

Special Problems

Course Information

- **Instructor:** Robert Gonzalez (robert.gonzalez@gatech.edu)
- **Course Prefix and Number:** ECON 8990 MO1
- **Term:** Fall 2026

Course Description

This course provides academic credit for doctoral-level independent research and specialized study conducted under the supervision of a Georgia Tech faculty advisor. ECON 8990 is designed for students to explore specific economic topics, methodologies, or preliminary research questions that fall outside the scope of regular course offerings.

Course Learning Outcomes

By enrolling in this course, students will:

1. Engage in independent research or specialized literature synthesis under faculty supervision.
2. Gain experience in formulating technical research questions and applying econometric or theoretical methods appropriate to the field of economics.
3. Communicate research progress and preliminary findings through regular interactions with the faculty advisor to prepare for subsequent dissertation work.

Required Course Materials

No textbooks or materials are required. Specific resources, datasets, or software needed for the research project are determined in consultation with the faculty advisor.

Grading Policy

This course is graded on a **Satisfactory (S) / Unsatisfactory (U)** basis.

- A grade of **Satisfactory (S)** indicates that the student has made acceptable progress in their independent study or preliminary research, consistent with the objectives established at the beginning of the term.
- A grade of **Unsatisfactory (U)** indicates that the student did not meet the expectations for performance or failed to maintain the agreed-upon contact and progress during the term.

Attendance Policy

This course does not include scheduled class meetings. Students conduct independent research under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The frequency and format of student–advisor contact (e.g., weekly meetings, email updates) are determined by mutual agreement.

Academic and Research Honesty/Integrity Statement

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review the Student Code of Conduct and the Academic Honor Code, especially Appendix A: Graduate Addendum to the Academic Honor Code.

Students are expected to perform research in an ethical and responsible manner. All doctoral students are encouraged to abide by the principles of the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training while performing research for this course. Allegations of scientific or scholarly misconduct are handled in accordance with the procedures outlined by the Policy for Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Scholarly Misconduct.

Core IMPACTS

Not applicable.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Expectations of Advisors and Advisees

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Expectations of Advisors and Advisees articulates some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.