

Introduction to Econometrics - Economics 113

Professor Alan Spearot

UC Santa Cruz

Fall 2009

Overview of the course

This course is an introduction to applying statistical techniques to economic issues. The course will cover practical methods for organizing and analyzing economic data, testing economic hypotheses, and measuring economic relationships. Regression analysis is the main empirical method, and basic statistical and probability theory is included.

I understand that this description may make the course sound difficult, or maybe even boring. It is my job to prove to you that econometrics is (1) accessible and (2) interesting and useful.

Grading and Expectations

The schedule and grading of the course is as follows:

	%	Date	Time
Computer Assignments	15	TBA	TBA
Midterms	60	Friday, October 9th	In-class
		Friday, October 23rd	In-class
		Friday, November 6th	In-class
		Friday, November 20th	In-class
Final	25	Monday, December 7th	8:00AM-11:00AM

I expect that absences will be a problem this quarter due to the flu, and thus I have changed the way in which I grade this class. There will be four midterms, each occurring during class. I will count the highest three midterm scores toward your grade. If you miss a class due to illness, emergency, or another valid excuse, this will be the midterm that you drop. If you must miss any other midterms for a valid reason, the missing points will be allocated to the final exam.

PLEASE DO NOT ATTEND CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS IF YOU FEEL ILL. Our class will barely fit in the lecture hall, and thus coming to class for any reason when you are ill risks spreading whatever you have to your classmates. Use your head, and stay home. Full lectures will be posted online this year, so if you must miss class you will be able to review the material covered via the course website.

The class will use a computer program called R to gain practical experience in econometrics. The program is available for free on the internet at www.r-project.org, and should be downloaded to your computer. If you do not own a computer, R is available in most computer labs on campus. You will use R to complete two long problem sets toward the middle and the end of the quarter.

TAs

We have three outstanding TAs to guide you through the details of the course and its material. The TAs will work through problems different from class, and treat section-specific problems as they come up. The TAs are Amrish Dongre (adongre@ucsc.edu), Xue "Stella" Liu (xl37120@ucsc.edu), and Ren Wang (rxwang@ucsc.edu). Details regarding their office hours are forthcoming.

Cheating

I will not tolerate cheating. Don't try. If you are caught, you will fail the course and be reported for academic misconduct. Possible penalties include expulsion. This happened last year in my class.

Regrades

If you feel like you have been given too few points on an assignment or exam, you may submit a regrade. However, you must use the following procedure in submitting a regrade. First, look at the answer key!!! You would be surprised how many people submit regrades without looking at the correct answer, first. After doing so, if you still feel that more points are deserved, you must write a clearly worded page or two explaining your answer, and why you think it is correct. If the TAs unanimously decide that your answer deserves more credit, I will review their conclusion and then assign points as necessary.

Book

The book for the course will be "Introductory Econometrics" by Jeffrey Wooldridge. It is available at Bay Tree, and any of the online outlets (Amazon, for example). It is fairly expensive, and will mainly be used for reference only. However, it is a very useful resource, especially if you hope to work in a field that uses any sort of data analysis. Used copies are fine, though the 3rd edition or above would be ideal. Also, avoid getting the international edition, since it is different.

Lectures will cover everything. Exam and homework material will be based on lectures.

Office hours and Final Thoughts

My office hours will be 2:00-4:00PM on Mondays. My office is 453, Engineering 2. My email is aspearot@ucsc.edu. Finally, relax and enjoy the class. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to bring them up. This course is for you to learn more than it is for me to teach. If it is not working for you, let me know, and I'll make every effort to make things better.

MSI Office Hours

There are supplemental office hours available through the MSI program. Details are forthcoming.