

Economics 100C Honors - Spring 2013

Monday 4:00-4:50pm, Sequoyah Hall 244

Professor: Mark Jacobsen (m3jacobsen@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours: Economics Building, Room 223
Tuesdays 10:30-11:30am (except 4/16) and by appointment

Overview:

This honors section accompanies Economics 100C and meets once a week in seminar format. We will discuss topics that are traditionally "economic" (for example the use and abuse of market power) and also some that are not (consider the value of clean air). As a companion to the 100 series the issues and papers we consider will be micro- rather than macro-economic, but otherwise explore a range of questions in economics.

In addition to the prerequisites in the course catalog you should be comfortable with basic statistics: there will be several applications to data and policy questions. Please feel free to talk with me if you have any questions on this.

Course structure and requirements:

The course will be organized around the readings and topics outlined below. I expect that each of you will do the required reading and come prepared with your thoughts and questions. It will not be enough to simply skim the articles quickly: you should read carefully and be prepared to discuss the authors' arguments critically.

50% of your course grade will come from participation in class and 50% from two short discussion papers (~800-1200 words, see schedule below). The ability to express your thoughts clearly in speaking and writing is essential in almost all directions you may take after UCSD: I hope this course will offer some preparation and guidance along both dimensions. Since much of your grade is from participation I expect you to attend class. If you are unable to attend a particular class please email me: missing one sometime during the quarter is ok if needed, though I will generally ask for a discussion paper in its place.

Course Schedule:

(Please check your UCSD email for the papers, reminders, and any updates.)

- April 1: Jacobsen (2013): "Fuel Economy and Safety: Vehicle Class and Driver Behavior" (American Economic Journal)
- April 8: Currie and Walker (2011): "Traffic Congestion and Infant Health: Evidence from E-Z Pass" (American Economic Journal)
- April 15: *No class this week*
- April 22: Basker (2007): "The Causes and Consequences of Wal-Mart's Growth" (Journal of Economic Perspectives)
- April 29: Boomhower and Davis (2013) "Free Riders and the High Cost of Energy Efficiency Subsidies" (working paper)

(Discussion paper 1 due by email on Thursday, May 2)

- May 6: Question chosen by class (paper announced in second week).
- May 13: Hannesson (2008): "The Exclusive Economic Zone and Economic Development in the Pacific Island Countries" (Marine Policy)
- May 20: Spar (2006): "Continuity and Change in the International Diamond Market" (Journal of Economic Perspectives)
- May 27: *No class (Memorial Day holiday)*

(Discussion paper 2 due by email on Thursday, May 30)

- June 3: Carson and Roth Tran (2009): "Discounting Behavior and Environmental Decisions" (Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics)