

Current Research in Economics

Summer term 2026

Overview

This course introduces students to contemporary cutting-edge research in economics. It is built around frontier work presented in the Essen Economics Seminar. Topics covered in recent seminars span a wide range of fields, including labor economics, public economics, health economics, and applied econometrics. Through participation in these seminars, students gain insights into the research process in economics and engage with academic discussions on current and policy-relevant topics.

Content

- Introduction to academic research in economics
- Participation in the Economics Seminar Series and selected external seminars
- Writing referee reports on presented research
- Developing a research proposal in economics
- Discussing methodological challenges and empirical strategies in economics research

Prerequisites: Basic knowledge of microeconometrics and economics is recommended.

Registration

You can register for this course on Moodle.

Dates

- Kick-off meeting: 23.04.2026, 14:15-15:45 (room WST A.08.17).
- Seminar sessions: Wednesdays, 14:15-15:30 PM, Room: R11 T07 C73.
- Class meetings: Thursdays 14:15-15:45 PM, Room: WST A.08.17 (in specific weeks only)
- Research proposal presentations: to be determined in class (one of the class meeting times).

Degree program eligibility

Students from the following master degree programs can enroll in the seminar: Gesundheitsökonomik, Märkte und Unternehmen, and Volkswirtschaftslehre.

Grading and ECTS

Students will be graded based on the following components: Three referee reports (each 700-1000 words) analyzing presented papers (30%). Research proposal (2000-4000 words) with presentation (70%). Total: 6 ECTS (equivalent to approximately 180 hours of workload, including seminar participation, reading, and preparation).

Background Literature

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, students will engage with research papers presented in the seminars. The following resources may assist with assignments (the referee reports) and the term paper:

Referee Report Guidance

- Berk, J.B., Harvey, C.R., & Hirshleifer, D. (2017). "How to write an effective referee report and improve the scientific review process." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(1), 231-244.
- Hamermesh, D.S. (1994). "Facts and myths about refereeing." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 8(1), 153–163.

Research Proposal Writing

- Varian, H.R. (2016). "How to build an economic model in your spare time." *The American Economist*, 61(1), 81-90.
- Karlsson, M., & Hyde, N. (2010). "How to Write a Term Paper in Economics," Technical University of Darmstadt.
- McCloskey, D. (1985). "Economical writing." *Economic Inquiry*, 23(2), 187-222.

Additional Readings on Economic Research and Methods

- Heckman, J.J., & Moktan, S. (2020). "Publishing and promotion in economics: The tyranny of the top five." *Journal of Economic Literature*, 58(2), 419-70.
- Cunningham, S. (2020). *Causal Inference: The Mixtape*. Yale University Press.
- Abadie, A., & Cattaneo, M.D. (2018). "Econometric Methods for Program Evaluation." *Annual Review of Economics*, 10(1), 465-503.