Economics Senior Seminar – Spring 2009
Syllabus

Course Description
This seminar will develop your abilities to do independent research using the concepts and tools of economic analysis. Your principal assignment is to undertake a research project and to develop and present a senior thesis. We expect that the papers will be well written and organized, supported by appropriate data and evidence, and reveal a command of economic tools and concepts that you have acquired in the course of your economics major. Evaluation is based primarily on the quality of your economic analysis. Several related assignments will help you develop your thesis and write your paper.

This research project presents a unique opportunity. Since you will be spending numerous hours reading, thinking, and writing about this topic, we strongly recommend choosing a topic that you care about. What you get out of this course can be more than just a grade. By the end of the semester you will develop considerable expertise in your topic and you will have written an extensive research report. The effort you put into your research project may generate "real world" returns. Your paper will demonstrate your research, analytical, and writing skills to a potential graduate school or employer. It can be a springboard to graduate school or it can be a ticket to a job after graduation. If your paper reflects your best effort, then it will provide a valuable and accurate signal of your abilities. It should be a source of pride and accomplishment for you.

Basis for Course Evaluation
Your final thesis constitutes the bulk of your grade. The abstracts, theory presentations, comments on colleagues’ work, paper drafts and other assignments are designed to enhance the final product. The effort you put into them is highly correlated with the quality of the feedback we can provide and the strength of your final thesis. Poor drafts will be handed back without comment to be redone and resubmitted. To pass the course these assignments must be submitted in a timely manner and reflect a solid effort. However, due dates are somewhat flexible. If you cannot complete an assignment on time, then you must make acceptable alternative arrangements with us substantially in advance of the due date. Late assignments without prior arrangements will be penalized. The weights for the final grade are:

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Style/Content Assignment</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstracts</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Peer editing</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>General participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Paper drafts</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
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Students Requiring Accommodation
Please contact us early in the semester if you have a documented requirement for accommodation to obtain equal access to this class or to any assignment. If you have any questions about this, we hope you will also feel free to raise them. I am quite willing to work with students to find the best way to achieve accommodation.

Office Hours and Communications
Below are our contact info and office hours. Office hours may be a good time to set up individual appointments, however we will expect to meet with you at other times, as well. In particular, the regular class time will be a good time to schedule appointments when we are not meeting as a group. Email is typically the best way to arrange appointments.

Nathan Sivers Boyce -  
**Office number:** Smullin 310  
**Class hours:** MWF 10:20-11:20, 1:50-2:50, **TTH 12:50-2:20**  
**Office hours:** M/W 3-4, T/TH 9:30-11:00 I will be in my office at other times as well. Feel free to drop by or make an appointment to see me.  
**Office phone:** x6916  
**e-mail:** nboyce@willamette.edu

Jim Hanson -  
**Office number:** Smullin 308  
**Class hours:** MWF 9:10-10:10, M 6:30-9:30pm, **TTH 12:50-2:20**  
**Office hours:** MW 10:30-11:30, T/TH 2:30-4:00 and by appointment.  
**Office phone:** x6316  
**e-mail:** jhanson@willamette.edu

Schedule:
The schedule below is intended only to indicate “due dates” and times that we meet as a class. It should go without saying that you are expected to meet frequently with your thesis advisor to discuss your individual research progress or challenges.

**Bolded** dates represent class meetings. **Italicized** dates represent due dates. All sessions meet in Smullin 314, 12:50-2:20 pm.

January
Tu., 20th: Introduction, Informal Discussion of Thesis Topics and Expectation  
Th., 22nd: Style and Content Assignment/Discussion  
Th., 29th: First Set of 4 Abstracts Due (by email)

February
Th., 5th: Second Set of 4 Abstracts Due (by email)  
Th., 12th: Third set of Abstracts Due (by email)  
Tu., 15th: Initial Presentations  
Th., 19th: 1) Initial Presentations; 2) Fourth set of Abstracts Due (by email)  
Tu., 24th: Initial Presentations  
Th., 26th: Initial Presentations
March
Th, 5th: Draft #1 due (by email)
Th, 12th: Peer review due (comments to your advisor and the author by email)

April
Tu., 7th: Draft #2 due (by email);
Tu., 14th: Peer review due (comments to your advisor and the author by email)
Wed., 15th: SSRD presentations
Tu., 28th: Final Presentations
Th., 30th: Final Presentations

May
Tu., 5th: 1) Final Presentations; 2) Final Draft due (by email)
Tu., 12th: Final Presentations (2:00-5:00pm)