Objective

The objective of this course is to provide you with a number of tools for conducting empirical research in economics, and to use these tools for a major research paper to be submitted at the end of the course. The focus of the course will be on empirical methods for cross-sectional and panel data. You are strongly encouraged to choose a research topic in which you will have the opportunity to apply in practice the methods learned in class. While these methods are typically used in applied microeconomics (labour economics, public economics, economic development, industrial organization, international trade, etc.), students are free to choose the topic they want to work on, provided that it involves the use of (preferably) cross-section or panel data.

Evaluation

Exam: 30%
Class presentation: 20%
Empirical paper: 50%

Important dates

Lectures: There will be ten two-hour lectures during the month of May, starting on Monday May 7th. The lectures will take place from 10am to 12 noon in room Iona 633. A detailed schedule is provided below.

Exam: The (two hours) exam will be on Friday, June 1st.

Student presentations: Students will present a preliminary version of their project in the weeks of June 4-8 and June 11-15.

Final paper submission: The deadline for submission of the final version of the paper is Friday August 3rd.

Other information

A detailed description of the paper project is available on my website (teaching tab).
Office hours

My office hours are on Monday and Wednesday from 2 pm to 4 pm throughout the semester (May, June and July).

Teaching Assistant

Nicolas Franz-Pattillo is the TA for the class. His office hours are from 12 noon to 2pm on Tuesday in IONA 434.

Reading list

The lectures will cover a variety of material from books and articles. A set of lecture notes will be made available on my website (teaching tab) prior to each lecture. Most of the themes covered in class are discussed in more detail in the following book by Jeff Wooldridge:


More standard econometric texts such as Greene are also a useful reference:


You may also find the “Mostly Harmless Econometrics” book by Angrist and Pischke interesting and useful. The book is not a standard textbook, and is rather aimed at helping applied researchers use modern econometric methods in the simplest and most sensible way. Those of you who plan to keep doing empirical research in the future should definitely consider acquiring a copy.

Class schedule

Lectures will be held from 10 am to 12 noon in Iona 633 on different days depending on the week:

Lecture 1, Monday May 7: Introduction

Lecture 2, Tuesday May 8: IV and Two-Stage least squares

Lecture 3, Wednesday May 9: Heteroskedasticity and clustering

Lecture 4, Monday May 14: Panel data 1

Lecture 5, Tuesday May 15: Panel data 2

Lecture 6, Wednesday May 16: Discrete choice models 1

Lecture 7, Tuesday May 22: Discrete choice models 2

Lecture 8, Wednesday May 23: Measurement error

Lecture 9, Monday May 28: Distributional methods

Lecture 10, Tuesday May 29: Regression discontinuity

Exam: Friday, June 1.

Student presentations: Weeks of June 4-8 and June 11-15.

Deadline for final paper submission: Friday, August 3.