

## **Econ 495 Economics Internship**

Fall 2024  
Prof. Kangoh Lee  
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**1. Course Description:** Economics 495 is a professional career experience, requiring about 150 hours of work for 15 weeks and economic research analysis. Students work in professionally-meaningful placements outside the classroom and learn how to conduct research analysis based on their internship.

**2. Course Objectives/learning outcomes:** This course is intended to provide students with the opportunity to apply their classroom learning and knowledge and to gain real-world experience. Upon completion, students should be able to

- understand the structure and function of the workplace,
- apply their academic skills to jobs,
- analyze business and economic data,
- relate data analysis to business operations,
- develop and expand their career options.

**3. Office:** Office NH 319

### **4. Office Hours**

10:00am – 10:50am on T and TH,

10:30am -11:30am on W via Zoom: <https://sdsu.zoom.us/j/82084097445>

or

by appointment

### **5. Internship Jobs**

#### **A. Acceptable internships**

Generally speaking, professionally-meaningful placements are accepted. That is, acceptable internships must have economics components, and you should be able to apply your economics knowledge and skills, regardless of whether your employer is a government agency or a private business or a corporation or a non-profit organization. As explained below in Section 6-D and Section 6-E, an economic analysis of your work is required, and your internship should be suitable for such analysis. Internships that are **not** acceptable include, but not limited to, simple clerical and office management jobs such as answering phones and managing files or data (paper or electronic), retail sales and tele-marketing jobs, and cashier jobs at stores.

Students are responsible for securing their internships. It is desirable that students have already secured their internships at the time when they register for Econ495 and submit the required forms, mentioned in Section 6-A below. If not, I urge students to find internships as early as possible, so that they can complete their internship on time and earn academic credits.

However, it is difficult to get internships, especially because the pandemic has changed businesses.

If you are willing to make an effort to find an internship, I will help you search in a systematic way. To work with me, register for Econ495 and let me know your intention to work with me to find an internship. Since it takes a while to search, the sooner you start the better, and you should not wait until the semester starts.

### **B. Using your part time jobs**

It is possible that you may use your part time jobs as internships. Register for Econ495, and discuss this option with me. The sooner you discuss, the better, and you should not wait until the semester starts.

### **C. Individual research option**

This option allows you to conduct meaningful research, relevant to economics and business, under my supervision. If you want to pursue this option, register for Econ495 and discuss your idea with me. Since it takes a while to have a correct idea of research, the sooner you discuss it with me, the better, and you should not wait until the semester starts.

## **6. Course requirements**

### **A-1. submit all required forms and internship contracts**

**Your internship will not start until all forms below are submitted to me.**

- (i) Student Information Form: submit it as soon as possible;
- (ii) Waiver and Release of Liability Form: submit it as soon as possible.
- (iii) Economics Internship Contract: Submit it as soon as you have obtained an internship.
- (iv) ISQ (Internship Site Questionnaire): Once you obtain an internship, I will email your employer the ISQ, and your employer should sign it and send it to me.
- (v) SLA (Service Learning Agreement): Once I receive the ISQ from your employer, I will email your employer the SLA, and your employer should sign it and send it to me.

Forms, (i) through (iii), are posted on my website, <https://klee.sdsu.edu> (click Econ 495 in the Teaching section).

### **A-2. meeting with the instructor**

Economics 495 does not meet in a classroom regularly. At the same time, Economics 495 is not an online course, and students are expected to meet the instructor to discuss their progress and to discuss their reports and economic analysis below, in Section 9. Students must meet the instructor to discuss the economic analysis report at least a few weeks before the deadline. Students of course can request a meeting with the instructor whenever they need.

**B. at least about 150 hours of professionally-meaningful work:** see 5-A above.

No credit will be given to any internships done prior to the Fall 2024 semester without my approval.

**C. First Midterm report:** 10% of the course grade, and due by 5:00 p.m. on September 25, 2024. Submit it via email attachments.

In this first project report, (i) describe your professional goals, and address how your internship will help you achieve the goals, (ii) discuss the on-the-job training you have received, (iii) explain your internship activities so far, and your possible future duties in the placement, and (iv) describe and discuss how and what you have communicated with your activity supervisor. In the report, give actual examples of each point you describe or discuss. In addition, briefly introduce your company or organization: nature of business, history, location, number of employees, sales, etc.

The report is for academic credit, and must have a high quality, both in terms of content and style. It must be typed, and I expect this report to be 3-5 page long, not including the introduction of your company or organization. The report should be your own work, and any type of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, including the use of AI such as ChatGPT, will be punished according to the university policies. See Section 17 below for academic dishonesty.

Do not try to complete the report one or two days before the deadline. Rather, take a note of and write down your observations and thoughts and actual examples in a memo format at least once or twice each week. Such memos will help you complete the report successfully.

**D. Second Midterm report:** 25% of the course grade, and due by 5:00 p.m. on October 28, 2024. Submit it via email attachments.

The second report consists of two parts.

**D-1: general report** (10% of the course grade)

In part 1, describe and discuss (i) the progress or any changes since your last report, and (ii) your expectation of duties and responsibilities in your placement until the end of the internship. In the report, give actual examples of each point you describe or discuss.

**D-2: preliminary economic analysis** (15% of the course grade)

In part 2, discuss and explain (i) your hypothesis you developed from your internship job, (ii) why it is meaningful from economic perspectives, (iii) why it is useful to your employer, and (iv) and what type of data you have secured from your internship job to test your hypothesis.

Do not provide a complete economic analysis, because the complete and refined economic analysis is part of the final report below in Section E. See Section 9 below for detailed explanation of economic analysis.

An economic analysis involves three parts: idea or hypothesis to analyze from your internship experience, data and statistical/quantitative analysis based on actual data related to the topic, and the interpretations and implications of the analysis for your organization. You must get an idea or hypothesis to analyze, and obtain relevant actual data from your internship job, and perform a statistical/quantitative analysis. I will help you improve and refine your analysis, but you are the one who should initiate the analysis.

It may take some time to develop an idea or topic to analyze. To discuss your idea with me, make

an appointment with me at least two weeks before the deadline.

The report is for academic credit, and must have a high quality, both in terms of content and style. It must be typed, and I expect this report to be 2-3 pages long for part 1 and 5-6 pages long for part 2. The report should be your own work, and any type of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be found and punished according to the university policies.

Do not try to complete the report one or two days before the deadline. Rather, take a note of and write down your observations and thoughts and actual examples in a memo format at least once or twice each week. Such memos will help you complete the report successfully.

**E. Final report:** 60% of the course grade, and due by 5:00 p.m. on December 2, 2024. Submit it via email attachments. However, it is usual that students need to revise their final report (economic analysis) a few times, and submit your report at the latest by November 20, 2024, so that I can help you and you would have enough time to revise before the deadline.

The final report has two parts.

**E-1: general report.** (10% of the course grade)

In part 1, (i) describe your achievements and your contributions to the organization during your internship, and discuss how your economics knowledge and skills help you achieve and contribute, (ii) describe and discuss skills and knowledge you have learned from your internship, and (iii) address how you or your supervisor or organization could have made the internship a better experience. In the report, give actual examples of each point you describe or discuss.

**E-2: economic analysis** (50% of the course grade)

In part 2, refine and complete the preliminary economic analysis you conducted in the second midterm report above in Section D-2. See Section 9 below for detailed explanation of economic analysis.

An economic analysis involves three parts: idea or topic to analyze from your internship experience, data and regression analysis based on actual data related to the topic, and the interpretations and implications of the analysis for your organization. You must get an idea or topic to analyze, obtain relevant actual data from your internship job, and perform regression analysis. I will help you improve and refine your analysis, but you are the one who should initiate the analysis.

A larger data set with many observations and variables is better for the analysis. Your data must have at least 150 observations and 10 variables (the dependent variable, the independent variable, and controls) for a meaningful analysis.

It is a violation of academic integrity to submit a term paper you already submitted or plan to submit to another class, and your internship final report must be based on your internship job and your data must be from your internship job. It is also a serious violation of academic integrity to use the economic analysis in this course for other classes. The violations will be handled according to

university policies.

It may take some time to refine the idea and to analyze statistically or quantitatively. To avoid any delay in completing your report, I strongly suggest that you meet and communicate with me regularly about your idea and progress. You may have to revise your report, and try to submit your report or see me at least two weeks before the deadline, so that I can help you and you would have enough time to revise before the deadline.

The report is for academic credit, and must have a high quality, both in terms of content and style. It must be typed, and I expect this report to be at least 4000 words (500 words for part 1 and 3500 words for part 2). The report should be your own work, and any type of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, including the use of AI, will be found and punished according to the university policies. See Section 17 below for more on academic dishonesty.

Do not try to complete the report one or two days before the deadline. Rather, take a note of and write down your observations and thoughts and actual examples in a memo format at least once or twice each week. Such memos will help you complete the report successfully.

### **E-3. structure of the final report**

Structure your final report as follows:

1. general report

2. economic analysis

2-A. introduction: discuss the importance of the issue you analyze in relation to your employer's business.

2-B. hypothesis: discuss the rationale for your hypothesis, and rationale for other control variables.

Also, relate your hypothesis to the literature. More specifically, read at least five published articles from Google Scholar that are related to your hypothesis, explain the difference between your hypothesis and those in the published articles, and discuss why your hypothesis may be more useful than those in the published articles. Include the author and year of an article each time you mention it, and cite it in the reference section.

2-C. data: explain your data and variables, and include summary statistics and explain it.

2-D. empirical analysis: regression results and the interpretation of the results

2-E. implications: discuss the implications of empirical analysis for businesses or government policies.

2-F. shortcomings: discuss the shortcomings of analysis such as data limitation

2-G. references: include all articles you cite, and any data sources.

**F. Supervisor's written evaluation of student's work:** 5% of the course grade, and due by 5:00 p.m. on December 2, 2024. Have your supervisor send it to me via email attachments. The evaluation is confidential, and your supervisor, not you, has to send it to me.

Use the Supervisor's Evaluation Form, posted on my website. It is your responsibility to have your

supervisor send me the complete form by the deadline.

### **G. Research analysis and your employer**

I help your research analysis throughout the analysis. As such, your research analysis in this course embodies my knowledge, research skills, and research experience. Since I help you complete your research analysis only to help you earn academic credits for Econ 495, any part of your research analysis should not be used by your employer. If your employer wants to use any part of your research analysis, your employer must have a written agreement with me.

### **7. Grade**

Students will receive one of three grades: CR, NC, RP.

To earn a CR, students must satisfy all A-F requirements stipulated in Section 6, with a **passing grade on each requirement, C-F**.

### **8. Late internship and deadlines for the reports**

If you start your internship late, submit the first report within 30 days after your start, and the second report within 30 days after your first report, and the final report within 45 days after your second report. You will get a RP (report in progress) grade at the end of the semester, and the RP grade will be converted to a CR (credit) if all the course requirements are successfully completed within a stipulated time period not to exceed one year.

### **9. Economic analysis report**

#### **A. General Ideas**

**From your internship experience**, create a hypothesis that relates two or more variables, and test your hypothesis statistically based on actual data from your internship job, and discuss the implications of the analysis. You need to know how to perform a regression analysis and how to interpret the regression results (Econ 301 covers basics of regression). I will help you improve and refine your analysis, but you are the one who should initiate the analysis.

You should not simply summarize or describe a case or data, or write an essay about something.

#### **B. Data**

The analysis must use an **actual data from your internship job**, not hypothetical data, although the names of persons and businesses or any identifiable information will not be revealed.

#### **C. An example of economic analysis**

##### **Hypothesis testing**

Suppose that you have worked for a commercial real estate brokerage firm. Your firm wants to maximize its profits or commissions by selling more commercial properties or office buildings. Potential buyers of office buildings are interested in the rents they can earn from the building they purchase. For these reasons, your firm and you would want to analyze the factors that determine the rents for office space. To that end, you would do the following.

First, create a hypothesis to analyze, meaning that you need to find out which variables are known to affect the rents. Those variables would include the distance to CBD (central business district), the year built,..... Discuss your findings about the variables in the report. That is, you need to justify why you include certain variables by citing the relevant literature. For instance, your key hypothesis would be that the closer to the CBD or the newer the building, the higher the rents.

Second, collect the relevant data to analyze the relationship between the rents and the variables you found above. That is, collect the data on rents and other variables from your internship work experience at the broker.

Third, statistically analyze the relationship between rents and other variables by conducting a regression analysis.

Fourth, make some recommendations to the firm based on your analysis.

#### **D. General Ideas Again**

It is expected that students meet with the instructor, as the instructor will help students improve and refine the analysis. However, students should initiate the analysis.

There will not be any credit for an essay that summarizes or describes your internship experience or case or a situation, or for an analysis that does not come from your internship.

#### **10. Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the [Student Ability Success Center](#) (SASC). To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact the center as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from the center.

#### **11. Student Conduct Code**

The [Student Conduct Code](#) prohibits conduct disruptive to instruction, including academic dishonesty and the unauthorized recording, dissemination, or publication (including on websites or social media) of lectures or other course materials.

#### **12. Essential Student Information**

For essential information about student academic success, please see the [SDSU Student Academic Success Handbook](#)

### **13. Safe Learning Environment**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I am required to share information regarding sexual violence on SDSU's campus with the [Title IX](#) coordinator, Gail Mendez (619-594-6464), who will contact you to let you know about support services at SDSU and possibilities for holding accountable the person who harmed you. If you do not want the Title IX Officer notified, you can speak confidentially SDSU's Sexual Violence Victim Advocate (619-594-0210) or Counseling and Psychological Services (619-594-5220, [psycserv@sdsu.edu](mailto:psycserv@sdsu.edu)).

### **14. Class materials, and Faculty Intellectual Property Protections**

Unauthorized use or dissemination of course instruction or materials by students, especially with the intent to disrupt normal university operations or facilitate academic dishonesty, is a violation of the Student Conduct Code. This includes posting of exam problems or questions to on-line platforms or selling course materials. Violators will be punished and be subject to discipline.

### **15. Sale of course materials and fundraising**

The following is not permitted: direct sale of course materials by instructor; sale of materials produced expressly for the course in a form that returns royalties or profits to the instructor; fundraising or other forms of solicitation.

**16. Religious observances:** According to the University Policy File, students should notify the instructors of affected courses of planned absences for religious observances by the end of the second week of classes.

**17. Academic Dishonesty:** The University adheres to a strict [policy prohibiting cheating and plagiarism](#). Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:  
using ChatGPT or similar entities [to represent human-authored work];  
copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination;  
obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor;  
collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor;  
falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data;  
submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course;  
altering or interfering with grading procedures;  
assisting another student in any of the above;  
using sources verbatim or paraphrasing without giving proper attribution (this can include



phrases, sentences, paragraphs and/or pages of work);  
copying and pasting work from an online or offline source directly and calling it your own;  
using information you find from an online or offline source without giving the author credit;  
replacing words or phrases from another source and inserting your own words or phrases.

The California State University system requires instructors to report all instances of academic misconduct to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. Academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary review by the University and may lead to probation, suspension, or expulsion. Instructors may also, at their discretion, penalize student grades on any assignment or assessment discovered to have been produced in an academically dishonest manner.

### **18. Finding Help on Campus**

Need help finding an advisor, tutor, counselor, or require emergency economic assistance? The [SDSU Student Success Help Desk](#) is here for you. Student assistants are available during the academic term via Zoom Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM to help you find the office or service that can best assist with your particular questions or concerns.

### **19. Land Acknowledgement**

For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the San Diego State University community, we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land, the land of the Kumeyaay