EC 827
Economic Forecasting - MBA Technology Elective

Overview:
This course is intended to give the student a background in the structure of modern national and international economics, as well as to teach and demonstrate the use of econometric techniques used to forecast economic trends and future market conditions. With a combination of these skills, managers should be able not only to form "big picture" expectations of economic conditions in the future and their implications for business strategy, but also to predict with some accuracy the specific economic factors which most influence a given business (e.g. raw materials pricing, interest rates, exchange rates etc.)

Course Layout:
The course can, to some degree, be split into two sections. The first deals with the practical, technical matter of forecasting economic time series, such as prices, and hence inflation. This section relies heavily on computer-based statistical modeling techniques, and the generation of forecast reports on different subjects. While this area of the course does not assume any statistical background outside of the MBA program, it does involve non-trivial use of statistical techniques.

Balancing this, the second part of the class deals with the generation of conditional models or "what if" scenarios. This is primarily achieved through the use of applied macroeconomic models of consumption, income and prices. By its nature, this segment is less technical and more intuitive than the econometric component.

Materials & Techniques:
The class makes significant use of information technology, not only for the practical modeling, but also in the collection and distribution of resources ranging from economic datasets through to class notes and group assignments.

Assessment of the class is based on exams in both the statistical and economic sections of the course, as well as on group projects which are predominantly centered on technical forecasting issues. A sample of the materials from the Summer 1998 session are currently (September 1998) located at: http://www.msu.edu/~jenkinsg/827.html