



Penn Economics Graduate Group

TO: All Incoming Graduate Students in Economics and Interested Wharton Ph.D. Students

FROM: David Dillenberger, Director of Graduate Studies

DATE: March 2025

RE: **MATHEMATICS PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE ECONOMICS
Ph.D. PROGRAM**

In our program, first year economic theory courses and econometrics courses are pre-requisites for most of the subsequent courses. These first-year courses take a certain amount of mathematics skills as a pre-requisite. Your success in the first year of our program depends heavily on how comfortable you are with the needed mathematical tools. In order to assist the first-year students in our program, we offer a course entitled Econ 897. Econ 897 is a non-credit course offered during the summer prior to the start of the first-year courses.

This year, Econ 897- the “Summer Math Institute” (also known as “Math Camp”) is scheduled to begin on July 7 and end on August 15, 2025 with the final being Monday, August 18, 2025. Students can satisfy the math pre-requisite requirement by taking Economics 897 and obtaining a grade of C or better, or by taking waiver examination (pass/fail) given on Monday, August 18th with the start time as 1:00 PM and place TBD.

During the last 14 to 15 years, the majority of entering students chose to take 897 during the summer and they found it an extremely useful experience. Not only did they learn a great deal of mathematics, but they also developed good cooperative spirits in the class, and this was of substantial help in their success after the regular fall term begins on Tuesday, August 26, 2025.

Every year there are several students who *should* have taken 897 but did not. They find the first year significantly more difficult than their classmates who had taken 897. Your presumption should be that you will take 897, unless you have a **STRONG** mathematics background.

Please return the registration form for Econ 897 and/or the form indicating that you intend to take a waiver examination **by June 13th**.

Some Ph.D. programs in the Wharton School also recommend that their incoming students take 897 and they will be admitted to this course upon the recommendation of their advisors. The tuition for this course is \$2,250.

In order to let you judge whether or not you would benefit from the summer course, we are making available the syllabi for 897 as well as sample waiver examination. On the other hand, since 897 is given prior to the start of the fall term, if you choose not to take it and then do not pass the waiver exam in 897 given on August 19th, upon your arrival, you will have to study the material in 897 on your own.