

Research Project in Economics: Tutorials

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Course Description

This course will have a research-based focus to introduce the student to the search and matching literature, with a particular focus on skills, educational investment, and mismatch in the labor market. The objective at the end of the course is to have a thorough understanding of the process of academic literature review, an introduction to the theoretical and empirical analysis necessary for a coherent and convincing research proposal, and a better knowledge of the macro-labor literature specifically related to the relationship between skills and labor market outcomes.

Course Structure and Requirements

The course will be run as 4 weeks of tutorials. Students are expected to complete the readings and prepare a draft research proposal by the end of the course. Meetings will be held in a conversational style to debate and discuss the topics covered in greater depth, with significant time dedicated to the associated economic theory; participation during these meetings is crucial. Students are expected to have familiarity with basic macro- and microeconomics, statistics, and calculus.

Course Outline (*subject to change*)

Week 1, April 22: Introduction to Search and Matching Theory

- Frictionless models of the labor market
- The McCall Random Search Model
- Introduction to Sorting, Skills, and Mismatch
- **Resources**
 - McCall, J. (1970). “Economics of information and job search.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*: 113-126.
 - Rogerson, R., R. Shimer, and R. Wright. (2005). “Search-theoretic models of the labor market: A survey.” *Journal of economic literature* 43.4: 959-988.

- Acemoglu’s lecture notes on Labor Economics:
<https://economics.mit.edu/faculty/acemoglu/courses>
- Faberman, R. J., and Mazumder, B. (2012). ”Is there a skills mismatch in the labor market?.” Chicago Fed Letter, (Jul). [**and references therein**]

Week 2, May 2: Literature Review and Data Collection

- Formulating a research question
- How to search for the relevant literature
- Collecting Data, with an application to measuring skill mismatch
- **Resources**
 - Nikolov’s Writing Tips For Economics Research Papers :
<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~pnikolov/resources/writingtips.pdf>
 - Gathmann, C., and Schönberg, U. (2010). “How general is human capital? A task-based approach.” Journal of Labor Economics, 28(1), 1-49.

Week 4, May 16: 1st Draft, Short Research Proposal

- Evaluation of the question and arguments
- Strategies for revision

Week 6, May 30: 2nd Draft, Short Research Proposal

- Remaining questions and future research