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American University of Central Asia
Economics Department

Economic Research Methods ECO-309

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Course Objectives and Description: The goal of this course is to introduce students to doing economic research. Specifically, students will be guided along the process of researching the literature on a specific topic, posing a well-defined research question and applying econometric techniques to answer the question in the form of a research paper.

The course is not designed to teach you empirical or theoretical tools. Rather, the idea is to help students apply the tools that they already have (e.g., your knowledge of micro, macro, or econometrics) and develop the skills necessary to come up with a well-posed research topic, develop a framework to analyze the question and/or bring data to support or counter hypothesis.

Prerequisite: Success in this course will require you to have a solid background in intermediate Microeconomics, intermediate Macroeconomics, and basic Econometrics. It is also important that you are independent, self-disciplined, and motivated enough to see a paper through.

Reading:

Dudenhefer, Paul, 2009. *A Guide to Writing in Economics*. Unpublished, Duke University

Wooldridge, Jeffrey. *Introductory Econometrics. A Modern Approach. 4th Edition.*, South-Western, Cengage Learning, 2009

Additional handouts and course materials will be available on web-resources designated for the course.

Grading Information:

Participation in discussion of classmates' research	throughout the course	10%
Presentation of research proposals for individual research papers	week 5,6	15%
Presentation of thesis reports (group work)	week 7	15%
Presentation of preliminary results of individual research papers	week 10	15%
Final Presentation of individual research papers	week 13,14	15%
Final Paper	week 15	30%

Course requirements:

Participation in Discussion of Classmates' Research

By registering for this course, students have made a commitment to participate in the course classes as well as other course related activities. Participation includes much more than being able to answer questions: students are expected to be engaged in and support class discussions about other students' topics and papers. Passive attendance is not credited.

Group work

Students will have to do a group work. In particular, each group will have to write a report (not to exceed 5 pages and be no less than 3 pages) on the assigned thesis paper from previous years and make a presentation.

Presentation of individual research papers

As far as individual research papers are concerned, students are required to deliver three presentations throughout the course: presentation of research proposal, preliminary results and final research project. All presentations should be well prepared and illustrate your knowledge and understanding of standards and requirements applicable to writing academic papers that were discussed during lectures. The length of presentations should be around 10-15 minutes. More detailed guidelines for presentations will be provided further in the semester. Failure to meet requirements will be penalized.

Students should highlight the main findings and arguments, and reveal how it relates to the issues discussed. Within seminars students are expected to discuss other students' papers - they are responsible for generating questions to guide seminars' discussions.

The deadlines for papers are indicated in the schedule below. Late papers will not be accepted.

Individual research papers

Students are expected to meet requirements of elementary (the simplest) research projects with formulating hypotheses, analyzing scientific literature and data processing with econometrical models, and reporting results in written form. Research papers must be a minimum of ten pages in length but they are to be no longer than twenty pages (reference list, illustrations, tables and graphs are not counted in this page range). Papers are to be formatted according to the following criterion: computer typed with Times New Roman 12-piont font and 1.5-spaced with 1-inch margins. More detailed guidelines for papers will be provided further in the semester.

Grading

The following grading scale (subject to change) will be used:
A= 90+
A-=85-89
B+=80-84
B= 76-80
B-=72-76
C+=68-71
C=64-67
C-=60-63
D+=56-59
D=53-55
D-=50-52
F<50

Academic Dishonesty
Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free of fraud and deception and is an educational objective of the American University of Central Asia. It includes, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information and citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, tampering with the academic work of another student, and lying to the instructor. Please refer to the University's Undergraduate Catalog 2008-20010 for additional information on Honor Code, which is also available on AUCA website. There is no tolerance policy toward academic dishonesty in this course.

Anyone found to be academically dishonest is subject to receiving an "F" for the course.

<u>Plagiarism</u> is a serious issue in academic settings. There is a general rule for avoiding plagiarism: never attempt to pass off another's work as your own. More specific guidelines are:

- Do not copy words from any source without quoting and citing that source. The quotation should be reproduced in the exact manner in which the quote is taken.
- Do not use the ideas, concepts or opinions from any source without citing that source. Included are key terms, technical concepts and original views.
- Paraphrasing is acceptable; however, one must take care to cite the source and not misrepresent the original thesis. Paraphrasing often is the area in which most charges of plagiarism result.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES (subject to change)

Dates	Topics	Reading and homework assignment
	Course description; introduction to economic research; types of writing in economics; review of in-text citation and referencing rules and styles, avoiding plagiarism; identifying and narrowing topic; thesis statements.	Dudenhefer pp. 7-32; Handouts and web resources http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/
	Writing abstract and introductions to economics papers; identifying materials for a literature review; writing a literature review. Empirical economics paper: the organization and composition of empirical papers; describing data and sources; describing model, estimation methods and techniques; reporting and interpreting results and findings; locating data.	Dudenhefer pp. 35-64, handouts.
By the end of the second week of classes students split into 10 groups. Each group is assigned a thesis paper (from previous years)		
	Empirical economics paper: the organization and composition of empirical papers; describing data and sources; describing model, estimation methods and techniques; reporting and interpreting results and findings; locating statistical data.	Dudenhefer pp. 35-64, Handouts.
	Presentation of research proposals	**Research proposals are due on … by 17:00**
	Econometric Analysis. Review of Basic Statistical Concepts. Measures of Central Tendency; Guidelines on Performing Econometric Analysis	Wooldridge, Appendices B and C; Wooldridge, Chapter 19
	Presentation of thesis reports	**Thesis reports are due on** (hand in during the class)
	Review of Linear Regression Models: OLS vs GLS. Review of basics of E-views econometrics software	Corresponding chapter from Wooldridge, lecture notes/handouts
	Multiple regression analysis: Inference, hypothesis testing, confidence intervals	Corresponding chapter from Wooldridge, lecture notes/handouts
	Presentation of preliminary results	
	Introduction to Simple Panel Data Models and their analysis using E-views	Corresponding chapter from Wooldridge, lecture notes/handouts
	Introduction to Time Series Models and their analysis using E-views	Corresponding chapter from Wooldridge, lecture notes/handouts
	Presentation of research projects	
	Presentation of research projects	
	Research papers should be submitted by 17:00 on	