Economics Dept.
Senior Thesis Program

September 4, 2019
Ec Advising Team
Today

- The *What, Why, and How* of Thesis
- Documents, Details, and Dates
- Misc thoughts
WHAT is a senior thesis?
thesis /ˈTHēsis/

noun

A dissertation on a particular subject in which one has done original research, as one presented by a candidate for a diploma or degree.

Source: Dictionary.com

- Unique contribution to knowledge
- Like a journal article
WHY write a senior thesis?
Deeply explore something YOU are curious about
Also:

- Major, exciting intellectual endeavor
- Draw together 3 years of tools, training, knowledge to answer YOUR question
- Good for grad school!
- Good for not grad school!
- Truly understand what “research” entails
"For most of college I was an executor: you gave me a textbook to read or a problem set to do, and I could spit it out for you. Given the inputs, I could produce the outputs.

But it wasn't until I wrote a thesis that I started asking the questions myself, deciding for myself what inputs I needed... There's a confidence that comes with it that I never had before."
HOW to write a senior thesis?
Thesis? where are you?
Topic

- What are you curious about?
- What would you like to understand better?
- What papers/topics/classes have you enjoyed?
- What do you disagree with?
- What excites you in current events?

- Not too broad, not too narrow
- Browse journals, old theses
- TALK to people

past thesis titles
Advisor
Advisor

- You must have one.
- It will take time.

**Strategy**

1. Get names (use sortable thesis advisor list)
2. Visit OH or email them to plan a meeting
3. Be reasonably prepared
4. Don’t give up!

**TO DO:**
Come up with a list of at least 7 profs who are relevant for your topic(s) of interest. Email 4 of them before Monday.
Ec 985 Seminar
Ec 985

- **Required** full-year Thesis Research Seminar (see [website](#))
- Led by Instructor
- ~12 peers per seminar
- Weekly meetings in different formats
- Lottery form up by 7pm tonight; due 12pm tomorrow.

**Ec 985 goals**

- Structure, support, feedback for YOU
- Foster steady progress
- Aid transition from *student* to *scholar*
documents, details, dates...
Documents

- Lottery Form
- Thesis Guide
- Thesis Registration form
- AM Agreement
- Advice sheet
- Previous thesis titles
- Sortable Thesis Advisor sheet

(details on Ec Thesis page)
Details

- Funding
- Human Subjects and IRB
- Libraries
- Stata
- AM/Ec
- Grades & Honors
- If the road is too rocky...

(details on Ec Thesis page)
Important Dates

- **9/5 (Thurs), 12pm:** Enter Ec 985 lottery.

- **10/7:** You **must** have an advisor. Submit registration form by 4pm. (AM: Submit 985 Agreement by 4pm.)

- **12/9:** Fall semester thesis draft due.

- **March 12, 2020:** SUBMIT FINAL THESIS!
Final Thoughts...

- It’s an adventure!
- We’re here for you.
“...your intellectual capabilities, your energy, and your persistence are all far greater than they were just a few years ago. Most importantly, they are also far greater than you probably understand them to be...

The real reason for every student to write a senior thesis, I believe, is ... to learn something of what you are now capable of accomplishing.

Whatever you do next—whether you work... or go to... graduate school—you will find challenges put before you... having an awareness of what you are now capable of doing will be an invaluable asset.”
“It was painful at times, and to be honest, I was almost ready to give up... but we pushed through. I am so glad I got to do this.”
LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN.