

# **Economics 395: Advanced Topics in Housing**

Carleton College

Fall 2016

Aaron Swoboda

## **Administrative Information**

**Class Meeting Time:** 2/3c (Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:10-11:55am)

**Classroom:** Library 305

**Professor:** Aaron Swoboda

**Office:** Willis 314

**Office Hours:** TBD

## **Course Description**

This seminar-style course focuses on the empirical analysis of topics in housing economics. Specific areas of study depend on student interest, but may include: determinants of housing supply and demand, hedonic analysis, land use regulation, rent control, spatial segregation, housing policy, housing as an investment, and the recent subprime mortgage crisis. Class time is primarily devoted to student-led presentations, discussion of peer-reviewed journal articles, and lab activities related to the empirical research process.

## **The Goal of the Course**

My goal for this course is to help you better understand the process of empirical economic research and to prepare you to succeed in an independent research project (aka COMPS).

## **Course Overview**

To accomplish the goal of the course we will spend a lot of time discussing how to conduct original economics research. These conversations will happen as a class, in small "tutorials" (small group meetings), and one-on-one meetings. The first few weeks of the course will be aimed primarily at helping you find an appropriate and interesting topic to propose in your prospectus. The middle of the course is designed to help you refine your prospectus for

submission to the Economics Department. The final weeks of the term will be devoted to help students approach the research process with a clear plan and confidence.

## Important Resources

### **Carleton College Economics COMPS process description.**

<http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/econ/seniorintegrativeexercise/>

This website is the official policy for your COMPS experience. Make sure you read this and know what it says. You will be held responsible for the terms and conditions set forth in this document whether you read it or not! Not looking at this will be detrimental to your well-being.

## Grading

### **Prospectus Preparation      25%**

You will have a series of smaller assignments and presentations throughout the term. Each assignment is aimed at moving you closer towards being ready to submit a successful COMPS prospectus to the Economics Department in order to earn tackle your COMPS research.

### **Course Citizenship              25%**

The overall quality of your engagement with the course is of paramount importance. To that end, your class "citizenship" will count towards your final grade in the course. Examples of high quality citizenship include participating in class discussions, active engagement in small group activities, and generally creating positive externalities in the course.

### **Final Presentation              25%**

The final course meetings of the term will be devoted to a "mini-conference" about your COMPS proposals. Each student will be responsible for giving a short presentation describing your research proposal. The presentation itself will be approximately 10 minutes long followed by five minutes of comments by a "discussant" and then additional class discussion. More information available at <http://bit.ly/v6z9OM>.

### **Replication Project              25%**

In order to better prepare you for the challenges you will face as you manage your own research project after the completion of this course, the final project for the course asks you to replicate some of the main results from a couple of the articles we will read and discuss in the course. More resources will be made available later in the term.

# Tentative Calendar

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Tuesday</b>                       | <b>Thursday</b>           |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1</b>    | Introduction to COMPS                | Library Resource Lab      |
| <b>2</b>    | Empirical Research Lab 1             | Empirical Research Lab 2  |
| <b>3</b>    | Student Presentations (1)            | Empirical Research Lab 3  |
| <b>4</b>    | Student Presentations (2)            | Empirical Research Lab 4  |
| <b>5</b>    | Individual Meetings                  |                           |
| <b>6</b>    | Peer Review Meetings                 | Individual Meetings       |
| <b>7</b>    | Individual Meetings                  |                           |
| <b>8</b>    | Replication Project Lab Office Hours |                           |
| <b>9</b>    | Final Presentations #1-5             | Final Presentations #6-10 |
| <b>10</b>   | Final Presentations #11-15           |                           |