Overview and Objectives

This course is intended mainly for first-year Strategy and International Business doctoral students. Other students in related disciplines are also welcome to take this course. It is assumed that students in this course will have already have been exposed to the main theoretical paradigms of these literatures.

This course will provide students with an overview of research methodology applicable to studying non-experimental phenomena within and among firms and organizations. Thus this is mainly a “macro” research seminar. The objectives of this course include familiarization with the concepts and skills necessary to conduct independent empirical research. Students will gain a first hand experience in working with data and conducting statistical analysis. It will also help in developing the ability to critically evaluate existing research.

Approach

The format of the course will be that of a research seminar meaning active, engaged reading of the week’s materials followed by written assignments/presentations and an intensive group discussion.

There are three main components to this course.

1. **Weekly readings**: The reading load is reasonable, but the expectation is that each student will come prepared to discuss each article. An active and well-informed discussion is critical to the success of such a course. Further, each student is expected to try to apply the concepts, issues or techniques in each article to their ongoing course project and weekly assignments.

2. **Weekly Assignments**: Students should also apply the learning from readings in doing their assignments. These assignments may be done in groups of 2 or 3 depending on the number of students in the class. The nature of assignments would vary from week to week: for example, it may involve identification of...
interesting research questions or statistical analyses of data. The broad research theme will be *corporate restructuring*. We will identify interesting issues related to how firms may achieve success or failure in selling and buying business units, international subsidiaries and other assets. We will analyze our hypotheses using real data. The typical data sources to be used include SDC, COMPUSTAT and CRSP. For data analysis (data manipulation as well as statistical analyses), my recommendation is to use STATA or SAS software, though you may pick any other package if you wish.

3. **Course project**: At the end of the course, each group will put together their most interesting results and analyses together with an appropriate literature review from their weekly analyses in the form of a research paper (about 30 pages). It should include the following: research question and topic, received theory and literature, novel predictions, data description, empirical methods and analysis, empirical findings and conclusions, implications for theory, and meaning to managers.

In terms of evaluation, the final grade will be based on all three components; each of these three components would be weighted equally. Students “auditing” or sitting-in the course are also required to take part in all three components of the course. Students will be graded on their work submitted by the end of the term—there will be no ‘incomplete’ grades granted.
CLASS SCHEDULE

1. Introduction


Optional:


Assignment: To be discussed in class

2. Research Questions and Proposals


Optional:


**Assignment:** Within the research theme provided and working with the instructor, identify an “interesting” research question. Be sure to use the lessons from readings, and you might also want to expose yourself to the previous literature related to your research theme. Submit a 5 page (double spaced) write up on it and be prepared to briefly (5 minutes) present it in class.

3. **Literature Review**


**Assignment:** Prepare a 10 page literature review on the research question identified previously. Be prepared to present it briefly (15 minutes) in class. This literature review should help motivate the research question (you may have to revise or refine the research question).

4. **Measurement Issues**


Optional:


Assignment: Identify the key constructs in your research proposal. Describe how you will measure each one of them using real data. Submit a 5 page write-up and be prepared to present it briefly (10 minutes).

5. **Illustrations of Some Strategy/IB Constructs**


Assignment: Does your research proposal involve the use of financial event studies, cultural distance or other standard measures from the literature? Compute such measures using data. Submit a 2 page write up and be prepared to discuss the process of how you went about it, and any challenges you faced.

6. **Regression Analysis I: Panel Data**


Or

Chapters 12 and 13 of Greene, William H. *Econometric Analysis*.


**Optional:**


**Assignment:** From your proposal, identify a relationship involving dependent, independent and control variables. Using Excel, STATA, SAS or other appropriate software, arrange the data to be able to run regression analyses on this data.

7. **Regression Analysis II: Categorical Dependent Variables**


**Optional:**


**Assignment:** Run regression analyses using the data that was set up last week. Try to draw appropriate conclusions. If some of the variables have not been described in previous assignments, please describe them briefly. Repeat the assignment with a set of categorical dependent variables. Provide an explanation of the choice of the method. Submit a 5 page write-up including the regression tables, and be prepared to present your results briefly (10 minutes).

8. **Regression Analysis III: Moderators, Mediators & Interactions**


**Optional:**


**Assignment:** Repeat the last assignment again, but this time test/explore a relationship involving moderators/mediators etc.

9. **Endogeneity/Systems of Equations**


**Optional:**


**Assignment:** Examine your analyses so far to identify potential issues of endogeneity. Attempt to deal with these issues using an appropriate method.

10. **Final Presentation of Course Project**

Synthesize the assignments you have done so far into a research paper. It should include identification and motivation of the research question, literature review, novel
hypotheses, data description, methods, results, conclusions and discussion (including implications for theory and practice, limitations, future research). Submit a 30 page (approx.) paper, and present it in class (45 minutes). The class will provide feedback.

Submit electronic version of final revised paper by email on March 17.