The Economics of COVID-19

**Responsible:**
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**Credit:**
Mandatory electives (Wahlpflichtbereich): "Ausgewählte Probleme der Volkswirtschaftslehre"

**Contents & Objectives:**

The COVID-19 pandemic is dramatically changing our everyday life. It has also profound economic implications: Production plants are temporarily closed, value-chains are interrupted, and millions of employees are threatened by unemployment and currently depend on public wage subsidies. At this moment, it is all but impossible to predict the full range of those implications.

The aim of this seminar is to track the economic consequences of the pandemic in real-time. We will approach this topic from various perspectives: There are several forecasts on how hard the pandemic will affect the economies around the world. What are those forecasts and how are they made? What can governments do to prevent or at least mitigate a recession? How does the high level of uncertainty affect individual consumption decisions? How does it affect the stock market? At first sight, COVID-19 appears to spread quicker in cities. Will cities lose their importance as hot spots of political, technical and social innovation? How can methods known from empirical economics help to gauge the actual mortality of this disease?

Each participant will write a seminar thesis on one of those topics. Starting on June 9th, we will meet weekly for the remainder of the lecture period. In each meeting, one or two participants present their paper on the respective topic and we will discuss the findings.

**Prerequisites:**
Students should have an interest and basic knowledge in economics and public policy. The course language is English but the theses can be written in either German or English.

**Topics:**
1. Forecasting the Macroeconomic Consequences
2. Mitigating the Economic Effects
3. Flexible Work Arrangements
4. Household Spending During an Epidemic
5. Pandemics and the Stock-Market
6. The Geography of Coronavirus

**Mandatory registration:**
Please sign up via WUEstudy until 21 April 2020.

**Meetings:**
We plan to analyze the consequences of COVID-19 on the economy and NOT on our own health. We will therefore only meet via the free online video communications platform zoom

Kickoff-meeting: 5 May 2020, 14:15 – 15:54
Individual consultation hours: Every Tuesday 10:15 – 11:45
Thesis presentations and discussions: Every Tuesday, 14:15 – 15:54, starting 9 June 2020

**Grading:**
Written thesis, 10-15 pages (2/3) and presentation (1/3).