



# ECON 1152

## Using Big Data to Solve Economic and Social Problems

**Term/Year:** Spring 2019  
**Department:** Economics

**Enrollment:** 361  
**Number of Responses:** 300  
**Percent Response** 83.10%

Unless otherwise indicated in the question text, the following scale is used for responses:  
1=unsatisfactory; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=very good; 5=excellent.

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
Evaluate the course overall.		1	18	45	121	112	297	82.27%	<b>4.09</b>

### QUESTIONS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
How much did this Gen Ed course meet at least one of these goals? (1=none; 2=very little; 3=some; 4=quite a bit; 5=a great deal)	10	0	4	20	72	187	283	78.39%	<b>4.56</b>

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
Course materials (readings, audio-visual materials, textbooks, lab manuals, website, etc.)	5	2	14	45	87	141	289	80.06%	<b>4.21</b>
Assignments (exams, essays, problem sets, language homework, etc.)	0	4	23	61	110	95	293	81.16%	<b>3.92</b>
Feedback you received on work you produced in this course	2	6	23	73	91	98	291	80.61%	<b>3.87</b>
Section component of the course	9	17	30	63	74	100	284	78.67%	<b>3.74</b>
On average, how many hours per week did you spend on coursework outside of class? (1=<3; 2=3-6; 3=7-10; 4=11-14; 5=>14)		37	214	24	3	1	279	77.29%	<b>4.38</b>

Unless indicated in the question text, the following scale is used for responses: 1=unsatisfactory; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=very good; 5=excellent.



	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
What was/were your reason(s) for enrolling in this course? (Please check all that apply)	Elective						163	45.15%	
	Concentration or Department Requirement						124	34.35%	
	Secondary Field or Language Citation Requirement						56	15.51%	
	Undergraduate Core or General Education Requirement						23	6.37%	
	Expository Writing Requirement						0		
	Foreign Language Requirement						0		
	Pre-Med Requirement						0		
How strongly would you recommend this course to your peers? (1=definitely not recommend; 2=unlikely to recommend; 3=recommend with reservations; 4=likely to recommend; 5=recommend with enthusiasm)		3	11	48	103	128	293	81.16%	<b>4.17</b>



## EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTORS / FACULTY MEMBERS

Name	Q1	# Responses for Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
<b>Instructors / Faculty Members Overall</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>4.59</b>
Bruich, Gregory Alan	4.33	213	4.26	4.52	4.51	4.53	4.53
Chetty, Raj	4.53	282	4.72	3.46	4.43	4.61	4.67

**Q1:** Evaluate your Instructor overall.

**Q2:** Gives effective lectures or presentations, if applicable

**Q3:** Is accessible outside of class (including after class, office hours, e-mail, etc.)

**Q4:** Facilitates discussion and encourages participation

**Q5:** Gives useful feedback on assignments

**Q6:** Returns assignments in a timely fashion



## EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTORS / FACULTY MEMBERS

### Bruich, Gregory Alan

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
Evaluate your Instructor overall.		1	9	29	53	121	213	59.00%	<b>4.33</b>
Gives effective lectures or presentations, if applicable	60	2	9	22	32	86	151	41.83%	<b>4.26</b>
Is accessible outside of class (including after class, office hours, e-mail, etc.)	22	2	5	17	35	131	190	52.63%	<b>4.52</b>
Facilitates discussion and encourages participation	105	0	2	12	16	63	93	25.76%	<b>4.51</b>
Gives useful feedback on assignments	115	2	0	8	14	57	81	22.44%	<b>4.53</b>
Returns assignments in a timely fashion	115	2	0	9	13	59	83	22.99%	<b>4.53</b>

## EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTORS / FACULTY MEMBERS

### Chetty, Raj

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
Evaluate your Instructor overall.		0	4	19	83	176	282	78.12%	<b>4.53</b>
Gives effective lectures or presentations, if applicable	0	1	2	16	38	228	285	78.95%	<b>4.72</b>
Is accessible outside of class (including after class, office hours, e-mail, etc.)	80	21	43	33	33	72	202	55.96%	<b>3.46</b>
Facilitates discussion and encourages participation	103	2	4	18	40	103	167	46.26%	<b>4.43</b>
Gives useful feedback on assignments	199	1	1	8	4	55	69	19.11%	<b>4.61</b>
Returns assignments in a timely fashion	198	1	1	5	6	57	70	19.39%	<b>4.67</b>

## EVALUATION OF TEACHING FELLOWS

### Droste, Michael

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.		0	0	1	2	15	18	4.99%	<b>4.78</b>
Gives effective lectures or presentations, if applicable	0	0	0	2	1	14	17	4.71%	<b>4.71</b>
Facilitates discussion and encourages participation	0	0	0	1	3	13	17	4.71%	<b>4.71</b>
Is accessible outside of class (including after class, office hours, e-mail, etc.)	0	0	0	1	0	17	18	4.99%	<b>4.89</b>
Generates enthusiasm for the subject matter	0	0	0	1	2	15	18	4.99%	<b>4.78</b>
Gives useful feedback on assignments	1	0	0	0	2	14	16	4.43%	<b>4.88</b>
Returns assignments in a timely fashion	0	0	0	2	2	13	17	4.71%	<b>4.65</b>

## QUESTIONS PROVIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR

	na	1	2	3	4	5	Tot.	Response Rate	Mean
How much did you learn in the class? 5 = a lot	1	2	12	34	111	134	293	81.16%	<b>4.24</b>
We had guest discussions with Shaun Donovan (Affordable Housing), Timothy Renick (College Completion), Jesse Shapiro (Food Stamps Programs), Lynn Overmann (Health and Criminal Justice), and Esther Duflo (Poverty in Developing Countries). Do you agree that these discussions were a useful component of the class? (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neither agree or disagree; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree)	0	2	9	23	110	149	293	81.16%	<b>4.35</b>



**ECON 1152**  
**Using Big Data to Solve Economic and Social Problems**

# Comments

## What would you like to tell future students about this class?

### Course

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

Not as easy as you might think. Although technically an intro class it'd help to have some quantitative background.

Evaluate the course overall.: **3 (good)**

This class is a good basic introduction to big data. It can get boring at times, but you'll read interesting papers and learn a few economic techniques

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

What this class does well is it exposes you to a variety of social problems, and gives you approaches to solving them with econometric methods. I was convinced that there are important social problems in the world to solve. I did not find them particularly inspiring or interesting, but I think that this clarified what I wanted to do.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

ABSOLUTELY AMAZING CLASS. This is the type of class you come to Harvard to take. Raj is the most organized, professional, engaging lecturer at Harvard. He got a round of applause after every single lecture. The slides are so easy to follow. The problem sets have the code given to you and are really straightforward. The exams are really fair. Honestly, I am so so so happy I took this course. Would recommend 15/10!

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

Some kinks to be worked out, but still a very compelling class!

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Amazing course. Chetty is a god tier lecturer. You learn about interesting economic research that makes the world a better place. Reasonable problem sets and very reasonable exams. lots of support resources. Michael is an amazing TF.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

This class will introduce you to many of the key problems going on in the world. It is likely to make you realize that you want to be a part of solving one or more of these issues. It will also give you the tools to do so and an appreciation for big data and randomized experiments.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

This class is a must take. Professor Chetty has a deep knowledge of the cutting edge research we discuss. I developed a good understanding of the issues people are talking about and how to evaluate their research designs. I was introduced to the data being used across many issues, from criminal justice to upward mobility to the environment to health. The projects and exams made me think about these questions more deeply. Lecture is exciting because we draw conclusions from the data that impact people's lives.



Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

This course covers topics that are incredibly important to modern society in an approachable, applied manner. I would recommend this much over Ec10 for its real-world implications.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Great way to get your Ec writing requirement out of the way - very low workload and it's a pretty fair/manageable class with interesting material. It's essentially a much easier, foundational version of metrics, but more interesting since you learn about various applications of it. The Empirical Projects are basically just metrics psets. Chetty is also a great lecturer. Try to get Michael as your TF - he's the man.

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

Overall, good class. Professor Raj Chetty is one of the most influential young economics in public economics, and he's also a great lecturer who is able clearly articulate the ideas he wants to convey. Watch out for the midterm. I sincerely believe the graders were too harsh with some of their scoring. I looked over my exam with my TF after I got it back, and he told me that some of the points that were taken off were unfair. I did not challenge though, because of the rather stupid rule that the entire exam had to be regraded upon a regrade request. That's so dumb. But this was the first time the class was offered, and I think it could have been much worse.

Evaluate the course overall.: **3 (good)**

This class presented very interesting research and opened my eyes to many pertinent social/economic issues. This said, as it was the first time it was a course at Harvard, it certainly had its issues. There was incredible inconsistency amongst TF preparation/knowledge and how they taught, as well as how they graded. 1152 is also is by no means an intro class (which is what it was branded as, requiring no prior background), I think you need at least stat 104 before it. Also even though there are intro vs. advanced streams, you feel at an extreme disadvantage to kids who have taken econometrics or an economics tutorial where they used (they said they would copy code). The projects are challenging, and consume a lot of time, but are only worth a cumulative 25% (should be worth a greater % imo). There needs to be more proactive stata/R support (OHs turn into everyone needing code debugging). Also, it was not fair that we used stata all semester, then in the last project had to switch to R (and teach ourselves R - and all the OH were so busy you got one questions per hour answered) - last project was way beyond the ability level of the course. Also frustrating that some TFs would send out sample projects to their sections so they would get 100%, and then you are left there without that (very unfair). Likely will be a better course next year, after modifications based on this year's feedback, but be warned it takes a lot of time (and make sure you get a TF who actually teaches and answers questions).





## Please comment on your Section Leader's teaching.

### Droste, Michael

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Smart dude, knows what he's talking about

Evaluate the course overall.: **3 (good)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Mike was the BEST TF. He responded to emails almost instantly and was always willing to put in extra time to help students out. He was clearly very knowledgeable about all the course material

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **4 (very good)**  
I wish there was less theory in the section because I've already taken a lot of statistical theory courses. But Michael is such a nice person and so willing to help and answer literally any questions he can. Great guy.

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Mike was incredible. Maybe the best TF I've had here. Very enthusiastic and a teacher at heart. Also very accessible and down-to-earth. A great guest for pfaculty dinner!

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Michael did an incredible job with our section. Always had a smiling face and kept things upbeat. Snacks in section were awesome. A+ job by him! Was very understanding and helpful when I just missed a problem set.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Michael is the dream TF. He understands each aspect of course material fully and can explain it to you extremely well. He's also extremely helpful in answering any type of question from research advice to pset help.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**  
Mike was the best section leader. He uses stories to explain the concepts, he really understands the material because he works at Opportunity Insights, and he has a contagious passion for these methods and questions. He answers questions so thoroughly, whether it be in class or over email. He was always ready to meet with students when we needed help. He really helped me understand the material.



Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Mike is awesome! Great at teaching and explaining topics and brings cookies :)

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Mike was one of the best TFs I have had. He brought enthusiasm and commitment to our section that I have seldom seen before. OHs were crucial to my success both in class and in my own pursuits which Mike provided feedback on.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**

As a graduating senior, best TF I've had in an Ec class hands-down. I feel like Michael is a model Economics TF. Very good presentation and teaching skills, knowledgeable about the subject matter, cares about his students, fair grader, enthusiasm for the material, etc. I feel like one glaring weakness in the Ec department is a lack of quality TF's. So many times I've had TF's who might be incredibly knowledgeable about the subject matter; however, they just have terrible teaching/presentation skills, lack of enthusiasm, and/or just do not care about their students. Please look to Michael as an example for what a great TF is for future Economics classes.

Evaluate the course overall.: **4 (very good)**

Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Mike was probably my favorite TF in my classes this semester. He is very knowledgeable and willing to help. 10/10 would recommend to anyone taking the course.

Evaluate the course overall.: **3 (good)**

Evaluate your Section Leader overall.: **5 (excellent)**

Went to his OH (not my TF)! He goes above and beyond explain! Couldn't have done the course without him!