



## Economics 191AB: Senior Essay Seminar, Winter and Spring 2005



**Please note corrected dates below.**

Economics 191A is Part I of the Department's Senior Essay Seminar. Part II, 191B, is given in Spring Quarter. These courses are required for Economics or Management Science majors who wish to graduate with the "highest distinction" honors designation on their diploma. Both 191A and 191B must be taken to receive departmental honors. They are normally limited to students with a GPA of 3.5 or better in upper division Economics and Management Science courses.

---

**Instructor: Professor Vincent Crawford**, Economics 319 (vcrawfor@weber.ucsd.edu, 858-534-3452)

Office hours Winter and Spring quarters Wednesday 2:00-3:00 or by appointment, in Economics 319

A more printer-friendly version of this page, with the same information, is available [here \(pdf; download Adobe Acrobat Reader for pdf files\)](#).

---

The only formal requirement of Economics 191AB is to complete a well-researched 25-30 page essay on an economics topic (approved by the instructor), by a deadline near the end of Spring Quarter. But to satisfactorily complete 191A a first draft of the essay must be turned in near the end of Winter quarter. Often, the first draft contains the essay's theoretical analysis and a preliminary description of its empirical content; but other arrangements are possible, depending on the topic.

Here are examples (pdf files, posted by permission) of excellent essays by some of your 2003 and 2004 ancestors:

- [Sirka Hennig \(2003\)](#)
- [Brad Hileman \(2003\)](#)
- [Melanie Hohlfeld \(2003\)](#)



- Carolyn Cadei (2004)
  - Aaron Ezroj (2004)
  - Heidi Fischer (2004)
  - Juliane Reinecke (2004)
  - Lin Wang (2004)
- 

Your work for Economics 191A can be divided into three parts:

- (1) selecting your topic, finding sufficient reference and source material, and writing a short description of your topic, including at least three references
- (2) formulating an outline
- (3) writing a first draft of your essay

Your work for Economics 191B can also be divided into three parts:

- (1) formulating a plan for completing your essay
- (2) writing and presenting a first draft of your completed essay
- (3) writing a final draft of your completed essay

At the end of each part of Economics 191A or 191B, you will turn in your work product to date. Please provide both an electronic version (preferably .pdf or .txt) and a hard copy in my mailbox.

You should think of 191A's goal not necessarily as completing a rough draft of your full essay, but of making enough progress to write up at least half of it. You are encouraged to give me drafts for comment and ask me questions throughout the quarter, and to come to see me as often as you find it helpful. My office hours both Winter and Spring quarters are W 2:00-3:00 or by appointment.

---

Economics 191A will meet periodically, as indicated, with times selected from MW 11:00-12:20pm in Sequoyah Hall room 244. The tentative schedule (with the February 23 and 26 meetings depending on your needs and wishes) is:

Wednesday, January 5 (NO MEETING Monday, January 3): First class meeting, introduction to choosing an essay topic, finding references, and research strategies; signups for your presentations on January 24 and 26 and (only if people want to give second presentations) February 23 and 26

Wednesday, January 19 (NO MEETING): Turn in a two-page description of your topic with at least three references by 4 p.m.

Monday and Wednesday, January 24 and 26, and if necessary Monday, January 31: Class meetings for short (roughly 10 minutes) presentations and



discussions of your topics

Wednesday, February 2 (NO MEETING): Turn in an outline of your essay by 4 p.m. (preferably both electronic and hard copy)

Wednesday, February 23, and Monday, February 28: Possible class meetings (only if people want to give second presentations) for short presentations of your first drafts

Friday, March 11 (last day of Winter Quarter classes): Turn in the first draft of your essay by 4 p.m. (preferably both electronic and hard copy)

**Economics 191B will meet only on Wednesday, March 30 in Spring Quarter, at 9:00-10:20 in Sequoyah Hall 244.** Again, you are encouraged to give me drafts for comment and ask me questions throughout the quarter, and to come to see me (W 2:00-3:00 or by appointment) as often as you find it helpful. The schedule is:

Wednesday, March 30 (NO MEETING Monday, March 28): Class meeting 9:00-10:20, Sequoyah 244: getting started on the rest of your essay

Monday, April 11 (NO MEETING): Turn in a two-page description of your plan for completion by 4 p.m. (preferably both electronic and hard copy)

Friday, June 3 (last day of Spring Quarter classes): Turn in final draft of your essay by 4 p.m. (preferably both electronic and hard copy)

---

## How to Find a Topic

At the start the main problem is deciding on your topic: something original, not too small or irrelevant, but not too big and complicated. Even more important is that the topic should be something that genuinely interests you, because otherwise you will be very tired of it by the time you write your final draft! A good topic project often has two parts, the first theory and the second empirical. Areas of research can be found in the leading general economics journals and specialty journals, and in publications of the regional Federal Reserve Banks, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Brookings Institution, environmental organizations such as Resources for the Future, and so on. A simple, possible strategy is to take a good paper published six to ten years ago in a good journal and ask how well the results hold up now; or to find a good paper based on one country or data set, and extend it to another country or data set.

## Readings

The following books (on reserve in Geisel Library unless noted) may help suggest topics:

Jacqueline Brux and Janna Cowen, *Economic Issues and Policy*, 2nd edition, Cincinnati, OH: South-Western College Pub., 2002

*Economics* (periodical: in Geisel stacks at HC 101 A635), Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill, 1999-2000.

Edwin Dolan and John Goodman, *Economics of Public Policy: The Micro View*, St. Paul,

... to the Social Science Database and many useful internet sites, including **these**. See also the useful links at Harold Colson's (the Economics Librarian at Geisel Library) page, at <http://weber.ucsd.edu/~hcolson/econbib.html> .

<http://dss.ucsd.edu/~vcrawfor/econ191AB.html>

4/25/2005