



Research Seminar

Thursday, 15⁰⁰ – 18²⁰, room B

<https://sites.google.com/site/warsaweconseminars/>

Coordinators

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always send emails to both of us [single message]



Objective of the course:

To give you basis for your own
research.



Meetings in 2019

Seminars (usually starting at 17:10)

WNE (aula B, building C)

03.10, 10.10, 24.10, 7.11, 21.11, 5.12, 19.12, 23.01

SGH (room 2a, building C)

17.10, 31.10, 14.11, 28.11, 12.12, 16.01, 30.01



Meetings in 2019

Group meetings

(usually starting at 15:00)

WNE (aula B, building C)
24.10, 7.11, 21.11, 5.12, 19.12, 23.01



Attendance

- Obligatory for
 - Group meetings at WNE (FES UW)
 - Seminars at WNE (FES UW)
- Absence allowed only once
 - Further absence results in negative points



Basic setup of the course

- Every week a seminar, with an invited scientist presenting his/her work.
- Seminars take place at the Faculty of Economic Sciences, Warsaw School of Economics and the Institute of Economics of the Polish Academy of Sciences.
- Every two weeks a meeting of coordinators with students.
- Students write essays/reviews and notes from the papers presented at the seminar.
- Students writing essays make presentations for their group.



The goals for each student are following:

- Gain exposure to state-of-the-art research in economics,
- Become familiar with key analytical tools and modeling skills,
- Develop academic writing skills,
- Develop critical thinking and evaluation skills,
- Gain exposure to useful presentation techniques.



Writing essays/reviews

- Why do you need to do this (except for „because we say so”)?
 - Thinking is nice, writing shows results,
 - Organization is key – no better way to test it,
 - Criticizing is a skill – not everything merits critique,
 - Group work is the future – start practicing now.

- What do you do this for?
 - WYDIWYL (= what you do is what you learnt)
 - Discipline helps getting nice ideas (for thesis too!)



Writing essays/reviews – how do you do this

Necessary steps:

1. Read the paper and prepare your comments – in the week before the seminar (**this we do not check**).
2. Ask questions and present your comments – at the seminar (**this is where we evaluate your potential**).
3. Make a presentation for your group, discuss your ideas – one week after the seminar (**first evaluation of your work**).
4. Submit your essay – four weeks after the seminar (**final evaluation of your work**).



Step 1 - preparation

Read the paper and prepare your comments

- Read the paper to be presented and think about it.
- Find some time to read more literature in the field.
- Think about the importance of the problem, approaches to the problem in the literature, the value added of the paper, etc.
- Make comments that include your reasons explaining why you like (or do not like) the paper, your suggestions and concerns.
- Make a list of specific questions you would like to ask to the presenter at the seminar.
- In addition: think about possible extensions that could be made to the paper.



Step 2 – the seminar

Ask questions and present your comments

- Use the knowledge of both paper and presentation to be sure your accusation/praise is grounded (question relevant).
- Speakers are here for you – ask them all possible (relevant!) questions.
- Use the opportunity of speaker presence to discuss with them your suggestions/questions/ideas on the theme.



Step 3 – first test

Presentation:

- Prepare your presentation, including all the important points you want to raise in your essay.
- Give a presentation for your group and your coordinator.
- Listen to our comments, defend your own opinions, views and suggestions.
- Take advantage from the debate, improve your arguments, note important points raised by the others.
- If everybody criticize your ideas, change or adjust them.



Step 4 – salvation

Submit the essay:

- There is a point in Step 3 – make best use of it.
- Make sure your structure is clear and coherent.
- Make sure sentences make sense (have beginnings, ends, etc.).
- Use spell checker, mind editing, complete bibliography, etc.
- We have many students: make sure there is one main reason for which we should want to read your paper.
- **Papers submitted by email only (Word format)**
 - E-mail title: Name, surname plus date of the seminar
 - File name: surname_draft_date or surname_final_date



Students' obligations

Winter semester:

- 2 essays/reviews
 - Purely descriptive, and not exceeding 15 pages,
- 2 notes

Summer semester:

- 2 essays/reviews with extension
 - Essays must include an analytical research connected with the reviewed paper,
 - Papers should not exceed 20 pages,
- 2 notes.



Students' obligations

Notes:

- The selection of the topic is totally up to you (papers presented at the Warsaw Economic Seminars in the current semester)
- Deadline: 2 weeks from the original presentation at the Warsaw Economic Seminars

Essays:

- Assigned at the beginning of semester (dates of group meetings when you are going to present, but you may choose between a paper presented at WNE or SGH)
- Deadline: 2 weeks from the group meeting



Deadlines: example

On Thursday October 10th, Dr. Anna Nicińska is going to give a prelection at the Warsaw Economic Seminar at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Warsaw (aula B)

You have to attend this meeting

If you would like to make a short note on this paper, you have 2 weeks (deadline: October 24th)

The following group meeting takes place on October 24th (2 weeks after the WES). During this meeting, groups assigned to prepare an essay on the paper presented on October 10th, have to give a presentation (approx. 20-25 min) about the original paper. This is a good occasion to get some feedback from the rest of the group.

Since this group meeting, people preparing essays on this paper, have 2 weeks to submit the final version (deadline: November 7th)



Students' obligations

- Essays are written in pairs
Pairs must be formed at the first meeting with your coordinator .
- Notes are written individually
- The attendance of the seminars held at the faculty and the meetings with the coordinators is obligatory.
- If you have chosen to write essays and notes on papers presented at Warsaw School of Economics or Polish Academy of Sciences, you have to attend also the seminars at which those papers are presented.
- Papers to review are assigned to you at the first meeting with your coordinator.
- Papers to write a note about you can choose yourself.



Each essay should include:

- Title page with an abstract
- Introduction with motivation, intuition, goals and structure
- Literature survey
- Analysis of the problem presented in the paper – the weight of the problem, its practical meaning, etc.
- Critical analysis of the presented paper
- In the winter semester: a list of possible future extensions
- In the spring semester: new research on the problem
- Concluding section with your main points summarized
- Bibliography



Introduction

- Explain, what is your motivation for reviewing this paper (saying "it is interesting" is not enough).
- Describe what the paper is about, maybe mention its main points.
- State the goals you want to achieve in the review ("reviewing the paper and criticizing it" is too general for the goal of a review) – they should be the same as your criticism afterwards.
- TEASE the reader.
- Be organized and clear.



Literature survey:

- Analyze different approaches to the problem used in the literature.
- Locate the paper in the field. We do not need you to repeat what was reviewed in the original paper (it is not an analysis of what literature is used in the paper and how it is presented).
- Show how you understand the field and the contribution of this particular paper.
- Link this section to your criticism (ground your criticism in the field).
- You do not need to read everything nor summarize all the papers you have found.
- The idea is to compare the problems, methods and results, and not to describe other papers in details.



Analysis of the problem:

- Discuss if it is an important problem from the point of view of economics.
- Analyze the practical meaning of the problem.
- If the problem is a purely theoretical one, consider how it can be applied to practice.
- If you cannot think of practical applications, think about a way to change the paper to give it a practical application (it is not a question of econometric analysis but rather of solving some real life problems).
- You should present arguments supporting your opinions.



Critical analysis:

- Do not describe theory or methodology in detail, unless you have comments or opinions of your own.
- If you have them, include in the paper sections on a critical analysis of the theoretical framework and/or a critical analysis of statistical methodology.
- If you have nothing to say about them, drop these sections, but say a few words about theory and methodology in the introduction.
- **You have to include a critical analysis of theoretical and empirical findings.**
- You should present arguments supporting your opinions.



Extensions

In the winter semester:

- Possible future extensions = only suggestions.
- You have to describe:
 - what the suggested extension is,
 - the intuition behind it,
 - what result you hope to obtain,
 - why it is significant,
 - its' feasibility.

You should think of at least two possible extensions.



Extensions

In the summer semester:

- Theoretical or econometric extensions of the reviewed papers:
 - a step further in the research described in the reviewed paper,
 - solutions of some special cases,
 - alternative methods of estimation,
 - tests which were not conducted in the original research,
 - alternative assumptions, approaches,
 - etc.
- New research connected with the analyzed paper.
- Only one extension per review (no need to do completely new research, although you may do that if you wish).



Research notes:

One page containing:

- An information on what the paper is about.
- A description of the points, which you find the most important in the paper.
- Since these are not necessarily the points, which the author(s) considered as the most important ones, you have to provide some justification of your choice.
- Your general opinion about the paper.



Papers evaluation and final grades

Each paper is evaluated on the basis of:

- Clarity of exposition – 20%
- Academic writing quality – 30%
- Substantive quality – 50%

In the summer semester these three points constitute 50% of the grade, while the extension yields the remaining 50%.

The final grade depends upon the sum of all points you have earned. A note counts as 25% of an essay.



Plagiarism

- Totally unacceptable
- If spotted, both authors are responsible
- Results in failing the course
- The case is reported to the Dean



Q & A