

1-2014

ECNS 494.01: Senior Seminar

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The University of Montana
Senior Seminar-ECNS 494
Spring 2014

SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Kellenberg
CLASS HOURS: 11:10AM-12:30 PM, TTh
CLASS LOCATION: MCG 237
OFFICE HOURS: TTh 1:30-2:30 PM (or by appointment)
OFFICE LOCATION: Liberal Arts 408A
TELEPHONE: 243-5612
EMAIL: Derek.Kellenberg@mso.umt.edu

Note: The following syllabus defines the rules and important dates for the semester. However, I reserve the right to make changes if the need arises.

Prerequisite: Senior status and an Economics major.

General Description: This course is the capstone course for economics majors where students will integrate their knowledge and skills to analyze and discuss current economic topics. This semester we will be reading and discussing papers by seven of the more recent John Bates Clark Medal winners. The reading list and schedule are outlined below. The course is designed to be a seminar/discussion course rather than a lecture course. As such, you will all be expected to have read all readings prior to coming to class and to participate in discussion.

Grading: Grading for the course will be based on attendance/participation, two exams, and participation on the senior exit survey. You will be expected to contribute to daily discussions on the readings so attendance and participation will constitute a large share of the overall grade. The overall grading breakdown will be as follows:

Attendance/Participation (daily)	30%
Presentation	20%
Exam 1 (2/27)	20%
Exam 2 (3/25)	20%
Exit Survey	10%

Attendance/Participation: Robust class discussion on daily readings is the goal. To incentivize reading of discussion material, each of you is required to come to class each day with a minimum of 2 typed discussion questions for the group. These discussion questions will be turned in each day and will count toward your participation score. If it is apparent that the readings are not being done prior to class, a short quiz will be instituted at the beginning of class each day. The quizzes will be designed so that if you have read the assigned readings, you should have no problem answering the questions. Quizzes, should they be necessary, will count toward your participation grade.

Presentation: Each person will be responsible for presenting the papers and leading a discussion for one of the course days with a partner. Papers and dates will be assigned at random on the first day of class. You do have the option to trade your date with someone else, but you need to inform me of any trades within the first two weeks of class. The presentation should give an overview (possibly Powerpoint) of the papers to be discussed and should also give some context to other related literature. Some questions you should address in your presentation:

1. What were the primary and secondary research questions in the paper?
2. What approach or data was used for the analysis?
3. What did the authors find?
4. What are the potential policy implications of the paper?
5. How do the findings relate or differ from previous work?

In addition to your presentation and leading of the discussion, you and your partner will be responsible for developing and turning in 5 possible essay style exam questions related to the papers you have presented. For two of those questions, you must provide a well written essay answer. Each answer should be at least 1 page (single spaced) in length. Your score for the presentation assignment will be based on the quality of your presentation, your effectiveness in leading the class discussion, and on the quality of your 5 exam questions and answers.

Exams: There will be two exams over the course of the first ten weeks. Exam questions will be essay style questions on the class readings. Exam questions will be largely drawn from the pool of potential exam questions submitted by the presentation groups.

Senior Exit Survey: The senior exit survey is an important survey tool that the Department of Economics uses to assess your experience as an undergraduate in Economics. You may sign your name or take it anonymously, but your grade for this will be dependent on your attendance on the Exit Survey day.

A Word on Cheating and Plagiarism: Do not do it! All students are expected to abide by the University of Montana Student Conduct Code. Any violators of the Student Code of Conduct will be subject to punishment as outlined in the Student Code. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct please consult the following website:

<http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/documents/StudentConductCode1.pdf>

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability who will require reasonable program modifications in this course, please meet with Disability Services for Students in Lommasson 154 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services, please arrange to meet with me during my office hours to discuss reasonable modifications that may be necessary. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umt.edu/disability>.

Classroom Policies: I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom for the day if I perceive that you are being disruptive in any way to me or others in class. I view disruptive behavior to include things like talking on a cell phone, texting, tweeting, emailing, surfing the web, reading a newspaper or doing crosswords puzzles during class time. *Cell phones must be put away (out of sight and ringers turned off) at all times.*

Class Schedule:

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1: 1/28 & 1/30	Introduction/Lottery Day	Raj Chetty Articles: [1] and Chetty Bio
Week 2: 2/4 & 2/6	Raj Chetty Articles: [2] and [3]	Emmanuel Saez Articles: [4] and [5]
Week 3: 2/11 & 2/13	Emmanuel Saez Articles: [6] and [7]	Esther Duflo Articles: [8] and [9]
Week 4: 2/18 & 2/20	Esther Duflo Articles: [10] and [11]	Daron Acemoglu Articles: [12] and [13]
Week 5: 2/25 & 2/27	Daron Acemoglu Articles: [14] and [15]	Exam 1 Meet 8:10 AM in DHC 117
Week 6: 3/4 & 3/6	Steven Levitt Articles: [16] and [17]	Steven Levitt Articles: [18] and [19]
Week 7: 3/11 & 3/13	David Card Articles: [20] and [21]	David Card Articles: [22] and [23]
Week 8: 3/18 & 3/20	Amy Finkelstein Articles: [24] and [25]	Amy Finkelstein Articles: [26] and [27]
Week 9: 3/25 & 3/27	Exam 2 Meet 8:10 AM in DHC 117	Exit Survey Meet 8:40 AM in DHC 117
Week 10: 4/1 & 4/3	Spring Break (No Class)	Spring Break (No Class)
Week 11: 4/8 & 4/10	No Class	No Class
Week 12: 4/15 & 4/17	No Class	No Class
Week 13: 4/22 & 4/24	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations
Week 14: 4/29 & 5/1	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations
Week 15: 5/6 & 5/8	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations	ECNS 489 Senior Thesis Presentations
Week 16: Starting 5/12	Finals Week --No Class	

Reading List

All articles will be available on the class Moodle website.

Raj Chetty

Raj Chetty Bio can be found at:

http://www.aeaweb.org/honors_awards/bios/Raj_Chetty.php

[1] How Does Your Kindergarten Classroom Affect Your Earnings? Evidence from Project Star, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2011.

[2] Salience and Taxation: Theory and Evidence, *American Economic Review*, 2009.

[3] Teaching the Tax Code: Earnings Responses to an Experiment with EITC Recipients, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2013.

Emmanuel Saez

[4] Emmanuel Saez: 2009 John Bates Clark Medalist, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2010.

[5] Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2003.

[6] The Top 1 Percent in International and Historical Perspective, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2013.

[7] The Case for a Progressive Tax: From Basic Research to Policy Recommendations, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2011.

Esther Duflo

[8] Esther Duflo: 2010 John Bates Clark Medalist, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2011.

[9] Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India, *Econometrica*, 2004.

[10] The Economic Lives of the Poor, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2007.

[11] What is Middle Class about the Middle Classes around the World?, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2008.

Daron Acemoglu

[12] Daron Acemoglu: 2005 John Bates Clark Medalist, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2007.

[13] The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth, *American Economic Review*, 2005.

[14] Income and Democracy, *American Economic Review*, 2008.

[15] Economics versus Politics: Pitfalls of Policy Advice, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2013.

Steven Levitt

[16] Steven D. Levitt: 2003 John Bates Clark Medalist, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2005.

[17] Rotten Apples: An Investigation of the Prevalence and Predictors of Teacher Cheating, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2003.

[18] Evaluating the Effectiveness of Child Safety Seats and Seat Belts in Protecting Children From Injury, *Economic Inquiry*, 2010.

[19] How Dangerous Are Drinking Drivers?, *Journal of Political Economy*, 2001.

David Card

[20] In Honor of David Card: Winner of the John Bates Clark Medal, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 1997.

[21] Family Violence and Football: The Effect of Unexpected Emotional Cues on Violent Behavior, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2011.

[22] The Effect of Unions on the Structure of Wages: A Longitudinal Analysis, *Econometrica*, 1996.

[23] Inequality at Work: The Effect of Peer Salaries on Job Satisfaction, *American Economic Review*, 2012.

Amy Finkelstein

[24] Amy Finkelstein: 2012 John Bates Clark Medalist, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2012.

[25] Input and Technology Choices in Regulated Industries: Evidence from the Health Care Sector, *Journal of Political Economy*, 2008.

[26] Selection in Insurance Markets: Theory and Empirics in Pictures, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2011.

[27] The Oregon Health Insurance Experiment: Evidence from the First Year, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2012.