

Professor Julie Cullen

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Office hours: Mondays 11am-noon, Econ 319

## **Economics 191A: Senior Essay Seminar, Fall 2019**

### **Course goals**

This course will help you apply the tools you have learned in your core and elective coursework to do your own research (to move from being a *consumer* of research to a *producer* of research) and critically assess others' research. You will learn how to:

- present your ideas in writing and orally
- ask, research and answer a question
- listen to other people's ideas, ask insightful questions and provide useful comments/suggestions

### **Structure of the course**

This is the first quarter of a two-quarter course sequence. Grades are assigned for the full two-quarter sequence. The grade recorded at the end of the Fall quarter is IP ("in progress"). Dropping the course by the end of the ninth week in the Fall results in a grade of W. Dropping the course in the Winter quarter may result in an F (at least for the Fall).

The formal requirement of the sequence is to complete a research paper (typically 25-35 pages) by the end of the Winter quarter. The goal of the Fall quarter is to pose a viable research question, obtain the data you will use, process the data so that you know which variables are available to you, and lay out a plan to use the data to answer your question. The deliverable for the Fall is a detailed **research proposal** that: i) poses your question, ii) explains how it relates to the existing literature, iii) describes the data and variables you will use, iv) details your plan for using the data to answer your question, and v) presents any preliminary results. This proposal should be a minimum of 4 single spaced pages of text, with additional figures and tables. The proposal is due by 5pm on Friday, December 6.

Each of you will also present your proposal to the class during the last two weeks. Plan for 10 minutes for your **presentation**, with an additional 10 minutes for questions and discussion. This is an opportunity to get feedback from the entire class on your research.

**Attendance** at all scheduled class meetings is required. Active **participation** in class is also important for developing the ability to think critically.

Once you have chosen and made some progress on your topic, you should **meet with faculty members** with interests related to the topic you choose. Faculty can provide useful guidance in your research, and may also serve as future references.

## Schedule

This quarter, our reserved class meeting slot is Monday 8:00-10:50am in SEQUO 244. Some weeks we will use this time to meet as a group to cover shared material or for presentations of your research. Other weeks we will use this time for one-on-one meetings. I will also be available for one-on-one meetings during my office hours or by appointment throughout the quarter.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Activity</b>
9/30	Introductory meeting <b>Assignment:</b> Submit brief write-up of project to <a href="mailto:abarsh@ucsd.edu">abarsh@ucsd.edu</a>
10/7	Introduction to UCSD library resources led by Adele Barsh <b>Assignment:</b> Bring laptop or web-accessible device to class
10/14	Methods for identifying causal effects; Crash course in Stata <b>Assignment:</b> Read Duflo et al. (2006) pp.4-17 Watch Muralidharan “Moving Up A Gear”
10/21	One-on-one meetings in Econ 319
10/28	One-on-one meetings in Econ 319
11/4	Informal class “hangout”
11/11	No class – independent research (Veterans Day)
11/18	Informal class “hangout”
11/25	Student presentations (20 minutes each)
12/2	Student presentations (20 minutes each)
12/6	<b>Proposal due by 5pm</b> (submitted electronically and by paper to Cullen’s mailbox in Econ 207)

## Course website

Required readings/videos and other materials will be posted at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/ec191cullen/home>

This website is also accessible through Cullen’s departmental home page, via the teaching tab.