

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Department of Economics

Proseminar, ECON 198W.11

Fall 2008

Thursday 5:10-7:00 pm, Gov 325

PROFESSOR: Arun Malik (Office Hours: W 4:30-6:00 pm, Th 3:00-4:30 , and by appointment,
Gov 305, Tel. 994-5471, amalik@gwu.edu)

TEXTBOOK: Steven A. Greenlaw, *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying out
Economic Research*, Houghton Mifflin, 2006

COURSE DESCRIPTION. This course is unlike any other economics course you have had. Its primary purpose is to give you experience conducting economic research and presenting it. The ultimate product is a major research paper. In the course of preparing this paper, you will be required to write a draft paper and present it to the class; in addition, you will be expected to read and critique draft papers written by your classmates, as well as other research papers.

The prospect of conducting economic research and writing a major research paper is likely to be a daunting one for many of you. To help you in the process, and to ensure that you make steady progress over the course of the semester, a number of smaller assignments related to the paper will be required during the semester. These assignments will count towards your final grade.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING. The assignments, and the weights attached to each, are given below.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Initial Prospectus	10/2	5%
Initial Literature Review	10/16	10%
First Draft	11/6	10%
Class Presentation	11/20, 12/4, 12/9	10%
Final Paper	12/11	50%
Class Participation		15%

The initial prospectus describes your proposed topic and contains a basic outline of the paper; it should be least two pages in length including the outline. The initial literature review will survey at least three papers/ reports that are closely related to your topic. Your class participation score will reflect a number of factors, including: your attendance record, the quality of your participation in class, the quality of the comments/criticism of the research papers you are required to read, your timeliness in handing in assignments, and your record of keeping appointments with me (see below).

In addition to the above assignments, each of you will be required to meet with me individually at least three times during the course of the semester. You must meet with me for the first time during the week of 9/8 or 9/15. A meeting sign up sheet will be circulated in class on 9/4. The timings of the other two required meetings will be specified later in the semester.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Students are required to adhere to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Plagiarism in any form is a violation of this Code. Examples of plagiarism include: buying or borrowing a paper; copying a paper entirely or in part from any source; summarizing a source without adequate citation; using thoughts (including wording) belonging to someone else without citation, etc. It is also a violation of the Code if the research paper has been used in its entirety in another class. (A previous paper of yours may be the basis for further research, but you must discuss this with me in advance). A violation of the Code results in a grade of F, notification of the Office of Academic Integrity, and a possible hearing before the Academic Integrity Council.

A tentative outline for the course and required readings from the textbook is provided below.

Sept. 4	Introduction, Administrative Matters, Tips on Selecting a Topic (Chapters 1 and 2)
Sept. 11	Researching Economic Literature and Sources; meet at Gelman Library, room TBA (Chapter 3)
Sept. 18	Good and Bad Proseminar Papers—you will be asked to read a few (old) proseminar papers before class and will discuss their strengths and weaknesses (Chapter 6)
Sept. 25	No class (Chapter 7)
October 2	Discussion of Provisional Topic—be prepared to discuss your provisional topic in class, bring enough copies of your initial prospectus for everyone
October 9	Discussion of Provisional Topic—be prepared to discuss your provisional topic in class, bring enough copies of your initial prospectus for everyone
October 16	Theorizing and Research Design (Chapters 7 and 10)
October 23	Writing an Economic Research Paper (Chapters 4, 5, and 12 pp. 232-249)
October 30	TBA
November 6	TBA
November 13	Presenting and Discussing Economic Research (Chapter 12, pp. 250-259)
November 20	Student Presentations
November 27	Thanksgiving Break—no class
December 4	Student Presentations
December 9	Student Presentations (class held on designated make-up day, a Tuesday)