

Economics 100C Honors - Spring 2014

Monday 10:00-10:50am, Sequoyah Hall 244

Professor: Mark Jacobsen (m3jacobsen@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours: Economics Building, Room 223
Mondays 11:00am-12:00noon and by appointment

Overview:

This honors section accompanies Economics 100C and meets once a week in seminar format. We will discuss topics that are traditionally "economic" (for example the use and abuse of market power) and also some that are not (consider the value of clean air). As a companion to the 100 series the issues and papers we consider will be micro- rather than macro-economic, but otherwise explore a range of questions in economics.

In addition to the prerequisites in the course catalog you should be comfortable with basic statistics: there will be several applications to data and policy questions. Please feel free to talk with me if you have any questions on this.

Course structure and requirements:

The course will be organized around the readings and topics outlined below. I expect that each of you will do the required reading and come prepared with your thoughts and questions. It will not be enough to simply skim the articles quickly: you should read carefully and be prepared to discuss the authors' arguments critically.

50% of your grade will come from participation in class and 50% from two short discussion papers (about 800 words, see schedule below). The ability to express your thoughts clearly in speaking and writing is essential in almost all directions you may take after UCSD: I hope this course will offer some preparation and guidance along both dimensions.

Course Schedule:

(Please check your UCSD email for the papers, reminders, and any updates.)

- March 31: Jacobsen (2013): "Fuel Economy and Safety: Vehicle Class and Driver Behavior" (American Economic Journal)
- April 7: Currie and Walker (2011): "Traffic Congestion and Infant Health: Evidence from E-Z Pass" (American Economic Journal)
- April 14: Basker (2007): "The Causes and Consequences of Wal-Mart's Growth" (Journal of Economic Perspectives)
- April 21: Persky (2007): "From Usury To Interest" (Journal of Economic Perspectives) and Stegman (2007): "Payday Lending" (Journal of Economic Perspectives)

(Discussion paper 1 due Monday, April 28th in class)

- April 28: Ito and Sallee (working paper): "The Economics of Attribute-Based Regulation: Theory and Evidence from Fuel-Economy Standards"
- May 5: Hannesson (2008): "The Exclusive Economic Zone and Economic Development in the Pacific Island Countries" (Marine Policy)
- May 12: Topic chosen by class (see email for paper(s)).
- May 19: Spar (2006): "Continuity and Change in the International Diamond Market" (Journal of Economic Perspectives)
- May 26: *No class (Memorial Day holiday)*

(Discussion paper 2 due Monday, June 2nd in class)

- June 2: Carson and Roth Tran (2009): "Discounting Behavior and Environmental Decisions" (Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics)