

ECON 599 – Methods and Practice in Development Economics: Applied Theory, Structural Estimation, and Experimental Design

Instructor: Anant Nyshadham

Time: W 10:00 – 12:50

Class Location: KAP 319

Contact Information: nyshadha@usc.edu

Course description:

The objective of this course is to review the state of the art in the development field with respect to applied theory, structural estimation procedures, and experimental design. We will review the latest papers from the field exemplifying these approaches and then practice applying these approaches in paper topics of the students' choosing. The development of these papers will be guided by periodic presentations and group discussions.

Learning objectives:

This course is open to PhD students wishing to learn about the frontier of topics, methods, and practices in the field of economic development. The objective is to learn how to identify open questions in strands of literature, construct applied theoretical frameworks, design and implement defensible identification strategies, and contextually interpret results.

Prerequisites: ECON 511; ECON 641 AND ECON 642 recommended

Course notes: Grading type is letter grade

Grading: students are expected to attend all sessions and to write a term paper.

Participation 15%

Term paper 85%

Description of assignments: The purpose of the term paper is either to write a motivated literature review on a selected topic or to start writing a research paper that will be a chapter of your dissertation. The term paper is due the last day of the semester.

Readings: The course is self-contained and material will be posted online at <http://www.anantnyshadham.com/teaching.html>. Readings will include recently published articles and working paper drafts on various topics in economic development. The topics explored are varied and listed below

Course schedule

August 27

Introduction

Student Groups

September 3 (Reschedule)

Review of Reduced-Form Estimation Techniques

Optional Reading: Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*, Second Edition, MIT Press

September 10 – No class

September 17

Differencing

Example Paper: “Salt Iodization and the Enfranchisement of the American Worker”

http://www.anantnyshadham.com/storage/MortonSalt_body_may2014.pdf

September 24

In-class presentations

October 1

Instrumental Variables

Example Paper: “Returns to Treatment in the Formal Health Care Sector: Evidence from Tanzania”

http://www.anantnyshadham.com/storage/AN_HCChoice_Jun2014.pdf

October 8

In-class presentations

October 15

Regression Discontinuity

Example Paper: “Describing the Marginal Enrollee: Merit-Based Tuition Subsidies Revisited”

http://www.anantnyshadham.com/storage/Nyshadham_MargEnr_nov2013.pdf

October 22 & 29

Structural Estimation & Extremum Estimators

Example Paper: “Learning about Comparative Advantage: Evidence from Thailand”

http://www.anantnyshadham.com/storage/Nyshadham_DCRC_0214.pdf

November 5

In-class presentations

November 12
Present paper ideas

November 19
Workshop paper ideas in class

November 26 – No class

December 3
Term papers due
In-class presentations

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:
http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Information on intellectual property at USC is available at: <http://usc.edu/academe/acsen/issues/ipr/index.html>.

