

Economics 690-GW
Senior Seminar: Economic Inquiry and Analysis
Spring 2022

Prof: Sudip Chattopadhyay
Office: N/A
E-mail: sudip@sfsu.edu
iLearn Site: ilearn.sfsu.edu

Class/Lab time Section 1 (IN CLASS): M: 4:00 pm to 6:45 pm
Class/Lab time Section 2 (ZOOM): M: 9:30am to 12:15pm
Office Hours (ZOOM): W (11:00 am – 3:00 pm)

1. Course Objective: Applications of economic intuitions, tools, and concepts are far and wide. The most important among these applications is perhaps framing policies at the local, state, and national levels of the government and also for efficient negotiation among nations for the purpose of international trading of goods and services and usage of common resources. Framing of such policies has far reaching implications in economic growth, quality of life, the level of unemployment, population health, state of the natural environment, disparities and inequities in access to education and training, healthcare, and public services, to name a few. The purpose of this course is to help students to focus on a specific economic topic that has direct policy relevance to the local, state, national, or the global economy, and train them to apply economic intuitions, tools, and concepts to address issues through systematic scientific inquiry. This course intends to give students an experience that is built around the training they have received so far in theoretical economics and its tools and applications to carry out systematic scientific inquiry, using social and economic data.

1A. Student Learning Outcome: By the end of the course, students will have an in-depth experience and skills in the following areas:

<i>Analytical Skill:</i>	Identifying economic/policy issues, researching the issues in a scientifically organized way.
<i>Quantitative Skills:</i>	Ability to collect, compile relevant socioeconomic data from multiple sources.
<i>Analytical Skills:</i>	Ability to seek out appropriate econometric methodologies to analyze data.
<i>Oral and Written Communication Skills:</i>	Ability to bring out verbally and in writing major findings with a solid understanding of the strengths and limitations of the research.

2. Students' Role: This course will involve extensive research and significant writing. Although, research topic will be identified by the instructor, the course will essentially be a student driven course. A satisfactory performance of the course will crucially depend on students' involvement in research, which will include relevant literature search, gathering relevant socioeconomic data for the inquiry, choosing empirical econometric/statistical models appropriate for the data to address the economic issues, systematically attacking policy issues, describing the issues in a layman's term, and finally, presenting findings in high quality writing. Commitment to engage in focused research in and outside of class and regular attendance in class (for Section 1 students) and at the Zoom session (for Section 2 students) and frequent one-on-one communications with the instructor via Zoom can go a long way in performing well in the course.

3. Instructor's Role: The course is not a typical lecture-based course. However, as an instructor, I will provide as much guidance and feed-back as possible from time-to-time with regard to sources of research materials and how best the specific research topic can be addressed. I will also discuss on various occasions, the framework around which the research needs to be carried out.

For the most part, this course is intended to facilitate student-driven economic inquiry. However, in order to achieve this goal, students must have a model to follow to successfully carry out such an inquiry. Therefore, the course is divided into two important components. The **first component** involves experiencing the step-by-step process of systematic economic inquiry that is already available in a recently completed/published research. This includes reading two existing research papers, familiarizing with the key policy issues in those papers, understanding the details of the data involved, familiarizing with the key econometric/statistical models adopted in the papers, replicating the empirical model presented in the papers by utilizing relevant data, and finally, writing two separate summary reports highlighting the findings of the papers and summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the research.

The **second component** is the natural extension of the first, in that it will be a student-driven new research (I will provide to all students the same topic of research) with a series of steps in systematic economic inquiry in line with the completed/published research projects in which students are exposed in the first component.

4. Course Format:

(Component – 1; Previously published research): Experiencing the steps in systematic scientific inquiry through exiting research. Students must thoroughly read two recently published research papers. Students will be evaluated for this component as follows:

- Clearly bringing out the key economic/policy issues discussed in the two papers.
- Explaining the key empirical models adopted in the papers.
- Replicating the empirical model presented in the papers by utilizing the relevant data.
- Writing two separate summary reports highlighting the findings of the papers and summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the research.

(Component – 2); Student-driven research): Engaging in self-initiated, systematic scientific inquiry with a focus on a specific economic/policy topic (I will provide to all students the same topic of research). Students will be evaluated for this component as follows:

- Clearly bringing out the key economic/policy issues a student would like to address.
- Identifying the data needs for the study, identifying sources of data, and collecting/compiling the relevant data.
- Formulating the empirical model and estimating an appropriate econometric model to address the issues in question.
- Identifying the key findings.
- Writing out the project report as a full-length research paper. It must involve a first draft at an appropriate stage to be announced by the instructor. Final draft will follow once the instructor gives a go ahead after a satisfactory first draft. The final draft must contain a full-length report with an appropriate title. The report must contain multiple sections with appropriate section titles, starting from “Introduction” to “Conclusion”.

5. Course Prerequisites: The prerequisites for this course are:

Econ 301
Econ 302
Econ 312

6. Statistical/Econometric Software for Data Analysis: This course will utilize the latest available STATA software for all purposes of empirical modeling and data analysis. If you think your training in STATA is not adequate enough, you must receive additional training from outside of class in order to ensure that your research experience in the course is smooth and uninterrupted.

7. Class Attendance: Overall course grade will significantly depend on regular class attendance (classroom attendance for section 1 students) via Zoom (for section 2 students). Out of a total of 250 points, the details of which will be laid out next, **50 points will be assigned to class attendance**. Class attendance will be taken during class meetings before the end of class. Students are allowed to miss a maximum of two (2) class meetings. Over and beyond the permissible number of days of absence, 10 points will be deducted for each day of absence.

8. Course Structure and Evaluation Rubric: Course performance evaluation will be based on the combined performance in Component – 1 and Component – 2 as follows:

Component – 1 (100 points: to be completed by Tuesday, March 15)

- Replicating the empirical model presented in the two papers.
(25 points each paper)
- Writing a summary report highlighting the key policy issues and findings.
(25 points each paper)

Component – 2 (100 points: to be completed by Monday, May 16)

- Two-Page Completed Research Project Proposal (due on or before Wednesday, Wednesday, **Tuesday April 5**).
(25 points)
- Data Collection Initiative and Empirical Analysis.
(25 points)
- Ten-Page Draft Written Report with all tables and charts (due on Monday, **May 16**).
(50 points)

Class Attendance (50 points)

Over and beyond the permissible number of days of absence, 10 points will be deducted for each day of absence.

9. Course Grades:

Score (Total = 250 points)	Grade
95% or better	A
90% - less than 95%	A-
85% – less than 90%	B+
80% – less than 85%	B
75% – less than 80%	C+
70% – less than 75%	C
65% – less than 70%	NC
60\$ – less than 65%	NC
Below 60%	NC

10. Disability access

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The [Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC)] is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The [DPRC] is located in the [Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email (dprc@sfsu.edu)."
(<http://www.sfsu.edu/~dprc/>)

11. Student disclosures of sexual violence .

SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the [Dean of Students]. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact:

[The SAFE Place - (415) 338-2208; http://www.sfsu.edu/~safe_plc/]

[Counseling and Psychological Services Center - (415) 338-2208; <http://psyservs.sfsu.edu/>]

12. San Francisco State University College of Business Undergraduate Academic Standards

San Francisco State University College of Business Undergraduate Academic Standards San Francisco State University College of Business (SF State CoB) regards incidents of academic misconduct as serious matters. The following explains what academic misconduct is and outlines the consequences of academic misconduct.

A. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is defined as follows:

1. Cheating: Any unauthorized attempt to offer or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise (e.g., an examination or class exercise); assuming another student's identity with intent to provide an advantage for the student; copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other evaluation instrument; submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of either course.
2. Plagiarism: The unauthorized use (i.e., representing as one's own work) or reproduction or close imitation of original creations (ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof; or artistic/scholarly works such as computer programs, photographs, or similar works) of another author (person, group, organization, including anonymous authors) without due acknowledgment (accepted standards of citation or reference of the original source of the used or quoted content).

3. Fabrication: The distortion of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise or altering grading or grading instructions. 4. Deception: Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise—e.g., giving a false excuse for missing a deadline, falsely claiming to have submitted work, or submitting false information regarding internships.

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B. Disciplinary Sanctions

Two major types of sanctions may be imposed for any academic misconduct: Academic and Administrative. Academic sanctions are actions concerned with the coursework and grades which are the jurisdiction of the instructor. Administrative sanctions are related to a student's status on campus and are governed by the Office of Student Conduct (OSC). The imposition of one form of sanction will not rule out the imposition of the other.

1. Academic Sanctions: Upon verification of academic misconduct by personal observation and/or documentation, an instructor reserves the right to take one or more of the following academic actions:

- i. Reprimand: A verbal or written notification of unacceptable behavior, violating the student honor code. Reprimand may be considered for any academic misconduct at the discretion of an instructor.
- ii. Modification of Grade: A student may be failed in the evaluation instrument (assignment or exam), may receive a reduced course grade, or may fail the course.

2. Administrative Sanctions: Academic integrity is essential to the educational process. Traditional academic practices require that faculty members address cases of academic dishonesty in the classroom. Executive Order 1078, Article III, K, Cases Involving Academic Dishonesty, insists that, in addition, CSU faculty members report any infractions to a central location so that a student can be held accountable for multiple academic violations and the campus can recognize any patterns of misconduct. Cases of academic dishonesty for both cheating and plagiarism should be reported to their respective department chairs who should then report it to the Associate Dean or designee of the College (e.g., Assistant Dean). The Associate Dean or designee will then instruct the faculty member to complete the Confidential Academic Dishonesty Reporting Form housed within the Faculty Resources section on the OSC website. The form, which goes directly to the OSC, will ask for the following information: names of students, SFSU ID #s, date of incident, class name/number/section, instructor's contact information, type of incident—cheating or plagiarism, etc.

13. Health & Safety Commitments

Your health and safety are our paramount concern at SF State. We ask every member of our campus community to join a pledge to make and follow plans to keep fellow students, faculty, and staff safe and well. Feeling confident, safe and well will help you focus on your academic success. To participate in this class, all students are asked expected to:

- **stay informed** on the most up-to-date information related to SF State's COVID-19 response and Campus Comeback plan
- **plan ahead** for possible class disruptions due to COVID-19 or other unexpected events, such as unhealthy air quality caused by smoke
- **take care of yourself and others** by staying home when you aren't feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, and
- **follow all required health and safety guidelines**, including verifying your proof of vaccination or exemption status before coming to class; and wearing a multilayered mask

over your nose and mouth at all times when indoors on campus; and wash your hands as often as possible (i.e. soap and water, hand sanitizer).

For more information about SF State's response to COVID-19 and how you can keep yourself and others safe and well, visit the [Campus Comeback](#) Website. To plan for how you will maintain your academic success when unexpected events disrupt regular teaching and learning activities, follow the information on the course syllabus and consult the [Keep Learning guide](#).