

***ECONOMICS 145***  
***ECONOMIC RESEARCH METHODS***  
***COURSE SYLLABUS***

This course covers the basic steps and process of conducting applied economic research. This includes the selection of topic, literature review and survey, selection of research method and approach, formulation of hypothesis, testing of hypothesis using statistical analysis, and summarizing results. You will organize and complete the research project in stages.

Course objectives include: In addition to learning well the topics of the course as stated above, applying economic theory to real world problems and concerns, learning the vast array of information available to economists over the Internet and in the library, learning where resources and data can be located, using statistical methods to analyze and evaluate the application of economic theory and reasoning, and gaining an appreciation for the value of economic reasoning and research, while also recognizing the limitations of its application. You will also learn to write an effective research paper and be able to effectively present it to your fellow students and faculty in economics.

**Prerequisites:** Economics 100A, 100B, 140, and a passing score on the WPE. You must also be a graduating senior in economics.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Greenlaw, S., *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economics Research*, South-Western Cengage Learning. ***This is a very useful text.***

I placed on Reserve four books containing many short articles on various economics issues so that you may use to get research ideas for your project. These books are: *Economics Is Everywhere*, *Real World Globalization*, *The Economics of Public Issues*, and *Current Economic Issues*. You may also wish to look at *Freakonomics* (not on Reserve). I will also provide you with many research ideas.

Additionally, on Reserve (under my name and Econ 141) are perhaps three copies of the splendid text, *Using Econometrics* by Studenmund. I strongly suggest you review this text as needed.

## SUGGESTED REGULAR READING:

The Wall Street Journal and/or other business and economics news press.

See <https://r.wsj.com/PROFd5c5> (for superb discount on subscription of *WSJ* \$4-\$10 per month)

## RECOMMENDED READING:

Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* and Ursula LeGuin's *The Dispossessed* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

## APPROXIMATE GRADING BASIS:

Class Participation	15%
Assignments (1-6)	60%
Final Paper	20%
Final Presentation	5%

It is strongly advised, required and expected you attend each class meeting and be engaged with the material. Otherwise, you will not be successful in this course. It is expected you will be well prepared for each class meeting by reading the relevant material before attending the class meeting. You should review your notes and readings after each class. You will be expected to **participate** in and **contribute** to class discussion. 'Class Participation' includes attendance, attentiveness, discussion, and in-class presentations regarding the progress of your research. This course is somewhat of an independent study. Class meetings will consist of lectures, individual meetings, discussion, student presentations, and lab work. Engaging in discussion and explaining your work improves its quality. Procrastination is irrational and futile. Begin with your project today and work on some aspect of it everyday. Find enjoyment in doing so. ***Please be aware a certain number of absences will mean repeating the course in another semester. Also poor work performance on early assignments, resulting in low number of accumulated points earned, will also likely mean repeating the course in another semester.***

## TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

	Readings	Topics
Week 1	Grennlaw Chpts. 1&2	Intro and overview

*(Holiday--no class meeting but read assignment above)*

**ON Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> WE MEET in LIBRARY ROOM 0136 (Lower Level) for an extremely useful and important ‘tour’ of library resources. This class meeting is absolutely mandatory. And absolutely do not be late! And please be diligent in your attentiveness.**

Week 2	Greenlaw Chpt. 3	Survey literature, library resources
Week 3	Greenlaw Chpt. 6	Critical reading
Week 4	Greenlaw Chpt. 4	Writing in research
Week 5	Greenlaw Chpt. 5	More on effective writing
Week 6	Greenlaw Chpts. 7&8	Conceptualizing the research, sources of data
Week 7	Greenlaw Chpt. 9	Examining the data
Week 8	Greenlaw Chpt. 10	Statistical methods, hypothesis testing
Week 9	Greenlaw Chpt 11 (And potential handouts)	Regression method
Week 10	Greenlaw Chpt 11 (And potential handouts)	Regression method
<b><i>Spring Recess – No Classes: March 30<sup>th</sup> to April 3<sup>rd</sup></i></b>		
Week 11	Greenlaw Chpt 11 (And potential handouts)	Regression method
Week 12	Greenlaw Chpt. 12	Communicating the results
Week 13	continuation of our work product	Work diligently on the paper and presentation
Week 14	<b>Practice presentations</b>	Have Power Points prepared

**Week 15: May 4<sup>th</sup> Presentations to faculty group, class, other students and attendees. Presumably, as in past, to be held in a room in the Student Union**  
*Presenters dress ‘Business.’ Non-presenters dress at least ‘Business Casual.’ Room # to be announced later. More discussion concerning presentations will be given.*

**May 11<sup>th</sup> Monday (5:15pm)** Discussion especially re the presentations, concluding remarks and farewells, departmental paperwork, and **Final Papers Due**

**Assignments:**

You will complete your project in a number of stages. You will submit a hard copy of each assignment. You will keep all assignments in a folder. Upon completion of each assignment, you place it in the folder and turn in the entire folder. Do not remove the returned assignments from this folder. This is your portfolio. You submit your entire portfolio. **Every day the assignment is late will be a 25 percent deduction in your grade.** The assignments are due at the beginning of class. Otherwise, it will be considered late. (*Of course, you will be on time for each class meeting.*) **Make sure to include an updated list of references for each assignment. You cite these references at the end of sentences or by including the date of the work after mentioning the author by the last name.**

**Examples:**

*The PASOK government fostered economic development by improving income distribution (Jouganatos, 1992).*

*Jouganatos (1992) found that the PASOK government fostered economic development by improving income distribution.*

You will receive a handout regarding writing formats during the library visit on Jan 30<sup>th</sup> and I will have sent you a handout on the ASA writing format. The library resources have more information concerning writing formats. **All assignments to be turned in hard copy at class.**

Assignment 1: One-page minimum (double-space, 12 point font) prospectus (proposal) of your research. Brief presentation. **Due Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>.**

Assignment 2: Three-page minimum relevant literature review. Brief presentation. **Due March 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Assignment 3: Two-page minimum discussion of your proposed methodology and model, including the identification of relevant data sources. The discussion should include the formulation of the hypothesis to be tested. Brief presentation. **Due March 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

Assignment 4: Two-page minimum interpretation and analysis of data and summary statistics, including charts and tables. Brief presentation. **Due April 13<sup>th</sup>.**

Assignment 5: An introduction and conclusion (one-page minimum each) and a one-paragraph abstract. You may also include an entire draft of your research report. Brief presentation. **Due April 20<sup>th</sup>.**

Assignment 6: Printed power point presentation, two slides per page in black and white. Practice presentation with Power Point slides 8-10 minutes. **Due April 27<sup>th</sup>.**

**Presentations (no more than 8 min) to faculty committee and others – room # to be announced at later date. Presumably, they will take place on May 4<sup>th</sup> in a room at the Student Union.**

**Final Paper: Due on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 5:15 pm. Please note from above, we need to meet during finals week to take of several matters. *Please turn in hard copy and electronic copy.***

**OFFICE HOURS: Mon & Wed 5:00–5:45, Thurs 4:15–6:30 & BY APPT.**

**OFFICE: Tahoe 2037**

**PHONE: 278-7124**

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Please do not hesitate contacting me!

**All students are expected to adhere to the University Student Code of Conduct outlined in the *CSUS University Policy Manual*. If you have questions regarding plagiarism and the appropriate way to give credit to sources in any work you submit, review the *Policy Manual* or confer with the instructor. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated, will be reported to Judicial Affairs, and will result in a failing grade. Please read the policy carefully in the college catalogue.**

**Student Tutorial on how not to plagiarize <http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>**

**You will find it useful to visit the Writing Center <http://www.csus.edu/writingcenter>**

**Please have your cell phones turned off while in lecture. No texting while in class! (Even before class starts, no texting. When I walk in to the room, I expect no cell phone usage or texting. Instead, you should be reviewing the material, notes, or discussing the material with students.)**

Make good use of your time. These rules/expectations are meant to help you. I want you to be able to enjoy the material and become enriched. This requires your focus and preparation. Being concerned with texting, emails, cell phone calls will diminish your focus and attentiveness and increase your anxiety.

Please read “A Tough-Love Manifesto for Professors” written by Thomas Benton: ‘Google the article title or author and you will find it easily.

**Please check you're your saclink email account daily. I will send you messages and attachments. Your other faculty and university administration may as well.**