

Professor Julie Cullen

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Office hours: By appointment, request via email

Economics 191A: Senior Essay Seminar, Fall 2020

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 through empirical analysis
- listen to other people's ideas 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. By the end of the Winter quarter, you will have completed an economics academic research paper. 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 goal of the Fall quarter is to pose a viable research question, understand how it fits into the existing literature, obtain the data you will use, process the data so that you know which variables are available to you, and lay out a concrete plan to use the data to answer your question.

The written deliverable for the Fall is a ***rough draft*** 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 the estimation strategy you will use to answer your question, and v) presents any preliminary results. This draft does not have to be complete but should be structured like a standard economics research paper and have fully developed data and strategy sections. The draft should be a minimum of 4 single-spaced pages of text, with additional figures and tables.

Each of you will also record and share a 10-minute ***presentation*** of your research project. All of us will watch your presentation and provide structured peer feedback. During the last two weeks, we will meet as a group to discuss your presentations/projects.

Attendance at all scheduled class meetings is required (unless you have been excused in advance). This quarter, our reserved class meeting slot is Monday 5:00-7:50pm (PST). All meetings will be held remotely via Zoom, with the link available on the canvas course website. Some weeks we will use this time to meet as a group to cover shared material or discuss your research projects. Other weeks we will use this time for one-on-one meetings. I will also be available for one-on-one meetings by appointment throughout the quarter.

Active *participation* in class is important for developing the ability to think critically. I encourage you to have your videos on, though the decision is up to you and what you are comfortable with and what works best for your internet connection.

Finally, make sure to use this opportunity to build your network. Once you have made some progress, you should *meet with faculty members* with interests related to your topic. Faculty can provide useful guidance in your research and also serve as future references.

Schedule

Week	Dates	Activity
1	Oct 5	Group meeting Introduction to course and one another Assignment By 5pm Email a brief write-up of your project (Subject: Econ 191A) to Adele Barsh (abarsh@ucsd.edu)
2	Oct 12	Group meeting Overview of UCSD library resources led by Adele Barsh
3	Oct 19	Group meeting Methods for identifying causal effects; Crash course in Stata Assignment By 5pm Read Duflo et al. (2006) pp.4-17; Watch Muralidharan “Moving Up A Gear”
4	Oct 26	One-on-one meetings
5	Nov 2	One-on-one meetings
6	Nov 9	Group meeting Genre analysis led by the Writing Hub Assignment By 5pm Submit genre analysis activity
7	Nov 16	No meeting
8	Nov 23	No meeting
	Nov 25	Assignment By 5pm 1st round of presenters submit presentations
	Nov 29	Assignment By 5pm Submit peer evaluations of 1st round
9	Nov 30	Group meeting Discuss 1st round of presentations
	Dec 2	Assignment By 5pm 2nd round of presenters submit presentations
	Dec 6	Assignment By 5pm Submit peer evaluations of 2nd round
10	Dec 7	Group meeting Discuss 2nd round of presentations
	Dec 11	Assignment Draft due by 5pm