

ECON 4901A Course Outline

Last updated: November 4

Course objective

- Apply knowledge to a research project of your own interest.
- Public speaking, writing

What is required & important dates

- Proposal (Methodology, timeline). Before 4th week, due on **October 8**, Sun midnight via email
- Presentation: used to gather feedback from me and classmates, **November 15**, in class
- Final paper submission: 4-5 weeks after presentation, due on **December 20**, Wed midnight, hard copy in my office collection box

***13 weeks in total

Office hours (until Dec 6)

- Wed. 2:30-4:10pm #907
- Calendly scheduling page: <https://calendly.com/econ4901a/20min>
- Use software to sign up in advance. 20-min slot, priority given to first and new-comers. Be respectful: please cancel your appointment 12 hours in advance if you can't make it. This opens slots for your fellow classmates.
- We can talk about your ideas, challenges and how to get unstuck. Make sure you have put in efforts googling and thinking about it on your own. For technical questions, please be very specific.

Evaluation

***Individual-based

- My session 80%
 - 15%: attendance, participation (meeting w/ me, coming to presentations and other gatherings)
 - 25%: presentation
 - 40%: paper
- Grading criteria
 - Presentation: Be organized. I need to see you've put some thoughts into it. Be concise. No rambling, keep good timing. Be catching. Show that you care, don't be boring, it's your project.
 - Paper
 - Novelty and significance of the problem. Motivate the questions, state what is new in your paper, and describe the analysis goals clearly and precisely.
 - A data multiplier corresponding to the level of data-difficulty, e.g., the amount of work in getting new data or data cleaning.
 - Methodology: appropriate and sound. Rigor in research design (An easy benchmark: higher quality than what typically appears in journalist reporting), robustness checks, etc.
 - Interpretation of results: correct, do not over claim, acknowledge limitations.

- Writing quality: clear and concise, logical, effective visualization, following the standard academic citation practice.

General tips for research

- Easy pitfalls: the question is too grand; ignoring all possible challenges to research methodology and interpretation of results.
- Tips: be specific and feasible. Stop changing topics at some point.
- Where do I get ideas? Debate in the news, an interesting argument you encounter in class, ...