

HONR-UB0002.01: Senior Honors Seminar
Fall 2025
Seminar sessions: Wednesdays 6:15-7:45pm
Room: KMC 7-191 (Backus Conference Room)
Office hours: Tuesdays 3:00-5:00pm

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SYLLABUS

Seminar description and learning goals:

This Senior Honors Seminar operates in conjunction with the Senior Honors Thesis (which is a separate course that is separately graded). The broad objective of the Senior Honors Program – thesis + seminar – is to provide motivated students with an opportunity to undertake their own research project under the close guidance/supervision of a member of the NYU Stern faculty.

To that end: **The Senior Honors Students are expected to be in periodic contact and communication with their thesis advisors throughout the fall and spring semesters. In-person contact/communication is usually the most desirable.** At each weekly meeting of the seminar, each Senior Honors Student will be asked to report on when he/she most recently communicated with his/her thesis advisor.

This seminar (including the spring semester) is designed to help the Senior Honors Students develop their research ideas and methods and thereby aid in the undertaking and writing of their Senior Honors Theses. The 3 books that were sent to each student during the summer should be a general aid in this process.

Content:

The fall semester seminar sessions will largely emphasize the development of research methodologies and methods, as well as start the process of developing the writing process itself. Other topics will be included, as appropriate.

Materials:

Some of the seminar sessions will have suggested beforehand readings. The readings will help enhance participation in the seminar (see “Grading” below).

Grading:

The course grade for the fall semester Senior Honors Seminar will be based on seminar (on-time) attendance and participation and on timely delivery of thesis outlines (as per the schedule below).

Class slides:

Class slides (when available) will usually be available in hard copy at the beginning of each seminar session. They will also be posted on NYU Brightspace after the seminar.

Academic integrity and classroom norms:

Integrity and professionalism in all aspects of an individual's academic life are central for the NYU Stern student experience. The NYU Stern Code of Conduct can be found [here](#). NYU's Guidance and Expectations for Student Conduct can be found [here](#).

On-time attendance and in-class participation are expected (see "Grading" above). Unless otherwise indicated: **The seminars will be (personal) screen-free: Laptops, tablets, phones, and similar devices are expected to remain closed throughout the seminar sessions.**

Teaching Assistant:

The Teaching Assistant for this course will be Mr. Dev Gupta (devgupta@nyu.edu). He will be available as a general resource for students with respect to topics such as statistics and statistical processes, econometrics, coding, etc. His office hours and location are TBA.

Help:

If you need help: In addition to contacting Mr. Gupta: Please come by my office during my office hours or send me an e-mail to arrange for another time. I am usually at Stern for a large fraction of any week.

Detailed seminar outline:

Note: All seminar sessions are in KMC 7-191 (the Backus Conference Room) on Wednesday evenings: 6:15-7:45pm.

Note: The spring semester seminar schedule will be developed during the fall semester. The end points in the spring – the in-seminar presentations (PowerPoint version) of the Senior Honors Theses, and the submission of the final version of the theses – will occur close to the end of the spring semester. **The final day of classes for the spring semester is Tues May 5.**

Sept 3: Intro

Sept 10: Brief (5 minutes) descriptions of thesis ideas by all 14 students (PowerPoint slides are not required).

Sept 17: David Yermack: "Writing an Interesting Research Paper"

We will look at what makes an academic research project successful, focusing on some of Prof. Yermack's past work. In class we will discuss the aspects of identifying an interesting question, finding relevant data sources, developing skills related to project management and problem solving, and packaging your research into an effective narrative.

Sept 24: Alums from recent years

Oct 1: No seminar (Yom Kippur)

Oct 8: Julianna Pillemer: “An Introduction to Qualitative Field Research”

Students will learn the basics of doing inductive, qualitative research on work and organizations. I will share examples from my own research studying a design firm and artists who share their work on social media. We will spend the last part of our discussion brainstorming ways to adopt an inductive approach to their own questions.

Oct 15: Irv Schenkler: “Writing Your Thesis: Set Your Direction”

In this session, you will discuss your research question/problem with classmates and evaluate how well you have been able to focus your efforts by explaining: 1) what you are working on; 2) what you don’t know about it; 3) why you want your readers to know and care about it.

Oct 21 (Tues): Short outline (1-2 pages) of thesis due by 5:00pm via e-mail to Prof. White; this document should be reviewed and approved by the student’s thesis advisor prior to submission.

Oct 22: Brief (5 minutes) presentations of thesis outlines by all 14 students.

Oct 29: : David Yermack: “Applying to Graduate School”

We will discuss the basics of admission to business school MBA programs, law school JD programs, business and economics Ph.D. programs, and other graduate school options such as Master's programs. The class will focus on comparisons between these degrees, the features of good applications, and the importance of work experience after college, particularly in “pre-doc” programs that increasingly serve as pathways into doctoral studies.

Nov 5: Jiebei Luo: “Library Resources Overview”

This session will provide an overview of the library resources available for the Senior Honors Seminar. It will cover key library tools and services, including research literature, workshops, and research support, with a special focus on business and economic data resources. In addition, students will take part in a brief in-class activity to practice searching for relevant datasets. The session will help students become familiar with the library’s support system and connect them with the liaison librarian for the Economics Department at Stern.

Nov 12: Christopher Conlon: “Popular Research Designs in Applied Microeconomics”

Much of applied work in econometrics follows a series of popular patterns. We will review some of the most common research designs including: Event Studies, Difference in Differences, Regression Discontinuity, Instrumental Variables, and Synthetic Control designs used to estimate casual effects from observational data.

Nov 19: Kristen Sosulski: “Visualizing Data”

Data visualization is the process of presenting information in a graphical format. This process starts with understanding your audience, the nature of your data, and the questions you

seek to answer. From there, you can select the most appropriate type of data graphic. In this talk, you will learn about fundamental data graphics for time series, multivariate, geospatial, and categorical data. Additionally, we will explore ten essential design principles and discuss common pitfalls to avoid.

Nov 26: No seminar (Thanksgiving)

Dec 2 (Tues): Longer outline (3-4 pages) of thesis due by 5:00pm via e-mail to Prof. White; this document should be reviewed and approved by the student's thesis advisor prior to submission.

Dec 3: Presentations (10 minutes) of thesis summaries by 7 students.

Dec 10: Presentations (10 minutes) of thesis summaries by 7 students.