

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

**Essential Information about Economics 496  
Internship in Economics**

Economics 496, Internship in Economics, is a three-credit upper-level course that may be taken as part of the 11-credit, any level, economics electives component of the UB economics major. **Economics 496 cannot be used for part of either the 12-credit upper-level electives requirement for an economics major or the 6-credit upper-level elective requirement of an economics minor (see pages 4 and 11 of the Undergraduate Program Brochure that is provided by the Department of Economics).**

**The pre-requisites** for Economics 496 are pass grades in both Economics 405 and Economics 407, and a GPA of at least 3.0 in the economics courses taken to date.

Economics 496 is graded on a pass/fail basis.

Economics 496 can be taken *only* by prior arrangement with the Director of Undergraduate Studies of the Department of Economics. It is essential that the Director be consulted before an Economics 496 internship is embarked upon and before a student enrolls in the course. When it is conducted properly, the internship is a valuable and rewarding experience for the internee, the organization providing the internship, and the University at Buffalo. Some simple preparatory steps greatly assist in providing a good outcome for all concerned.

First, and most important of all, Economics 496 offers three credits at the upper-level towards your major in economics. Therefore, any internship that you consider undertaking *must* allow you to gain additional experience in economics that merits awarding to you those three credits. For example, an internship that involves you only in entering survey data into a computer is not appropriate for Economics 496. But an internship that involves you in working alongside people using those same data to help to decide how an organization can best use its resources to achieve its goals would let you see and, better still, involve you in weighing benefits and opportunity costs in a fundamentally economic manner. Such an internship would be appropriate for Economics 496. The basic point is that to be appropriate an internship should either teach you three upper-level credits worth of new economics, or teach you three upper-level credits worth of applying economic knowledge that you already have, or be some mixture of these.

Second, there are a few preparatory steps to take to reduce the chance of a bad outcome from your internship. You should present a copy of this document to the person who will be supervising your internship so that he or she also knows what is needed. That person should supply to you and to the Director of Undergraduate Studies a short description of the internship so that you, the Supervisor and the Director all understand what the internship involves and that it will suffice for enrolment by you in Economics 496. This description is a contract. It must contain at the least:

- (a) the name of the organization providing the internship and the name of the person who will be chiefly responsible for supervising the internship, and
- (b) a description of the internship, including the tasks to be assigned, training methods, the hours per week required of the internee and the duration of the internship.

It may be that as the internship progresses there are some minor deviations from this contract. These will not be problems so long as the deviations are minor or increase the economic content of the internship. It is risky for you to enroll in Economics 496 until all of these details have been worked out so please do not do so. If your supervisor has any questions then he or she is most welcome to contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies (contact data are given below).

Third, at the conclusion of the internship your supervisor should provide to the Director an evaluation of your performance throughout the internship. As well, you must prepare a report on what you have done and learned throughout the internship. This report is how you justify to the Director that you have earned three upper-level credits towards your economics major. It is recommended that you keep a weekly diary throughout your internship so that you can refer to it when you come to prepare your report. The report should be typed in a 12-point font and double-spaced. Upon receiving the supervisor's letter and your report, the Director will as soon as is possible assign a grade of Pass or Fail to your performance in Economics 496.

If you have additional questions concerning Economics 496 then you are welcome to ask the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Zhiqiang Liu. His office is 445 Fronczak Hall on the North Campus of UB. His mailing address is Department of Economics, 445 Fronczak Hall, University at Buffalo, NY 14260-1520. His phone number is (716)-645-8688 and his FAX number is (716)-645-2127. Email him at [zqliu@buffalo.edu](mailto:zqliu@buffalo.edu) to specifically outline your concerns before you visit him during his undergraduate advising office hours.