Ph.D. Course in Economics of Education, Bavarian Graduate Program in Economics,  
27 February - 2 March, 2012

Instructors:
David Figlio, figlio@northwestern.edu  
Orrington Lunt Professor of Economics, Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University

Richard Romano, richard.romano@warrington.ufl.edu  
Gerald L. Gunter Professor of Economics, University of Florida

Course Description:
This weeklong course will provide students with an overview of many of the key theoretical and empirical concepts associated with the current education issues of vital interest to economists. While the limited time precludes complete coverage of the area, the course will cover a wide range of topics including school accountability, school choice and vouchers, teacher compensation and incentives, student incentives, and the political economy of education finance.

This is a very intense course that will include 17 hours of lecture and 6 hours of formal class discussion, as well as 8 hours of scheduled group work and numerous hours of time allocated to out-of-class readings previous to and over the course of the week. Students will submit an examination to the instructors no later than Friday, 16 March, 2012.

A typical day will include the following:

(1) Two two-hour lectures, one each by Professors Figlio and Romano. Students will be expected to read the assigned papers prior to the lecture. (Monday through Thursday)

(2) A two-hour block for group work on "thought exercises" to be discussed the following morning. The purpose of these exercises is to have students extend or apply the material discussed that day in lectures. Students will be divided into groups and will be given an assignment to investigate/explore during the two-hour time window. Groups will then write a one-page summary of their work to give to the instructors the following morning. Two of the thought exercises will be assigned by Professor Romano and two will be assigned by Professor Figlio. (Monday through Thursday)

(3) A 90-minute group discussion of the previous afternoon's thought exercise. These discussions will be moderated by the instructor who assigned the thought exercise. Each group will make a fifteen minute presentation of their work, followed by a moderated discussion of what we learned from the exercise. (Tuesday through Friday)

For the final examination, students will select one theoretical paper and one empirical paper from a set of choices that will be provided. For each paper, students will write a 5-7 page, double-spaced document that provides a thoughtful summary of the paper in the context of the related literature and a critical discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the paper, together with a view of the directions that the research should go in the future. Final examinations will be submitted to the instructors by email.
Course schedule:

Monday, 27 February 2012
09:00-10:00: Course overview (Figlio and Romano)
10:00-10:15: Coffee break
10:15-12:15: Lecture 1: Theory of school choice and competition; peer effects (Romano)
12:15-13:30: Lunch
13:30-15:30: Lecture 2: Empirical evidence on the economics of school vouchers (Figlio)
15:30-17:30: Group work on thought exercise 1
19:00: Dinner

Tuesday, 28 February 2012
09:00-10:30: Review of thought exercise 1 (Figlio)
10:30-10:45: Coffee break
10:45-12:45: Lecture 3: Political economy of education finance (Romano)
12:45-14:00: Lunch
14:00-16:00: Lecture 4: School accountability (Figlio)
16:00-18:00: Group work on thought exercise 2
19:00: Dinner

Wednesday, 29 February 2012
09:00-10:30: Review of thought exercise 2 (Romano)
10:30-10:45: Coffee break
10:45-12:45: Lecture 5: Tiebout educational provision (Romano)
12:45-14:00: Lunch
14:00-16:00: Lecture 6: Evidence on performance pay for educators (Figlio)
16:00-18:00: Group work on thought exercise 3
19:00: Dinner

Thursday, 1 March 2012
09:00-10:30: Review of thought exercise 3 (Figlio)
10:30-10:45: Coffee break
10:45-12:45: Lecture 7: Student incentives (Figlio)
12:45-14:00: Lunch
14:00-16:00: Lecture 8: Educator objectives (Romano)
16:00-18:00: Group work on thought exercise 4
19:00: Dinner

Friday, 2 March 2012
09:00-10:30: Review of thought exercise 4 (Romano)
10:30-11:00: Course wrap-up; expectations for final examination (Figlio and Romano)
Reading list:

Readings for Monday, 27 February:


Readings for Tuesday, 28 February:


______________________, “On the Political Economy of Educational Vouchers,” working paper.


**Readings for Wednesday, 29 February:**


**Readings for Thursday, 1 March:**


