Research methods and research communication

Lecturer
Philip VERWIMP (Coordinator)

Course mnemonic
ECON-S504

ECTS credits
5 credits

Language(s) of instruction
English

Course period
First term

Course content

Part I: Research Design (10h)

Introduction to the course & theoretical modelling

Methodology of experimental economics

Model specification

Integrating theory and empirics

How to write an effective theory paper

Part II: Applications & data (16 h)

From raw data to the construction of a dataset with multiple academic purposes: an application using DHS data

Using and presenting spatial information: an applied economist's perspective

Data in international trade research

Data used in political economics

Firm-level data

Historical data

Data: Heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation problems

Part III: Presentation skills and research proposals (10 h)

Presentation skills

How to write a research proposal

Objectives (and/or specific learning outcomes)

The aim of this course is to introduce students to conducting and presenting academic research in economics (both theoretical and empirical/experimental). The course will be given by several instructors, who will discuss specific aspects of different (sub-)fields in economics. In addition, the students will learn how to handle and present data, critically evaluate academic research papers, develop a research proposal, and to improve their presentation skills (aimed at academic (and broader) audience).

Teaching method and learning activities

The course is highly interactive. Most meetings are based on lectures and discussions about specific research methods and approaches. Certain parts of the course will also use applied hands-on work on data. The final part of the course will involve presenting by students and giving individualized feedback on their presentation skills.

Contribution to the teaching profile

This course is a "connecting bridge" between the core courses in micro-, macro-, and econometrics, and the topics courses of various fields in economics. It serves to encourage the students to build upon and move away from well-established basic knowledge in graduate economics and towards the independent scientific inquiry aiming at pushing the research frontier of particular fields. It also serves to familiarize the students with specific research methods and approaches used in different fields of modern economics.

In addition, the course contributes to developing students' skills in selecting and handling data needed to answer a research question, in presenting it visually, and in presenting the research projects and findings in front of an academic (and broader) audience.

References, bibliography and recommended reading

The bibliography of recommended readings will be provided at each lecture.

Other information

Contact(s)

Gani Aldashev (contact: Gani.Aldashev@ulb.ac.be) and Philip Verwimp (contact: philip.verwimp@ulb.ac.be)

Evaluation method(s)

Other

Evaluation method(s) (additional information)

The grade for the course is based on two individual assignments.

Assignment 1. (Deadline: **15 March**) *Critical evaluation of a theoretical model* of an article from Part I (about 3 pages). This assignment should be sent in by email to the course instructors (Gani.Aldashev@ulb.ac.be and philip.verwimp@ulb.ac.be), by 15 March. It should be in PDF format, single-spaced, with standard margins, and font size 12. Please note that sending in the assignment late will result in incomplete credit (the weight of the grade will be reduced by 10% of the final grade for each additional day of delay in sending it in).

Assignment 2. (Deadline: **26 April**) *Empirical project using one of the datasets* from Part II (10 slides). This project should consists of a research question, motivation, brief review of existing work (and how this project would contribute to it), brief description of data and identification strategy, empirical challenges and how do you plan to overcome them. All should be condensed into 10 slides, and will be presented on 26 April (a 20-minute presentation). The presentation will be filmed and used for providing you feedback on your presentation skills (in individual 1-to-1 sessions on May 9).

Determination of the mark (including the weighting of partial marks)

Assignment 1 accounts for 40% of the final grade.

The contents of Assignment 2 accounts for 30% of the final grade; the presentation quality accounts for the 15% of the final grade.

The remaining 15% of the final grade will depend on the self-evaluation report prepared by the student for the feedback session.

Main language(s) of evaluation

English

Programmes

Programmes proposing this course at the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management

MA-ECOE | Master in Economics : Econometrics | finalité Research in Economics/unit 2 and finalité Research in Economics and statistics/unit 2