

Economics 475: IS-Econ Senior Seminar

Fall 2009 Course Syllabus
(Addendum to IS 475 syllabus)

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By majoring in IS-Econ you have demonstrated an understanding that the two areas are inextricably intertwined. Differences in economic conditions can explain much of the differences across countries and their political/social interactions with one another. Differences in political and social institutions can often explain, in part, differences in economic conditions.

The combined IS and Economics senior seminar is the perfect opportunity for you to exploit this very rich intersection of international political science and economics in your senior-level thesis paper.

The tutorial should not be more work for you than either the Econ senior seminar or the IS senior tutorial, but it will be different. The purpose of this document is to outline clearly the expectations in your joint senior seminar.

How Econ 475 is going to be like the IS Senior Tutorial, IS 475:

You will be attending the weekly IS senior tutorial with the straight IS majors for the following reasons:

- Presentations and class discussions with your peers are necessary components of scholarship
- The method of modeling taught in the IS senior tutorial is as relevant to Economics as it is to IS. Coming up with a topic, thinking through the cause and effect relationships you've learned in previous study, developing hypotheses etc. are all necessary components of developing an economic model.
- The due dates for your work and presentations will be set by the IS senior tutorial.
- The weights assigned to various components of the senior seminar (drafts, final paper, presentation) will be determined by the IS senior tutorial.

How Econ 475 is going to be like the Economics Senior Seminar, Econ 486:

You will be meeting with me individually before IS senior tutorial for the following reasons:

- Economic models are mathematical in presentation, so you will need to learn how to translate a verbal model into an equation.

- Testing hypotheses requires data; regression analysis and the other types of statistical analysis used in Economics research require quite a bit of data. I will help you determine the statistical analysis most appropriate for your topic. Furthermore, there are some standard places I can point you towards to find the data.
- Part of your literature review will cover the Economics literature. These must be scholarly **articles** available on EconLit.
- We will meet once as a group in early September (date TBA) to discuss how a typical paper in Economics differs from other social sciences. We will talk about approaches to integrate the two different paper styles in your work.

How this course will be different than either senior seminar:

- You will have two professors evaluating your work rather than one. The IS professor has determined the weight of each component.
- The topic you choose will involve both political science and economics (so called political economy). Depending on your topic, your research may involve slightly more political science or more economics, but it should come close to 50/50.
- My evaluation will contribute 50% of each of your grades (paper, presentation, participation).
- A note on my evaluation of your participation: Participation includes attending weekly meeting as scheduled and well-prepared. If you wait until the night before to work on your research, you will not be well-prepared and my evaluation of your participation will suffer. If you skip a scheduled meeting, your participation grade will suffer greatly.

Books (highly recommended and most should already be on hand from previous coursework):

Econometrics book (from Econ 420)

Statistics book (from Econ 290)

Development Econ book (from Econ 312 or Easterly's *The Elusive Quest for Growth*)

International Econ book (from Econ 210)

Please fill out the following questionnaire and email the responses to me before Monday, August 27.

A) When will you be available to meet with me on Thursday, Aug. 28?

Meetings will only last 20 minutes. If you are free for an entire hour, write "11 to 12" and I'll give you one of the three slots during that hour, otherwise put down the exact times (i.e. 11, 11:20, or 11:40). **Please indicate 3 times you will be available amongst the following:**

11-12 (last slot is 11:40-12)

1:00-4:00 (last slot is 3:40-4:00)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

B) Which of the following courses have you taken already? In which are you enrolled this semester?

	Already taken	Taking this semester
International Economics		
Development Economics		
Statistics		
Econometrics		
Health Economics		
Labor Economics		

C) The following Excel skills, taught in Econ 290, are necessary to do research in Economics:

- 1) Make a histogram or scatter plot using Excel
- 2) Find mean, variance
- 3) Do a t-test, z-test
- 4) Do a Chi-squared test
- 5) Run a regression

Are any of these tasks are unfamiliar? _____ If "yes," do you have a Statistics textbook or know where you can get one? _____.

Do you know STATA or a similar statistics program? _____