**Course Time and Location:** Monday & Wednesday, 6:00pm – 7:20pm, **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**

**Course Overview:** This is a **writing-intensive** seminar course. The goal of the course is for you to gain experience in research, econometric methods, and writing. You will need to give several presentations to the class, and you will be expected to participate in class discussions. Throughout the semester, I will be giving you several writing exercises. **Attendance and participation are required.**

The culmination of the semester will be a research paper. You will conduct an original econometric research project using one of the data sets I will post early in the semester. Your chosen topic will be presented to the class and class members will offer constructive suggestions.

**Prerequisites:** Successful completion of both Statistical Methods (220:231) and Introduction to Econometrics (220:322). Some knowledge of calculus is expected. **If you do not have Econometrics (or have not passed it), you CANNOT take this class. You must drop it immediately.**

**Required Software:** This course will be taught using Stata, which is a commonly-used statistics software. See the Rutgers Software portal for more information on how to get Stata <https://software.rutgers.edu/product/1679>. The easiest option is to buy a student license for one year (con: costs money, pro: on your laptop and easy to use). You can also use the virtual computer labs (<https://it.rutgers.edu/virtual-computer-labs/>) which allows you to access Stata on one of the computer labs from a remote location (pro: free, con: you need to manage moving your data and results back and forth from the cloud).

### Readings & Text:

**Econometrics Review:** During the first few weeks of class, I will be reviewing econometric methods. I will be teaching mostly from the book A.H. Studenmund, *Using Econometrics*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (2011). I assume you are familiar with the concepts that were covered in Statistical Methods and Econometrics. You are free to use any Intro. to Econometrics book you have or want to buy. You can buy or rent Studemund online.

After the econometric review, you will have weekly readings that you can download from online or from the Rutgers University library website. Everyone is expected to read each article. Each week, a group of three students will be required to lead a class discussion on a paper. Generally speaking, I will discuss some papers and you will discuss some papers. The idea is that by working through them you can see how economists perform research, test hypotheses, and write up their research results.

### Requirements and Grading

Class Participation	10%
Online Quizzes (2 at 5% each)	10%
Article Reviews	10%
Online Midterm Exam ( <b>Due Oct 19</b> )	15%
Paper Components	20%

Project Oral Presentations	10%
<u>Final Submitted Paper</u>	<u>25%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Here are the requirements in more detail. I will be handing out guideline sheets for the various assignments during the early part of the semester.

- **Class Participation:** If you have more than two unexcused absences you will get 0 for your class participation grade. To get full marks for this, you must regularly participate in class discussions (aside from other aspects of the course discussed below).<sup>1</sup> More than two unexcused absences will also result in the loss of half a letter grade for the course for each additional absence above two.
- **Online Quizzes:** You will have two short online quizzes regarding econometric methods and Stata. They will be uploaded approximately in mid-Sept and end of September, respectively. You will have a couple of days to do each one. They will be multiple choice.
- **Article Review:** All students will be required to write one article review. I will assign you an article, and you will have to answer a specific set of questions about it, which must be written up in essay form.
- **Midterm Exam:** On Monday, October 19, you will have an on-line exam regarding the material discussed up to the week before.
- **Paper Components:** Each of you will writing up a paper. I will be giving you a data set and you will select your research question and will then perform a regression analysis to answer the question. You will be working on the various parts of your paper throughout the semester. You will have deadlines to hand in drafts of parts of your paper (i.e., the introduction, the literature review, the discussion of the economic theory and model, the data and regressions, and the conclusion and general discussion). For each section you will get comments and a grade. You will have the chance to improve your grade with a revision. I will allow unlimited revisions. Information about the data sets and research questions will be given out early in the semester. You will receive zero grade for each component that is more than 5 days late and there will be penalty for all writes up that are late.
- **Presentations:** Throughout the semester you will have several presentations. You will have to discuss at least one academic article (from the list handout during the second week of class), and you will have to give presentations related to your term paper. You can expect to give three presentations throughout the semester: one article review, one presentation about your topic and your hypotheses, and a third one about your final paper.
- **Final Paper:** The completed paper will be submitted at the end of the semester. The results of the paper will be presented to the class during the few weeks of the class.

---

<sup>1</sup> If I do not know your name by the end of the semester, there is a good chance you won't get full marks for class participation.

### Course Policies

1. Your final grade will be determined by both the quality of your work and the effort you make to achieve a high quality performance. Just because you are a senior does not mean you will automatically pass this class. If you perform below expectations, you will FAIL the class. Late assignments will not be tolerated. **If you hand in an assignment past the deadline you will receive 0 credit for it. There will be a zero tolerance policy on late assignments.**<sup>2</sup>
2. There will be NO make-up midterm exam given unless you show a valid DOCUMENTED excuse (such as doctor's note). If you are unable to take the exam because of a legitimate reason, you must tell me (or email me) **BEFORE** the exam.
3. **Please** put your computer on mute when listening. I want you to participate, so best option is to use the chat box or virtual "raise your hand" icon and then turn the mic on.
4. **Attendance is mandatory.** I will be taking attendance. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes, etc. from other students in the class. More than two (2) unexcused absences will result in the loss of a half letter grade for each additional absence above two and will result in a score of 0 for class participation. I will likely record each lecture, but please come to class—we are a small group and even online we need everyone to come and participate.
5. **Cheating and Academic Dishonesty** will **NOT** be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the full extent of university regulations. To familiarize yourself with these regulations see the University Policies (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>). All final papers will be submitted through Turnitin to check for plagiarism. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarisms please speak the to professor before you hand in your paper.

### Course Outline:

1. **Review of Econometrics.** I will spend the first few weeks of class reviewing regression methods. You will be given two on-line quizzes about this material during the first month of the semester. I plan to review about 10 chapters in the first month of the semester.
2. **Selected Journal Articles.** During the second week of classes I will handout a list of journal articles that will be read/discussed throughout the semester. Either I will lead the discussion or a student group will. As we go through the semester I will announce at least a week of ahead of time when you need to have read the next paper for the class. I may substitute, change, or add articles, but you will be given notice about this ahead of time.
3. **Stata Lessons:** I will teach you how to do statistical and regression analysis in Stata.
4. **Oral Presentations:** Throughout the semester you will be giving oral presentations regarding the progress of your research project.

---

<sup>2</sup> The ONLY legitimate excuse is a severe medical emergency, for which a doctor's note and other documentation is provided.