

Economics 191

Topics in Economic Research

Tuesday 6:30-9:30 PM

- Instructor of record:
 - Barry Eichengreen: eichengr@econ.berkeley.edu
 - Office hours: Tuesday: 1-3pm, 605 Evans
- Acting instructors:
 - Dawn Powers: kdpowers.gsi@gmail.com
 - Office hours: Wed. 12-2pm, Location TBA

 - Issi Romem: iromem@econ.berkeley.edu
 - Office hours: Fri. 8-10am, Location TBA
- Guest Lecturers: A Galaxy of Stars

- For Professor Eichengreen's office hours, make an appointment by emailing Cheryl Applewood: capplewood@berkeley.edu
- All course announcements will be sent by Twitter: [Economics191@twitter.com](https://twitter.com/Economics191)
- All Powerpoint presentations will be posted to the course website.

Questions about admission

- Above our pay grade.
 - Students seeking admission should consult the following website for instructions:
<http://emlab.berkeley.edu/econ/ugrad/enrollmentproc.shtml>.
- Ask Christine Yasi, the Economics Department's undergraduate advisor, cyasi@econ.berkeley.edu
- Ask Mike Urbancic, the Economics Department's head graduate student instructor, headgsi@econ.berkeley.edu
- If you're a BESAP student, ask Ginnie Sadil, gsadil@econ.berkeley.edu

Importance of attending your first section

- If you don't you get dropped.
- Readmission is then unlikely.
- Special circumstances? Talk to your section leader after class.

Goal of course

- This course provides an overview of research frontiers in economics and relates them to real world events.
- The course is taught jointly by Economics Department faculty and our two acting instructors.
- This semester the course discusses developments in international economics, the economics of immigration, the economics of corruption, internet platform competition and on-line markets, monetary policy at the zero lower bound, and the effectiveness of fiscal policy, among other topics.

- The course consists of approximately 42 hours of lectures, 1 (approximately 25 page) research paper (with intermediate benchmarks), and required readings.
- Readings can be accessed on the Economics 191 course page. Google “Barry Eichengreen Economics 191.”
http://emlab.berkeley.edu/users/webfac/eichengreen/e191_spring/e191.shtml
 - Note that you will need to use a Cal-recognized computer or your Calnet ID to gain access to materials that the library has under license.
 - Powerpoint presentations will appear there shortly after lecture.

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Announcements

1-4-12: A revised syllabus was posted with instructor new office hours.

Economics 191, Topics in Economic Research

Spring 2012

Lecture: Tuesdays, 6:30-9:30 p.m., 105 North Gate Hall

Instructor: [Professor Barry Eichengreen](#)

Office: 603 Evans Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 p.m. Please call or email Cheryl Applewood for an appointment: 510.643.9044 / capplewood@berkeley.edu

E-mail: eichengr@econ.berkeley.edu

Course Information

This course discusses recent research and policy developments. The core objective is to expose students to different aspects of research in economics and how it influences policy. The course is taught jointly by a number of faculty members in the Economics Department and by two acting instructors. The course consists of 42 hours of lectures, one 20-page paper, and required weekly readings.

- [Syllabus](#)

Lecture Notes

Handouts, Links and Readings

- Example research papers from previous Econ 191/196 students: [Paper 1: The](#)

Course sequencing

- One lecture introduces relevant models, methods and literature.
- The next lecture by a member of the faculty uses those models and methods and that literature to describe frontiers of research and current policy challenges.
 - Next week, for example, Dawn will describe the models, methods and literature relevant to my lecture on China in the world economy.
 - And then the week following I will return to deliver that lecture on China.
 - By the time I return you should have completed the readings on my topic. (And so forth.)
 - Note that in the “intervening weeks the graduate student instructors will also be giving you guidance/tutorials on research paper requirements.

Research papers

- Length: approximately 25 double-spaced pages.
 - More on this in a moment...
- Content: new theoretical or empirical research.
 - Not simply a survey of existing research
 - More than speculation
- How to find a topic: start with the topics covered in this course.
 - You need a well-defined question or hypothesis
 - You need motivation (why it's important)
 - You need an approach to answering that question (a model that you can solve or estimate)
 - For an empirical paper (that is to say, most papers), you need a data set
- Consult “Guidelines for writing an economics research paper” and “Data sources for empirical work,” both on the course webpage.

What does 25 pages mean?

- Should start with self-contained 100 word summary (“abstract”)
- 12-point Times New Roman or Arial
- 1-inch margins all around
- Double spacing
- All tables, figures, footnotes, reference list included in this page limit.
 - Questions about style? About section headings, organization etc? About what kind of footnoting practices and reference list to include?
 - You can answer them by referring to the research papers assigned in this course and following their example.

Research paper benchmarks

- *February 21.* Students are required to discuss their research question with at least one GSI no later than the beginning of this lecture time and are encouraged to meet with a GSI sooner.
- *February 21.* Two-page statement of introducing research question and its motivation (why it is important) due at the beginning of class.
- *March 6.* Five-page review of literature relevant to research paper topic due at the beginning of class.
- *March 20.* Five-page description of model or data to be used in research paper due at the beginning of class.
- *April 10.* Five-page summary of research paper results due at the beginning of class.
- *May 1.* Completed research paper (drawing on but extending these components) due by 5:00 p.m.

Grading

- There are five intermediate benchmarks (one meeting with your TA and four assignments due on, respectively, Feb. 21, Mar. 6, Mar. 20 and April 10). Each counts for 10 per cent of your grade.
- The final paper then accounts for the remaining 50 per cent.
- (Extra credit will be given for informed questions and other forms of active participation in class.)
- We do not accept late submissions. No exceptions. Late submissions will receive zero credit. Please take careful note of deadlines. Welcome to Cal!

- Barry Eichengreen: The Chinese Economy: Growth and Slowdown



- David Card: The Economics of Immigration



- John Morgan: The Economics of Platform Competition and Online Markets



- Fred Finan: The Economics of Corruption



- David Romer: Monetary Policy at the Zero Lower Bound



- Brad DeLong: The Effectiveness of Fiscal Policy



- And then I will come back and explain what it all means...



Your questions?

- We will now have a brief presentation from James Church, from UC Berkeley Libraries, about how to find materials for your research paper.
- And then we will turn things over to Dawn and Issi for some more rules of the road.