

ECON 400: Introduction to Statistics and Econometrics
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Lich
Email: swlt@email.unc.edu
Office hours: Gardner 202, Monday & Wednesday 1:30 – 3:00

Teaching assistants: Mr. Lucas Mariani, M. Linzhi Li, Mr. Bennett Kobos, Mr. Gonazlo Asis

Lectures (400-001): Murphey Hall 116, Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 – 12:15

Lectures (400-002): Murphey Hall 116, Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30 – 1:45

Tutorial sessions: Gardner Hall TBD, Sunday through Wednesday afternoons TBD

Honors recitation: Gardner Hall 307, Wednesday 3:35 – 4:25 (required for all 400H students)

Materials: Mirer: Economic Statistics and Econometrics, 3rd ed. (recommended)
Intercooled Stata (Version 13 or later)

Background: ECON 101, Calculus (STOR 113, MATH 152, or MATH 231), Statistics (STOR 155)

Content: This course provides students with an understanding of statistical vocabulary and techniques, the ability to apply a statistical and probabilistic mindset to economic situations, and the skills to analyze data and draw conclusions. At the end of the course, students will have the skills to do multivariate linear regression, econometric modeling, and statistical inference at an intermediate level. Students will also be able to apply their skills to data analysis in other courses. The course covers five general topics:

1. Descriptive statistics
2. Probability, sampling, and hypothesis testing
3. Regression and inference
4. Specification
5. Limited dependent variable models

Attendance: I expect regular attendance at lectures, but I do not require documentation of absences. When students are absent, they are still responsible for submitting assignments on the due date and knowing all announcements and material from class.

Announcements: When I make announcements (about due dates, changes to the schedule, and such), I will write them on the board at the start of lecture, or I will email through Sakai.

Assignments: Students must turn in homework problems in the classroom at one of two times: either on the due date or (with permission) at the end of the next class. Students should not turn any assignment in at my office or the economics department office. Students should upload Stata assignments to Sakai as a PDF document. The last homework assignment might be due after the last day of class.

Grading: Grades are based on three exams, six quizzes, and ten homework assignments. The course grade is a weighted average of the exams and quiz grades.

Quizzes (5%):	Sept. 5th & 19th, Oct. 10th & 26th, Nov. 14, Dec. 5th (subject to change)
First midterm (30%):	Thurs., Sept. 21st
Second midterm (30%):	Thurs., Nov. 2nd
Final exam (50%):	Fri., Dec. 8th, 12:00 – 2:00 (for 400-002 meeting Tu./Th. 12:30) Thurs., Dec. 14th, 12:00 – 2:00 (for 400-001 meeting Tu./Th. 11:00)

For students who take all three exams as scheduled, I reduce the weight on the lowest exam by 15 percentage points. If a student misses a midterm exam, the weight will be transferred to the remaining exams. The final exam is given in compliance with UNC final exam regulations and according to the UNC Final Exam calendar. A student may miss one quiz, for any reason, without penalty. If all quizzes are completed, then the lowest grade is dropped.

Homework: We evaluate homework primarily on technique and completion. I do not factor homework into the grade directly. However, your course grade cannot be more than 10 points higher than your homework average. (This adjustment is uncommon.)

Special grades: I offer two special grades based on the final exam alone. If a student scores in the top 75% of the class on the final, the student will receive at least a C in the course. If the final is in the top 5%, the student is guaranteed an A. In order to qualify for these special grades, students must have taken both midterms and completed all homework assignments. (These special grades are uncommon.)

Bonus points: During the semester, there may be opportunities for extra credit. I will always announce extra credit publicly and make it available to the entire class.

Schedule: All lectures will be held at the scheduled time, with holidays for University Day, Fall Break, and Thanksgiving. The dates of the exams are almost certain. Other dates (especially due dates for assignments) on the Sakai calendar are tentative. I will announce due dates for assignments at least one week in advance. The last homework assignment might be due at the final exam.

Academic integrity and etiquette:

Homework: Students may consult each other and collaborate on homework assignments. They may seek assistance from the instructor, the teaching assistants, or a tutor. However, each student must do the problems on his or her own, and each student must submit a unique assignment. Students may use calculators, except for their statistical functions.

Late assignments: Students turning in late assignments may not use any resources that were unavailable to their classmates at the regular due date.

Quizzes: Students may use their textbook, the study guide and lecture notes, and their own notes. They may not work together, and they may not receive assistance from other people.

Exams: Students may use appropriate statistical tables and basic calculators.

Archives: Students may not acquire my documents from, or place my documents into, any online or physical archive, other than my course website on Sakai.

Technology: Students may not use laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices during the lecture, except when I specifically permit them, or when they are prescribed accessibility devices. Disruption behavior violates section II.C.1.k of the Honor Code. (And, for your own sake, it interferes with your learning.) I may deduct up to 1 point from a student's course grade for each violation of this policy, after a warning.

Externalities: Avoid the negative ones; create the positive ones.

Help resources:

Tutorials: Students can get answers to questions and homework help at the tutorial sessions. These tutorials are held every day in Gardner [TBD], from [TBD-TBD], Sunday through Wednesday. A teaching assistant will be available. These tutorials are unstructured and completely optional. Students are welcome to come to this room simply to work on their assignments, and a teaching assistant will be available to provide help.

Office hours: Students can also receive help and answers during my office hours. I can also address administrative issues or other special situations. I am always available in Gardner 202 between 1:30 and 3:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students may simply drop in, or they may ask for priority at some particular time. I can also arrange to meet at other times.

Email: I can answer quick questions and administrative issues through email, but I cannot provide detailed homework help through email. (My teaching assistants do not provide help through email.)

Before and after class: I can answer only very quick questions.

The Learning Center: The Learning Center has academic counselors who can give general advice about improving study habits, note-taking skills, and other academic strategies. In some semesters, free peer tutoring is available in Dey Hall. They also maintain a list of private tutors available for hire.

Syllabus changes: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including due dates and test dates. Changes will be announced as early as possible.