Economics 387
Seminar in Labor
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Course Description

The objective of this course is to learn how to do empirical research in labor economics using data drawn from the Current Populations Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics and is the primary source of information on the labor force characteristics of the U.S. population. Using the CPS data many economists have written papers on topics such as gender/racial wage discrimination, economic performance of immigrants, labor union, job training, involuntary job loss, computer use, poverty, health insurance, and welfare.

Students will write and present an empirical paper using data drawn from the CPS. In order to process the CPS data for their research, students will learn how to write programs in statistical software Stata. This would be an excellent prep course for students interested in writing a senior thesis on any topics in labor economics or applied microeconomics and analyzing large data sets.

The main labor economics topics to be covered in this course include compensating wage differentials, human capital, labor mobility, immigration, and labor market discrimination.

Prerequisites

Microeconomic Analysis (Economics 241) and Introduction to Econometrics (Economics 243) are prerequisites.

Requirements

Requirements will include problem sets, research project assignments (research proposal, literature review, empirical results, and presentation), and a final research paper. There will be no exams. The class will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00-10:45 a.m. Students need to have a laptop computer and purchase a six-month license for Stata ($75).

Eco 387 is a WAC course.