**Introduction to Econometrics:  Eco 441K- Spring 2021**

**Unique Number: 34770**

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| Lab Instructor: Helen Schneider, Ph.D. |  |
| Office: 3.116 BRB | Lab Recordings: Lectures Online |
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| E-mail: h.schneider@eco.utexas.edu | or by appointment |
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| Lab TA’s: TBA |  |
| TA Office Hours: TBA |  |

**INTRODUCTION**

There are two syllabi for Eco 441K.  One describes the lecture part of the course, and the other describes the lab part of the course.  **This is the syllabus for the lab part of the course.**  Please see the syllabus for the lecture for all information related to the lecture part of the course.

**Prerequisites:** Economics 329 (Economic Statistics) with a grade of at least C-. Completion of or concurrent registration in Economics 420K (Microeconomics Theory).

**GOALS FOR THE LAB PART OF THE CLASS**

In the lab students will learn to

1. formulate a hypothesis to be tested or a research question to be answered;
2. apply the appropriate empirical model to analyze the question.
3. collect relevant data to test the hypothesis/question.
4. provide feedback and discuss the work of peers.
5. present their research findings in writing.
6. incorporate feedback from the instructor and peers into a formal research paper.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

**Required Reading***: Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach*, by Jeffrey Wooldridge (South-Western College Publishers).

**Additional Reading**: Additional required readings from sources other than the textbook will be posted on the course website (see below).

**Website:** Lab material will be on the university’s Canvas system. Lectures will be recorded on Fridays 12-1 p.m. and posted on Canvas, Lectures Online tab. All slides, readings and data files will be posted in Econometrics Lab folder. This lab will also use the Grades feature on Canvas so that students can keep track of their scores on paper assignments.

**POLICY ON STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon receipt appropriate academic adjustments for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students—Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

**SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY POLICY**

In your lab projects you must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must cite your sources. Giving credit where it’s due and adding your own discussion will result in higher grades than putting your name on someone else’s work. You must also reference any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, talk to me or professionals at the Writing Center (see below). While peer feedback and discussion are encouraged and rewarded in this lab, each student must submit their original writing. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. *All* cases of suspected plagiarism will be filed with the Dean of Students office and will receive zero credit.

**Writing Center:** I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222: <http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/>). The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate through zoom appointments. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. The consultants there work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Their services are not just for writing that has "problems." Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project.

**FLAGS**

**Independent Inquiry (II) flag**: II flag courses are designed to engage you in the process of inquiry over the course of a semester, providing you with the opportunity for independent investigation of a question, problem, or project related to your major. Your project in this course will be an empirical investigation of an economics question or economic policy question.

**Writing (WR) flag**: WR flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you will write and revise a substantial research paper in four stages. You will receive feedback from your lab instructor and TA to help you improve your writing, and you will receive peer feedback in group discussions. WR flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and personal responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This class meets these objectives through your research paper, peer feedback, and a discussion about academic integrity in the context of empirical research in economics.

**Quantitative Reasoning (QR) flag**: QR flag courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for understanding the types of quantitative arguments you will encounter in your adult and professional life. The statistical skills you will learn in this course will be useful in subsequent courses and they are marketable skills upon graduation. In addition to applying these skills in your research project, you will apply them in a series of examples, using a variety of data sets, in lecture, homework, and exams.

**EVALUATION AND GRADING OF THE LAB PART OF THE COURSE**

Note that the total for all writing assignments in the lab is 35% of your grade. The lab outline provides the relevant dates for all writing assignments. Each is due *on-line in Canvas* on the due date. Lateness at any stage results in a loss of one letter grade on that assignment.

**Short Paper**. This assignment will count for 5% of your final grade. Topic and data set for the short paper will be announced in lecture (9/4).

**Research Paper.**  To begin your independent inquiry, you will choose a research question or formulate a hypothesis that you would like to test and that is of interest to you. The paper must present relevant data and apply one econometric model presented in class to test the hypothesis and provide empirical results based on your findings. Finally, you will revise the paper and address the feedback from the instructor and your peers.

I would like you to start thinking early of a research topic. Feel free to talk to me about your topic, your sources and approaches you can take in doing your research. Due dates along the way will help guarantee progress.

Your research paper will have three stages: 1) proposal; 2) first draft; 3) final paper. The **proposal** should convey the research question you want to address, discuss the importance of your study (i.e. why it is an important public policy issue) and include some literature review. Proposal topics will be approved by instructor or by your TA prior to the due date. Proposal will be graded for writing quality only. The purpose of the proposal is to narrow down on a testable hypothesis and to motivate the study to the reader. Revised proposals become introductions to the research paper. The **first draft** shouldinclude a revised proposal, add a data section, empirical model, present empirical results and brief conclusions. The data section will provide the sources of data, discuss variables used and how they relate to the concepts that they are supposed to measure and present descriptive statistics. The empirical results section will state the estimating equation, present empirical findings in a table and discuss whether the results support or refute the hypothesis. The discussion of results should also include a statement of whether results are statistically significant and interpretation of the magnitude of the coefficients. Conclusions will explore the implications of the results, provide policy recommendations and point to future research. The revised **final paper** will address instructor comments and add the abstract and diagnostic tests. It should also acknowledge shortcomings of the data (unreliability of the source, lack of observations, imprecise variables, short time horizon, etc.) as well as the shortcomings of the paper in general (potential omitted variable bias, reverse causality, etc.).

**Grading Policy:**

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| **Requirement** | **Approximate Paper Length Without Tables** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| Short Paper | 5-7 pages | 5 |
| Proposal  First Draft  Final Paper | 3-4 pages  7-10 pages  10-15 pages | 5  15  10 |
|  |  | 35 |

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST**

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| **Date** | **Lab Topic** | **Assignments due dates and readings** |
| 1/22 | Introduction |  |
| 1/29 | Simple regression model  Short paper presentation | Sample short paper will be posted in Econometrics Lab Files folder on Canvas |
| 2/5 | Short paper discussion | I strongly encourage all students to run their short paper topics by me or your TA via email or zoom office hours |
| 2/12 | Research project discussion  Discussion of academic integrity and plagiarism | *Short paper is due* |
| 2/19 | *Continued* | Reading: Oehrlein, Paul (2009) "Determining Future Success of College Students," *Undergraduate Economic Review*, 5(1), Article 7. |
| 2/26 | Literature review and data sources discussion | *Topics should be approved by instructor or TA. This is not a graded assignment.* |
| 3/5 | Empirical model discussion | *Proposal is due* |
| 3/12 | Difference-in-Difference Models | Reading: Duong, Anthony (2016) “How Does Medical Marijuana Legalization Affect the Number of Marihuana Users? An Inclusion and Examination of Different Age Groups. *The Developing Economist*, 3(1). |
|  | SPRING BREAK |  |
| 3/26 | Proposal Feedback  Interpreting empirical results |  |
| 4/2 | Diagnostic tests | *First draft is due* |
| 4/9 | *continued* |  |
| 4/16 | First drafts feedback |  |
| 4/23 | Final paper discussion |  |
| 4/30 | Abstract discussion  Limitations section |  |
| 5/7 | Disseminating research findings | *Revised final paper is due* |

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:** No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

**Class Recordings:** Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

**COVID Caveats**: To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](https://hr.utexas.edu/current/services/occupational-health-program) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](https://hr.utexas.edu/current/services/occupational-health-program) to understand what needs to be reported.