

Research Workshop

CEMFI

Professor Diego Puga

Email: diego.puga@cemfi.es

Professor Manuel Arellano

Email: arellano@cemfi.es

Professor Nezih Guner

Email: nezih.guner@cemfi.es

This Research Workshop aims to provide guidance for second-year Master's students to transition more effectively from coursework to research.

The course will cover the following topics:

- Guidance for planning and developing a Master thesis.
- Critically evaluating existing research and writing referee reports.
- Writing a research proposal.
- Writing a research paper.
- Presenting research to an audience.
- Coding and managing data for effective and replicable applied economics research.
- Useful software and computing tips.

The course hopes to help you:

- Think critically and creatively about existing research.
- Design and develop your own research projects.
- Implement best practices regarding data management, coding, and replicability.
- Improve your ability to present complex research output in a clear and synthetic way, both orally and in writing.

Schedule

Class schedule: The course is spread over three periods of intensive teaching.

Part 1. This first part is intended to provide guidance on how to approach the Master Thesis as well as develop skills to critically evaluate research, write a research proposal, give oral presentations and organise data and code. During the first week of the academic year, Monday 16 through Friday 20 September 2024, 9:30-11:00 & 11:30-13:00. Diego Puga will teach sections on topics 1-5 in the syllabus Monday-Thursday. Manuel Arellano will teach topics 6 in the syllabus Friday.

Part 2. This second part is intended to provide hands-on advice on how to write a research paper, with particular applicability to the Master thesis. It will be taught by Nezh Guner over the course of a week in the Spring term.

Part 3. This third part is intended to provide more detailed guidance on organising data and code in the context of the Master thesis. Students will present orally a progress report of their Master's thesis with preliminary results. Students are also expected to attend the presentations of fellow students in related research areas. These joint sessions with individual presentations, scheduled on 7 May 2025, will be followed over the subsequent week by an individual session with a presentation by each student of the status of a package of code and data that will eventually allow to replicate the results of the Master's thesis, where they will receive personalised feedback and advice.

Office hours: By appointment.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation for this course (pass/fail) will be based on the presentations on the progress of the Master thesis and of its replication package in May.

Syllabus

1. A Practical Guide on Coding and Managing Data for Applied Economists

- [Lecture slides for topic 1.](#)
- Download the replication package from <https://diegopuga.org/data/urbangrowth/>, to be used for illustration (the smaller version [urbangrowth_replication_nogis.zip](#) is enough).
- [The paper that this replication package replicates.](#)

2. Writing a Research Proposal and Planning a Research Paper

- [Lecture slides for topic 2.](#)

3. Writing a Referee Report

- [Lecture slides for topic 3.](#)

4. Presenting Research

- ["How to Give an Applied Micro Talk"](#), by Jesse M. Shapiro
- ["Public Speaking for Academic Economists"](#), by Rachael Meager
- [Public Resources with Writing and Presentation Advice](#), compiled by Amanda Agan

5. Software tips

- [Lecture slides for topic 5.](#)

6. Introduction to the Master thesis

- ["Introduction to the whats and whys of knowledge production in economics for research rookies"](#), by Manuel Arellano

7. Writing Workshop

- Writing Workshop with a particular focus on the Master's thesis, by Nezhir Guner