FORECASTING (ECON 3640): Fall

William J. Smith (Joey Smith) - (678) 839-4779 - 1307 Miller Building
OFFICE HOURS: all at RCOB Office 1307

T (3:15 pm – 7:00 pm) OR W (1:00 pm – 5:15 pm) OR TH (3:15 pm – 5:15 pm)...Other times, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Emphasis is on the application of various forecasting methods with regard to analyzing and projecting future business and economic conditions at the national, regional, industry, and firm levels. This course is intended to be very hands-on. The goal is to provide you with a set of tools that you can use to analyze data. The course will extensively use Microsoft Excel, its data analysis capabilities, along with SAS, an industry standard business intelligence software package used in economics for both forecasting and other types of statistical research.

PREQUISITES: ECON 2105, ECON 2106, ECON 3402, or equivalent of each.

SUGGESTED TEXT (not required): Business Forecasting, Wilson and Keating. See links on CourseDen header. Edition 5 or later are all similar, but any forecasting text will cover the material in a similar fashion.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE: Microsoft Excel plus add-ins, SAS (available in Lab and though web access).

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is highly recommended for each class. Students are fully responsible for all announcements and material covered in class, whether in attendance or not. Those not attending class will not receive individual instruction on assignments and the forecasting project. Classes will begin promptly at the scheduled time.

EVALUATION:
Course Den Quizzes and Outside-of-Class SAS Assignments 25%.
Exam (ch 1-5) 25%.
Exam (ch 6-9) 25%.
Forecasting Project 25% (research, writeup, In-Class Presentation)

FORECASTING ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments are to be completed INDEPENDENTLY unless EXPLICITLY stated otherwise. If group assignments are made, Independent means no collaboration between groups. These assignments will use various quantitative techniques covered in the text to develop and evaluate forecasts. These assignments will require the extensive use of MS Excel and its extensions, SAS and access to the Internet. Assignments will not be accepted after the due date. Homework, quizzes, exams are all to be completed independently.

FORECASTING PROJECTS: 25% of the final grade will be based on a forecasting project in which students will develop a multiple regression forecasting model (or comparable appropriate model) in an area of interest. The forecasting project grade will depend both on the quality of the project itself and on the PRESENTATION of the project. All sources must be cited. Students must submit a project proposal in writing for my approval by September 15th. See me prior to this date if you are having problems. (DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE).

CHEATING: Academic dishonesty on any assignment will result in a zero on the assignment, an F for the course, a note recording the incident on the student's permanent record and the student reported to the Vice-President of Student Services for appropriate disciplinary action by the University. All assignments are individual assignments. I encourage discussion on the individual forecasting project, but group work on quizzes or exams is strictly prohibited. See Wolf Pact Below.

WITHDRAWALS: A student who withdraws during the first half of the term will receive an automatic W. A student who withdraws after the midpoint of the term will receive a WF unless the student is administratively withdrawn from the University. The student is fully responsible for formally withdrawing from the course. If the student does not formally withdraw, the instructor will assume the student is still in the course and assign a grade of F for the course.

INCOMPLETES: A student will not be given the grade I unless non-academic circumstances beyond the student's control occur which prevent the student from completing a small segment of the course such as the final exam. For a student to receive a grade of "I," he or she must be doing passing work up to the point that he or she can’t continue. The Dean of the Richards College of Business must approve all incompletes.

E-MAIL: The official channel of communication outside of class will be through your myUWG Email account and Course Den. To protect your confidentiality, I CAN NOT respond to any other email account. This is departmental policy, not just my policy. For faster response, use the regular campus email, as I get no notification of Course Den emails unless I am logged in.

CELL PHONES: All cell phones must be silenced or turned off during class in the College of Business. No cell phone may be on or out during exams. Anyone talking on a cell phone during class will be asked to leave the room.
FOOD AND DRINK: Food and drink are not allowed in computer classrooms in the College of Business.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE SYLLABUS: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if the need arises. However, this will happen ONLY in extenuating circumstances.

COURSE OUTLINE:
Part I – Introduction to Forecasting Methods
  Chapter 1 - Introduction to Business Forecasting
  Chapter 2 - Forecast Process, Data Considerations, and Model Selection
  SAS Primer (The interfaces of SAS)*
Part II - Single Variable Forecasting Methods
  Chapter 3 - Moving Averages and Exponential Smoothing Models
  SAS Primer (working with data sets, reading/writing files, descriptive statistics, tabulations)*
Part III - Forecasting With Regression Models
  Chapter 4 - Introduction to Forecasting with Regression Methods
  SAS Primer (Proc Reg, time-trend modeling)
  Chapter 5 - Forecasting with Multiple Regression
  ***Midterm***
Part IV - Business Cycles & Economic Indicators
  Chapter 6 Time Series Decomposition
  Chapter 7 ARIMA Models (proc ARIMA, and Time Permitting, ETS components of SAS)
  Chapter 9 Data Mining (topics TBD)
  ***Somewhat Comprehensive Exam (don't panic)***

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

(LG1) The student will learn communicate effectively in oral presentations and writing. (LG5, LG6) The students will acquire basic skills in information and business technology. They will learn to access data for developing forecasts using a variety of sources and they will demonstrate an ability to transfer data from one medium to another and use common business application to analyze data by generating and interpret descriptive statistics. (LG2) Students will learn business decision-making skills based on analysis.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT: If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services. A CDS Counselor will coordinate those services. See http://www.westga.edu/~dserve/

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT: No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by UWG.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT: University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.

DISCLAIMER: Unforeseen events may cause changes to the scheduling of projects, assignments, quizzes, etc. Every effort will be made NOT to change scheduled items. Nevertheless, I reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary to best fulfill the course objectives. Students registered for this course will be made aware of any changes in a timely fashion using reasonable means (class announcements, email, website posting).

WOLF PACT: By enrolling and continuing in this course you agree to the following: Having read the Honor Code for the University of West Georgia, I understand and accept my responsibility to uphold the values and beliefs described therein and to conduct myself in a manner that will reflect the values of the Institution and the Richards College of Business so as to respect the rights of all UWG community members. As a UWG student, I will represent myself truthfully and complete all academic assignments honestly and within the parameters set by my instructor. I understand and accept that if I am found guilty of violations (through processes due me as a UWG student and outlined in the UWG Student Handbook), penalties will be imposed. I also recognize that my responsibility includes willingness to confront members of the UWG community if I feel there has been a violation of the Honor Code. Ultimately, I will conduct myself in a manner that promotes UWG as the best place to work, learn, and succeed for my generation, and those to come!

ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES

This class offers a mix of individual assignments and group activities. All assignments must be submitted individually, even if the nature of the assignment requires or allows you to work in a group. Any quiz, given online or in class, is an individual assignment where collaboration is not allowed.

Faculty & Staff
Faculty & Staff Resources
Course Learning Objectives

Credit Hour Policy

Credit Hour Policy (3 credit hours): For approximately fifteen weeks, students in this class will generally spend 150 minutes with direct faculty instruction (either face-to-face or online) and work about 360 minutes outside of the classroom each week. This out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to, readings, assignments, projects, group work, research, and test preparation.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Please carefully review the information at the following link:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

The document at this link contains important information pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.