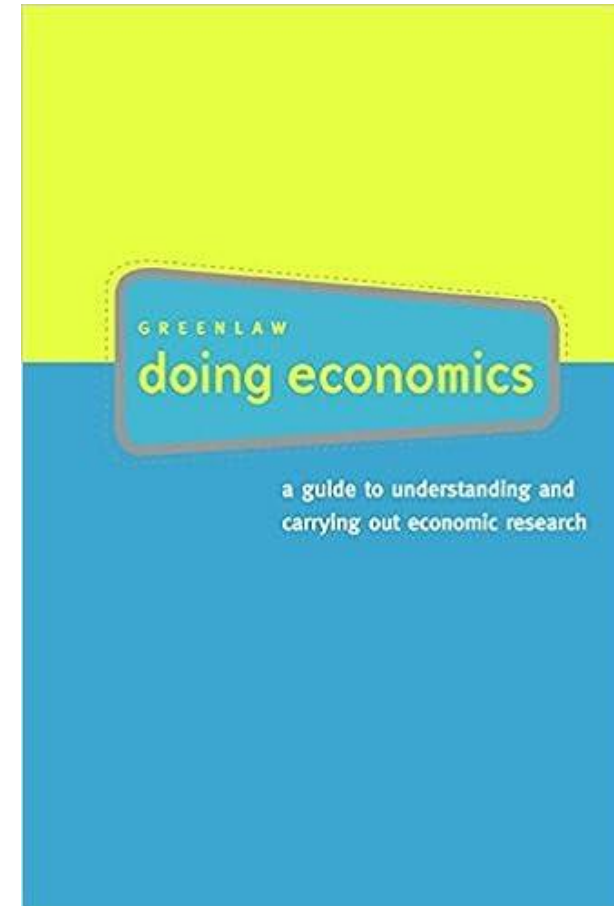
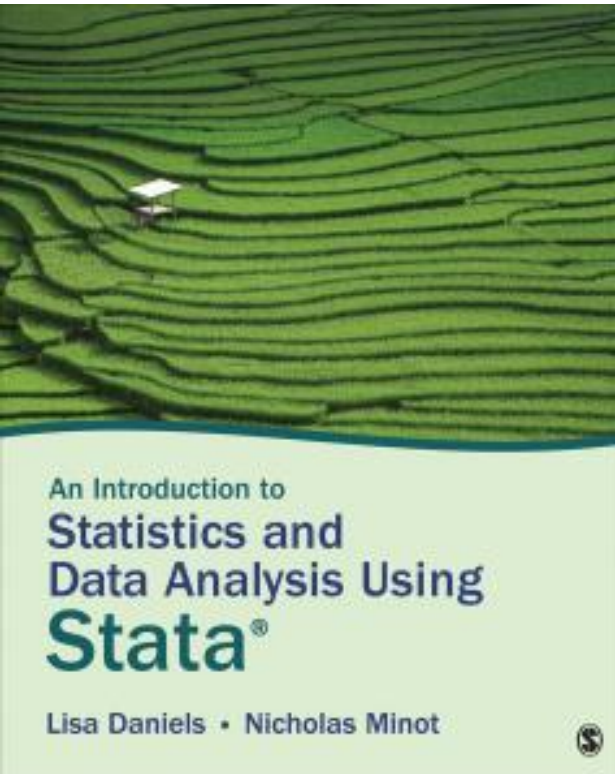


Economic Research IN PRACTICE

ECN 310 (M002)

Professor Buzard



Agenda for today

1. What is economic research?
2. Introductions
3. Course overview and syllabus
4. Plan for Friday's class
5. Creating your first class log on Github

What *is* Economic Research?

- Remler & Van Ryzin's definition:
 - “A social and intellectual activity that involves systematic inquiry aimed at accurately describing and explaining the world”
- Primary research (our focus), aims to establish new facts and reach new conclusions to create *knowledge*
 - That is, it pushes out the frontier of what is already known
 - It is heavily influenced by the perspectives of the researcher
- The process of research
 - involves the collection, organization, and analysis of information
 - is fundamentally creative
 - requires critical thinking
 - is iterative, non-linear, less straightforward than coursework

What is economics? Many things...



Some examples from SU's economics faculty

- Welfare Reform and Children's Health (Badi Baltagi)
- What makes you go back home? Determinants of the duration of migration of Mexican immigrants in the US (Carmen Carrión-Flores)
- How Dark is Dark? Bright Lights, Big City, Racial Profiling (Bill Horrace)
- Does Youth Training Lead to Better Job Quality? Evidence from Job Corps (Alfonso Flores-Lagunes)
- The Differential Incidence and Severity of Food Insecurity by Racial, Ethnic, and Immigrant Groups over the Great Recession (Hugo Jales)
- Unity in Diversity? How Intergroup Contact Can Foster Nation Building (Alex Rothenberg)
- European Colonization and the Corruption of Local Elites: The Case of Chiefs in Africa (Abdulaziz Shifa)
- Labor Unions and Workplace Safety (Perry Singleton)
- Equal Time for Equal Crime? Racial Bias in School Discipline (Maria Zhu)

My Research

- International Trade Agreements
- Political Economy
 - Lobbying and special interests
 - How they influence Congress
- Conflict
- Research & Development / Urban Economics
- Gender Discrimination
- Economics Pipeline: “What Attracts and Deters Women from Economics?”
 - Help me brainstorm ideas at [PollEv.com/kristybuzard004](https://www.pollEv.com/kristybuzard004)



Introductions

Teaching Assistant: Dylan Eldred

- Email: deldred@syr.edu
- Office Hours: by appointment

Professor: Kristy Buzard ([Buh-ZARD](#))

- kbuzard@syr.edu
- Eggers 131
- Office Hours:
 - Mondays 2:30 – 3:30pm
 - Wednesdays 3:45-4:45pm
 - By appointment at kbuzard@syr.edu.

Introductions

- Who are you?
 - We'll learn more about each other through a survey on Friday

Course Overview

Syllabus

- It's on Blackboard
- So is the syllabus quiz that's due by the end of day on Friday
- Open both up now! (Demo)

Course Overview

What will this course do for you? It will:

1. provide education in, and tools for, research methods;
2. give you context and background for your econometrics courses;
3. engage you in research experiences;
4. connect you to mentoring so you can take advantage of the full range of research opportunities offered by the Economics Department;
5. provide recommendations to faculty offering research opportunities, including our economics distinction and B.S./M.A. programs;
6. help you think about research-related education and career paths.

Course Objectives

1. Learn the steps involved in conducting economic research;
2. Utilize economic theory to frame analysis of research questions;
3. Become familiar with basic concepts of statistical description as it applies to economic analysis;
4. Select a research question of interest, write a literature review and formulate a hypothesis;
5. Collect, clean, visualize and analyze relevant data using descriptive statistics;
6. Interpret results, draw conclusions, communicate findings, and document the research process.

Course components

Three major components:

1. Context and choices

- Economic theory
- Choice and framing of the research question
- Literature review
- Finding data

2. Basic statistics

3. Technology

- To manipulate, analyze, visualize data: Stata, R
- To communicate: Github, markdown, maybe LaTeX
- (PollEverywhere)

Getting ready for your first assignment!

- Go to github.com/join
- Enter username, email, and password
- Solve the puzzle and click “Create account”
- Follow instructions to verify email address
- Once email address is verified, go to <https://classroom.github.com/a/nwR8P0tB> to accept the assignment invitation
- Once you’ve accepted the invitation, answer the PollEverywhere poll

How does this class work?

- Dylan and I will provide guidance, instruction, demonstration, support
 - But you will learn *more* from each other and trying it out for yourself
 - Greater opportunity for expert **feedback** than “lecture”
- Research on how people learn:
 - Everyone constructs their own understanding
 - I can’t dump understanding into your brain
 - To learn, YOU must actively work with tools and ideas and construct your own understanding of them

How does this class work?

- This class will be VERY hands on
 - You will submit a log at the end of every class
 - Usually, you will also work through an example, train on software, or work on an assignment or your project
- Class time will be focused around YOU
 - What YOU understand
 - I'll learn about this through the questions you ask in class, Poll Everywhere, your daily logs
 - How you and your classmates figure things out *together*
 - Crucial for your success: building the learning community and fulfilling your responsibilities to it every day
 - Read assigned material before class
 - Ask for help / help others

What will each class day look like?

BEFORE CLASS: short reading quiz (on Blackboard)

- tells you whether you're ready for class AND to contribute to your team's work for the day (your primary responsibility)
- credit for *correct* answers only
- 15% of grade (85% of correct answers for the semester gets full credit)

DURING CLASS

- mix of: short lectures, PollEverywhere questions / discussion, hands-on activities, work on assignments and project
- 15% of grade (need 85% of total points to get perfect score)
 - 3 points for full participation (log, PollEv, actively engaged, fully present)
 - 2 points if one element lacking (late, not always engaged, skip PollEv Q)
 - 1 point if no log or more than 1 other element missing
 - 0 points for no attendance

Your Participation

Your involvement during class is crucial

- Ask a question
- Share an explanation
- Tell us what your group talked about
- Explain where you got stuck, any problems or new questions
- Work collaboratively with your classmates

Your explanations and questions are **CRITICALLY HELPFUL** for your classmates' learning

- Sharing your perspective/struggles in class is a very important contribution to the learning community

How to succeed in this class

- Prepare for class: use learning objectives to guide your reading, prepare for quiz (quizprep document)
- Complete all practice assignments
- Stay on top of the material, up-to-date with project
- Participate in class: work with your classmates, ask questions!
- Try to construct a “big picture” for yourself—how things fit together
- If you’re having difficulties, ask us for help
 - We can help you find an alternative approach

Plan for Friday

- Reading quiz (practice)
 - Potential questions posted in “Assignments/Quizzes” subfolder of Aug. 27 – Sep. 2 folder on Blackboard
 - Quiz is in same folder; opens at noon on Thursday
 - Score won’t count in your grade, but this gives you a chance to practice before first graded quiz for Wednesday, Sep. 6
- Answers to questions about syllabus (read!!!)
 - Syllabus quiz due Friday on Blackboard
- Discuss “What is Research?” reading
- Modify, complete, analyze survey
- Intro to course project possible topics

Demos

- Blackboard: <https://blackboard.syr.edu>
 - Syllabus Quiz
 - Quizprep / Reading Quiz
 - Slides

Github log

- Our first kind of documentation!
- <https://classroom.github.com/a/nwR8P0tB>
- You will fill out the following in your own Github repository (repo) at the end of class each day
 - The date
 - I worked on:
 - I still need to do:
 - I learned:
 - I found difficult / where I need(ed) help:
- We'll take the rest of the class period to help you finish your first log
 - You can leave as soon as you've submitted it!