

# **ECON 191: Senior Essay Seminar**

## **Information Session**

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## What is Economics 191?

- A set of 2 classes (191A in Spring 2024, 191B in Fall 2024) during which students develop and conduct independent research projects
  - Q1: Develop a well-defined proposal
  - Q2: Implement the analysis and produce an academic-style paper
- The typical completed paper runs 5,000-7,500 words (10-15 single-spaced pages plus figures, tables, and references)
  - Can serve as a writing sample for graduate school and job applications
  - May be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
- Examples from students in previous cohorts are available at:  
<https://sites.google.com/site/ec191cullen/>
- (Mandatory) class meetings focus on research methods, introductions to library/computing/writing resources, and student presentations of work in progress
- The meetings help to provide structure and feedback, but the bulk of the research process will be carried out independently

## Typical Steps in the Research Process

- Topic selection
- Consultation with specialist librarians to identify data and literature
- Literature review and data acquisition
- Devising specific analysis plan in consultation with expert faculty
- Managing data and conducting analyses
- Building from a detailed proposal and rough draft to a polished paper

## Should I apply to take Econ 191?

### Good reasons to apply

- You would like to get experience conducting independent research
- You enjoy working independently and self-training as needed
- You are willing to be proactive and seek out expert guidance from faculty
- You are willing to invest a great deal of time in the process and support your peers

### Bad reasons to apply

- You have good grades and this seems to be something that strong students do
- You want to graduate with the phrase “with highest distinction”

## **Eligibility**

- Complete the first 2 courses of the microeconomics and econometrics core course sequences (100AB and 120AB) by the start of the Spring 2024 term
- Have a GPA of 3.5 or better in upper division economics courses
- Demonstrate promise for conducting original research and making a strong commitment to the course through your application

## Application

- The [Google Application](#) will open soon after the virtual information session
- All applications and materials (PDF copies of your degree audit and your proposal) must be submitted no later than **4:30PM on Monday February 5, 2024**
- Your proposal must be 1,000-1,500 words (2-3 single-spaced pages), be written concisely, and include the following:
  1. What is your (tentative) research question and why is it important?
  2. What do key papers from the existing literature have to say about your question?
  3. How will you tackle your question? What data and empirical strategies will you use?
  4. Explain briefly why you are motivated to conduct independent research, and whether you have preparation beyond what is evident from your transcript
- Decisions on applications will be released on **Wednesday February 14, 2024**
- [Alternatives](#): Economics 199 or volunteering as a research assistant