SENIOR RESEARCH SEMINAR IN ECONOMICS, 2014-2015
Economics 4400E-001
Department of Economics
Western University

Course Outline

I. Who?
II. What and Why?
IV. Where and When?
III. How? Assignments/Steps to Complete Your Research
V. Everything Else You Always Wanted to Know…
VI. Dos and Don’ts of Data
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I. Who?

Economics 4400 is a two-semester course for fourth year students in Economics Honors programs. The Course Team consists of three faculty members (the Course Committee), three specialized librarians, and a TA. Although the Course Committee (CC) is responsible for the course, students are expected to seek advice from other faculty members with expertise in their areas of interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Course Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tai-Yeong Chung</td>
<td>Chris Robinson</td>
<td>Terry Sicular (coordinator)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSC 4079</td>
<td>SSC 4011</td>
<td>SSC 4015</td>
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<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:tchung@uwo.ca">tchung@uwo.ca</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:robinson@uwo.ca">robinson@uwo.ca</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:sicular@uwo.ca">sicular@uwo.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office hours: Tu 3-4, Wed 10-11 or by appointment</td>
<td>Office hours: Wed 1:30-3:30 or by appointment</td>
<td>Office hours: Th 1:30-3:30 or by appointment</td>
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Map and Data Library (http://www.lib.uwo.ca/madgie/)
Vince Gray & Liz Hill
Weldon Library (ground floor, room 14)
Phone: 661-2111 x85044 & x85049
Email: vince@uwo.ca, ethill@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistant
Antonella Mancino
SSC 4064
Email: mmanci3@uwo.ca
Office hours: By appointment.
II. What and Why?

Course Description

The aim of this course is to help you develop the skills to carry out an original research project. You will acquire these skills through learning by doing. During the course of the year you will write a substantial, original research paper on a topic chosen and researched by you in consultation with the course faculty. Subject to the approval of and in consultation with the faculty, you may select any topic you find interesting, choose your approach and methodology, and work solo or with a partner.

You will submit several written assignments in addition to the final research paper. You will also present your research to the class and discuss in writing and orally the research paper of a classmate. More information on the course requirements appears below.

The course team will endeavour to help you with all aspects of the project. We will provide class presentations, hands-on demos, and informal consultation and feedback throughout the year. Useful and important information is available on the course website.

While we will provide support, this is your research project. It is up to you to take charge, set your directions, and carry the project through to completion. Your success will depend on the initiative, resourcefulness, effort and skill that you devote to your project.

Research is a collective endeavour. We encourage you to interact formally and informally with your classmates so as to generate positive externalities and form a community of scholars (see Student Choice Award below).

Course Structure

Research involves the following steps: finding a topic, reading the relevant literature, developing a research strategy, accessing appropriate data (if the project has an empirical dimension), writing a first draft, and revising the draft to complete the final research paper. Young scholars benefit from systematically following this sequence of steps. We have structured the course and its assignments accordingly.

All students are required to submit all assignments and meet all deadlines. All students are expected to consult with and to keep the faculty team informed of their research progress. To facilitate communication, each student (or partnership) will be assigned one member of the faculty team as primary supervisor. You will be expected to take the initiative to communicate with your supervisor on a regular basis (we suggest at least every two weeks).

Within these parameters, you have considerable flexibility to follow your interests and develop your own research project.
Requirements and Assessment

The formal requirements of EC 4400 are:

• six written assignments (the topic proposal, the literature survey and work plan, two progress reports, the draft paper, and the final paper—see below for descriptions and due dates of the assignments)
• to consult with and keep in touch with the faculty team and your supervisor
• to make presentations of your work to the class
• to act as a discussant of the work of others
• to attend and participate in class meetings

The course mark will be calculated as follows:

10% topic proposal and presentation
15% research plan and literature survey
5% progress report #1
5% progress report #2
20% draft paper and presentation
10% discussion of another student’s draft paper (verbal and written reports)
35% final paper

Working with a partner has many advantages, and we encourage it. If you choose to work with a partner, you and your co-author will receive the same marks on everything *except* the mark for discussion of another student’s paper. As a discussant, you will be acting on your own and receive an individual mark.

Late Penalties

Due dates for the assignments are shown in the timetable below. Grade penalties (out of 100) for late submissions will be as follows:

1-24 hours late -10 points
24-48 hours late -30 points
48-72 hours late -50 points
>72 hours late no credit

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to conduct independent, original economic research. Specific learning outcomes include being able to:

• formulate a clear research question
• identify and synthesize literature relevant to a research question
• design and carry out a plan to investigate a research question
• creatively and appropriately apply economic concepts, models and methods to address a research question
• interpret research findings and draw appropriate conclusions
• present research in a professional manner, both orally and in writing
• evaluate critically the quality of one’s own research as well as that of others
• give and receive critical feedback, both orally and in writing, in a constructive, professional manner

IV. When and Where?

The scheduled class times are **Tues. 4:30-5:30** and **Thurs. 4:30-6:30**. The classroom is **KB 208**.

The class will meet many but not all of the scheduled class times. Class meetings are shown on the timetable below. Please keep all T, Th class times available even if no meeting is shown in the timetable, in case we add a class session.

Our classroom has been booked for the entire academic year. When the class is not meeting, you may use our classroom during the scheduled class time slots to organize discussion groups, consult with classmates, and practise presentations.

**Timetable**

Scheduled class meetings are shown below. Please note: **Some classes (a) meet in other locations, (b) extend past the scheduled class times, and (c) meet on other days outside the normal times.**

Attendance is *strongly recommended and mandatory* for all sessions with student presentations.

**Fall term:**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 4 (Th)</td>
<td>First day of class—distribution of course materials</td>
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<td>Sept 9 (Tu)</td>
<td>Introductions, discussion of course requirements, Q &amp; A</td>
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<td>Sept 11 (Th)</td>
<td>How to find a topic, Q &amp; A</td>
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<td>Sept 18 (Th)</td>
<td>Finding Sources/Literature for Your Research — <strong>Bruce Fyfe</strong> (<em>Library Instruction Room in the Map &amp; Data Centre on the ground floor of Weldon Library.</em>)</td>
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<td>Sept 23 (Tu)</td>
<td><strong>Notify intent to partner</strong>, by email to <strong><a href="mailto:sicular@uwo.ca">sicular@uwo.ca</a></strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 30 (Tu)</td>
<td>Dos and Don’ts of Data — <strong>Vince Gray</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 2 (Th)</td>
<td>Download Some Data — <strong>Vince Gray</strong> (<em>Library Instruction Room in the Map &amp; Data Centre on the ground floor of Weldon Library.</em>)</td>
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<td>Oct 2 (Th)</td>
<td><strong>Proposals are due.</strong> Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA by 4:00 pm. Please put your name(s) and student number(s) on the title page.</td>
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<td>Oct 7 (Tu)</td>
<td><strong>Proposal presentations,</strong> Session I (4:30-6:50 pm)</td>
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<td>Oct 9 (Th)</td>
<td><strong>Proposal presentations,</strong> Session II (4:30-6:50 pm)</td>
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**Week of Oct 13:** Assignment of Faculty Supervisor. Meet with Faculty Supervisor.
Oct 21 (Tu)  Instructions on the Research Plan/Literature Survey, Q & A
Oct 23 (Th)  Introduction to Stata — Antonella Mancino (SSC 1032)
Nov 13 (Th)  Research Plan and Literature Survey due. Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA by 4:00 pm. Please put your name(s) and student number(s) on the title page.

Week of Nov 18: Meet with Faculty Supervisor

Winter term:

Jan 13 (Tu)  Progress Report #1 due. Email a copy to your Faculty Supervisor and the TA by 4:00 pm. Please put your name(s) and student number(s) on the title page.
Jan 15 (Th)  Using Stata: Econometric Applications — Antonella Mancino (SSC 1032)
Jan 20 (Tu)  Q&A (if needed)
Jan 30 (Fr)  Progress Report #2 due. Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA by 4:00 pm. Please put your name(s) and student number(s) on the title page, and also indicate whom you want to serve as the Second Reader.

Week of Feb 2: Progress Report meetings with Faculty Team

Possible additional meetings in February, if requested/needed:
- Demonstration of how to do a Presentation and how to be a Discussant.
- “Tables and Figures,” conducted by the TA in the computing lab.
- Tips on format, references, and writing for a research paper.

Feb 26 (Th)  Draft Paper due. Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA and to your assigned discussant by 4:00 pm. Put your name(s) and student number(s) on the title page. Check the course website for the presentation schedule to see when you will present your paper and discuss someone else’s.

Mar 3 (Tu)  Paper presentations, Session I  (4:30-6:50 pm)
Mar 5 (Th)  Paper presentations, Session II  (4:30-6:50 pm)
Mar 6 (Fr)  Paper presentations, Session III  (4:30-8:30 pm)

Week of Mar 10: Meet with Faculty Supervisor

Mar 12 (Th)  Written Discussant Remarks due. Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA and to the author(s) of the paper that you discuss.

Mar 31 (Th)  Final Paper due. Bring three hard copies to SSC 4075 and email a copy to the TA by 4:00 pm. Please put your name(s), student number(s), and a 100-150 word abstract on the title page.

???  Party
III. How? Assignments/Steps to Complete Your Research Project

Carrying out a research project involves a series of steps. The assignments for this course are designed to take you through these steps in a systematic way.

*The Topic Proposal (due Oct 2) and Presentation*

This should be a 2-3 page (500-750 words) proposal describing the research question on which you wish to work. In it you must:

- Cite at least three published or unpublished academic research papers related to your research question
- List the names of two Professors in the Economics Dept. with whom you have discussed your topic and research question (one should be a member of the Ec 4400E faculty team)
- Provide a preliminary assessment of data availability and/or the nature of the economic model or framework that you will employ (i.e., you must have started looking for data and/or an analytical framework)

All students will give a short presentation of their proposal to the class (see course timetable).

The main aim of this assignment is to make sure you find a research question sooner rather than later, share your topic with the class, and solicit comments and suggestions from the faculty and your fellow students.

*The Research Plan and Literature Survey (due Nov. 13)*

In this assignment you will discuss how you plan to carry out your proposed research, based on a careful, systematic survey of relevant literature. The suggested length of this assignment is 10 pages (2000-3000 words). It should be written as a complete paper with an introduction that motivates the topic and a conclusion. This assignment is not meant to be part of your final paper, but it will inform your research and you will probably draw upon it in your final paper.

This assignment is NOT supposed to be an annotated bibliography or sequential discussion of articles and books on your topic. Rather, it should discuss how your proposed research is related to and motivated by what has been done by others in the literature. It should organize and discuss in a logical fashion the ideas, methods, and findings of existing work related to your topic. It should explain how the literature informs your research, how your research will build upon the literature, and what is new or different about what you plan to do.

*Progress Report #1: (due Jan. 13)*

The main purpose of the progress reports is to facilitate consultation and feedback, and to provide an opportunity for you to bring questions to and receive guidance from the faculty team.

The first progress report should be no more than 2 pages. It should report on your progress to date since submitting the literature survey. Students writing papers with an empirical component are expected to have acquired all the necessary data by this stage. Students writing a theoretical
paper should have (and communicate) a clear idea of the model they will use.

You should submit this report to your supervisor, with whom you will then meet. You are encouraged to meet also with other faculty members in Economics and other departments with knowledge on your topic.

**Progress Report #2: The Data Report or Theoretical Modelling Report (due Jan. 30)**

Students writing papers with an empirical component are required to turn in a **Data Report**. The Data Report should include 2 to 3 pages containing the following information: (a) a brief summary of progress since the first data report, (b) an explanation of your empirical model, and (c) a short verbal description of your data (source, how the data were collected, sampling methods, number of observations, years covered, and so on). In addition, please append no more than 3 pages of tables containing the following information: (i) definitions of the variables that you expect to use in your analysis; and (ii) descriptive statistics (means, minima, maxima, standard deviations, and number of missing values or number of observations) for these variables.

Students writing a theoretical paper with no or little empirical analysis are required to turn in a **Theoretical Modelling Report**. The Theoretical Modelling Report should be 2 to 3 pages long and contain the following information: (a) an outline of the model (e.g., description of the action/choice sets and the payoff functions for each economic agent in the model, and description of the timeline of the model); (b) an outline of preliminary results and conjectures; (c) a simple example that illustrates the key trade-off or the main idea (if available).

In this report, you should list two faculty members with whom you have met in January to discuss your research. One should be your primary supervisor; the other should be a faculty member with expertise on your topic of research.

After submission of the progress reports, we the faculty team will hold individual meetings with all the students. Students will report orally on their progress and can raise questions and receive feedback. Although students are generally expected to be in regular contact with their primary supervisor and the faculty team, the progress report meetings, roughly a month before the draft papers are due, provide an important, one-on-one opportunity to apprise us of your progress to date and to discuss any questions and concerns.

**The Draft (due Feb. 26)**

The first draft of your research paper should be approximately 3000-5000 words. It should present and motivate your topic, explain your analytical framework or model, relate your approach to the literature, describe the data, and present your initial analysis of the data (if empirical) or initial theoretical results (if a theory paper). It should contain an introduction. Since your work is still in progress, instead of a standard conclusion at the end of the draft paper you should discuss remaining steps.

Draft papers will be posted on the course website so that everyone can read them and exchange ideas.
To ensure a coherent draft research paper by late February, you must make substantial progress on your research project during December and January. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL FEBRUARY to get going on your research!

**Oral Presentation/Discussion of Drafts (March 3-6)**

Students will present a 15 minute synopsis of their draft paper to the class, followed by oral comments from a discussant (5 minutes). If a paper is co-authored, both students must participate equally in the presentation. For example, one might present the intro and the model, while the other presents the empirical work and findings.

**Discussant Presentations (March 3-6) and Reports (March 12)**

Each student will be assigned as a discussant for another paper. As discussant, each student will give an oral presentation (5 minutes) and submit a 2-3 page written report, due March 12.

The role of the discussants is to provide constructive comments that will help the author(s) improve the draft paper. Discussants can suggest other viewpoints from which to approach the subject, point out strengths or weaknesses, and discuss errors or omissions in a constructive way.

The model for a written discussant’s report is the referee report solicited by journal editors on papers submitted for publication. Copies of some good referee reports are posted on the course website; also, you can look at journals that publish discussant comments to some of their articles, such as the *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* (both Microeconomics and Macroeconomics), the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *Economic Policy*, and the *NBER Macroeconomics Annual*.

**The Final Paper (due March 31)**

The final paper will be a revised version of the draft paper that contains the final results of the research that you have undertaken for this course. The final paper should be organized as follows: introduction, relevance to past studies in the literature, your model/estimation techniques, description of the data and empirical approach or methods (for empirical papers) or of theoretical approach and analysis (for theory papers), presentation and discussion of findings, and conclusion. The introduction should motivate the paper, give a clear statement of the focus of the paper, explain your work’s new contribution, and outline the approach to be followed. Not everything in your literature survey should make it into the final paper, but you should include at least 2-3 pages that explain how your analysis relates to and is motivated by the literature.

The final paper should include a title page that contains a 100-120 word abstract that summarizes the highlights of your paper.
V. Everything Else You Always Wanted to Know…

Writing Dos and Don’ts

Instructions on how to write an essay and of writing dos and don’ts is given in the Guidelines for Essay Courses attached to this handout and posted on the course website. The Guidelines contain links to writing resources and assistance, information on how to cite sources, information on essay formats and styles, etc.

Plagiarism: The work you do and papers you write for this course should reflect your own work and should properly cite and reference all sources. Any instances of plagiarism will be severely penalized. You should know what PLAGIARISM is and do NOT do it! For more information on plagiarism, see the Guidelines for Essay Courses. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask the Course Team.

Presentations—Audio Visuals

Students are welcome to use overhead transparencies, PowerPoint, PDF files, etc. The classroom is equipped with AV equipment.

The Department has its own computer projection equipment which can be reserved for this course. It is available for presentations as well as practice sessions. If you wish to borrow this equipment, please check with the Undergraduate Coordinator for more information.

Statistical Software

Students who undertake projects involving empirical work are free to use whatever statistical software they prefer. Stata is the recommended software package because the Course Committee is familiar with it, it is well suited to research topics usually undertaken by students in this, and it is available on the SSC network.

An introduction to using Stata on the SSC network is available at http://ssts.uwo.ca/support/helpdocuments/statistics/index.html

Print copies of the full set of Stata manuals are on 3-day reserve at Weldon Library. The Map and Data Centre at Weldon has copies of Stata manuals and publications that are available for use within the Centre. Much Stata documentation is available online through its HELP command.

Material from Previous Years

Selected papers from previous years will be available on the course website. These can give you an idea of the standards expected and of the variety of approaches used in recent years. These materials are for your use for purposes related to Ec 4400E; they should NOT be shared or circulated to anyone else.
**Helpful Materials from Weldon**

Weldon Library maintains special web pages for students in Economics and for Economics 4400E. These are full of *extremely* useful information and links. Check them out:

- [http://www.lib.uwo.ca/programs/economics](http://www.lib.uwo.ca/programs/economics)

**Awards & Prizes for EC 4400 Students**

Two awards are given each year to students in Economics 4400. The award winners receive a book prize, not to mention eternal glory *plus* an invitation to a special awards ceremony at graduation (a great way to impress your friends and family).

**Mark K. Inman Senior Essay Prize:** Awarded to the author(s) of the final paper that is judged to be the best in Economics 4400E. It is given in memory of Dr. Mark K. Inman, one of the founding members of the Department of Economics in 1929 and head of the Department from 1939-1962. With the author or authors’ consent(s), the winner of the Mark K. Inman Senior Essay Prize is automatically included in the *Western Undergraduate Economic Review*.

**Student Choice Award:** Awarded to a full-time student enrolled in Economics 4400E who has made the greatest contribution in Economics 4400E and is most helpful to other students in the course. Students enrolled in Economics 4400E will nominate candidates and select the winner by secret ballot. In the event of a tie, the Economics 4400E Course Committee will decide the winner. Nomination forms are available from the Department of Economics and must be submitted by March 15.
VI. Dos and Don’ts of Data

Do:
- Start early; already is not too soon
- Have a firm idea of what you want to do
- After choosing a topic, ensure that data are available in the format and at the level that you need
- Recognize that confidentiality restrictions may restrict access to variables that you want to use
- Be prepared to have to pay for data if it is coming from outside the university
- Visit the Data Resources Library if you need assistance in locating data
- Visit the Data Resources Library earlier rather than later in the process
- Try to have your topic firmed up and the necessary data lined up and ready to use by the Christmas break – it will make your second term much happier and less stressful
- Check variable definitions and coding: e.g., what is “full-time work”
- Be prepared to change your topic if data are not available
- Be prepared for delays in obtaining data: if data are to be released by Statistics Canada in January, they might not come out until July
- Expect delays in getting data loaded into IDLS: it’s not a five-second procedure to load a file – LET US KNOW EARLY if you need data

Don’t:
- Put off finding your topic
- Find a paper dealing with one country, and expect to be able to replicate it with data from another country (e.g., Canada)
- Expect that you will have the same access to data as other authors: they may have personal ties to the organizations providing them with access to the data
- Assume that the data will be available
- Expect definitive data. Data concerning politically sensitive topics (e.g., softwood lumber) may be tinged by the political slant of the organization releasing the data, or may be suppressed
- Expect that the Data Resources Library will be able to drop what it’s doing and service your requirements immediately
- Automatically believe what you find on the web
- Assume that the Data Resources Library has the data and just won’t give it to you – if we can get you the data, we will. If we can’t, asking us each week won’t change the situation.

Equinox Data Delivery System
http://equinox.uwo.ca

Access to the system

Nearly fifty institutions across Canada currently use Western Library's Equinox Data Delivery System. Each file within the system is governed by a data release agreement: see the documentation.

Any Western user may use the system. Access to the data stored within the system is controlled by IP address. Access to the system is transparent if connecting through an on-campus computer. If using an
outside Internet provider (e.g., Rogers, Sympatico), use Western Libraries’ proxy service:  
http://www.lib.uwo.ca >> Databases – by Title >> E >> Equinox >> Off-Campus Access

Features of Equinox:

- Users may conduct a basic or advanced search for files or variables, or browse lists refined by file type.
- Provides the ability to determine quickly which files cover a specific subject area.
- Delivers data in ASCII, tab-delimited format for easy import into a wide range of statistical packages, and provides data set descriptions for SAS, SPSS, and Stata, along with request-specific codebooks.
- Provides access to documentation about specific data files, as provided by the supplier.
- Provides links to other data sources, such as other web sites and databases.

How the System Works

Equinox records information on a number of types of data files. These include raw data files, digital maps, Internet-accessible databases, Excel spreadsheets, and Beyond 20/20 tables.

A link to the file provides either the ability to download the file or to open it within the browser (depending upon the nature of the file). Raw data files not fully loaded into Equinox provides links allowing you to request that the data file be loaded into the system, to provide variable-level access.

Where variable-level access is provided, the user selects which variables to retrieve from a particular data file. Users supply the system with their e-mail address. The user may also request a codebook specific to the variables selected, along with a Stata, SPSS, and/or SAS program file (dataset description) to load the data. The screen is refreshed to provide a link to the file(s), which is compressed using Zip, and a copy of the link is sent by email to the user, along with your PIN for extracting the data.

Contact information:

Vince Gray          Elizabeth Hill
vince@uwo.ca  ethill@uwo.ca
519-661-2111 ext. 85044                519-661-2111 ext.85049
Map and Data Centre
Western Libraries
Weldon Library (ground floor)
VII. Registration and Prerequisites

Registration
You are responsible for ensuring you are registered in the correct courses. If you are not registered in a course, the Department will not release any of your marks until your registration is corrected. You may check your timetable by using the Login on the Student Services website at https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm. If you notice a problem, please contact your faculty academic counsellor right away.

Prerequisite Note
The prerequisite for this course are Economics 2223A/B, Economics 2261A/B, and Economics 2221A/B (Economics 2220A/B for students in the Economics, Politics and Philosophy Honors Specialization). Students must be in their 4th year of an Honors Specialization module. (Economics Degree). Concurrent enrolment in Economics 3388A/B is strongly recommended.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course requisites, and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis of appeal. If you are found to be ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed.

If you find that you do not have the course prerequisites, it is in your best interest to drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. Your prompt attention to this matter will not only help protect your academic record, but also ensure that spaces become available for students who require the course in question for graduation.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocmt/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

ACCESSIBILITY

Please contact economics@uwo.ca if you require information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.
Please Note
Department Policies for 2014 – 2015

Remember that the University expects all students to take responsibility for their own academic Programs. Also remember to check your registration to make sure you are enrolled in the correct courses.

1. Guidelines and policies for the Faculty of Social Science and the Department of Economics are posted online in the current Western Academic Calendar at http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca.


3. Cheating as an academic offence: Students are responsible for understanding what it means to “cheat”. The Department of Economics treats cheating incidents very seriously and will investigate any suspect behavior. Students found guilty will incur penalties that could include a failing grade or being barred from future registration in other economics courses or programs. The University may impose further penalties such as a notation on your official academic transcript, suspension or expulsion.

4. Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge it by using quotation marks where appropriate and referencing with footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the current UWO Academic Calendar at http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg113.html.

The University of Western Ontario uses software to check for plagiarism and students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form. Those found guilty will have penalties imposed as noted in point 3.

5. It is Department of Economics policy that NO assignments be dated, stamped or accepted by staff. Students are responsible for submitting assignments in class or to the instructor during office hours.

6. When appealing a mark, students should refer to the University’s Procedures in the current UWO Academic Calendar (http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg112.html). Please note the relevant deadlines.

The Department will not consider any appeal unless an attempt has been made to settle the matter first with your instructor. If after this discussion you remain dissatisfied with a grade or other decision, you may proceed with a written appeal (e-mails are not acceptable) to the Undergraduate Director in Economics, stating the reasons for your appeal. A useful form and checklist is provided at (http://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_counselling/responsibilities_policies.html#appeals).
7. Systematic adjustments of a class grade distribution (either up or down) can occur in Economics courses. The fact that grades have been adjusted is not grounds for an appeal.

8. Note the following add and drop deadlines:

   Last day to **add** a full course or First term half course:  
   **Friday, September 12th**, 2014

   Last day to **drop** second term half course without academic penalty:  
   **Wednesday, November 5th**, 2014

9. Faculty of Social Science policy states that oversleeping or misreading an exam schedule is not an excuse for a make-up. This rule applies to all mid-term tests and final exams in the Department of Economics.

   **Policy Regarding Makeup Tests and Final Examinations**

   Academic Accommodation will **not** be granted automatically on request. You **must** demonstrate by documentation that there are compelling medical or compassionate grounds before academic accommodation will be considered.

   If you decide to write a test or an examination, you must be prepared to accept the mark you earn. Rewriting tests or examinations, or having the value of the test or examination reweighted on a retroactive basis, is **not** permitted. Book airline flights after you know the dates of your final examinations. Airline flights must not conflict with test or final exams.

   If you are requesting a makeup test for a midterm or a final examination, unless medically incapable, notify your instructor by email or phone, preferably prior to the scheduled date of the test, but definitely within **24 hours** of the date of the test or exam. Failure to follow this procedure may result in denial of a request for academic accommodation or result in a grade of zero. Set up an appointment as soon as possible to meet personally with your instructor. If the instructor is not available, you may send an email message, copying the Undergraduate Coordinator at econugrd@uwo.ca (Social Science Room 4075). **Notifying your instructor of a missed test or exam does not automatically entitle you to a makeup test.**

   Students who seek a makeup test or examination must provide medical or other relevant verification that their absence from a regularly scheduled test or examination is beyond their control. Documentation must support your reasons. Medical documentation should be given to the Academic Counselling Office of your home Faculty **as soon as possible (preferably within 24 hours of the test)** if you know you may not be able to write your final examination on the scheduled day and time. Failure to follow this procedure, or to provide supporting documentation, may result in denial of a request for academic accommodation or result in a grade of zero. If your documentation is not acceptable, you will be given a zero for the missed test.

   For personal illness, if you consult Student Health Services regarding your illness or personal problem, you should request a Student Medical Certificate from the physician. If
you were seen by an off-campus doctor, obtain a certificate from his/her office at the time of your visit. The off-campus medical certificate form must be used and can be found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. Notes stating "For Medical Reasons" are not considered sufficient.

For any other circumstances, if you are not sure what documentation to provide, ask your Academic Counselor. If your documentation is judged sufficient, the academic counselor will issue a Recommendation for a Special Examination (a single form for midterms or a triple color form for final examinations). Once you have this form, contact your instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements. Even if approved from your home faculty Academic Counsellor, there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to write the makeup test and exam.

For final examinations, you need permission from your home Faculty Counsellor, your instructor, and the Department Undergraduate Director. Failure to follow this procedure may result in an examination grade of zero. You must ensure that the Special Examination form has been signed by the instructor and Department Undergraduate Director and that the form is returned to the Academic Counseling Office for approval without delay. Make-up final examinations, if permitted, will be written within one month of the end of the exam period.

**Policies Regarding Academic Accommodation**

Information about the Faculty of Social Science’s policies regarding academic accommodation is found on its website at http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp or in Social Science Room 2105. Your “Academic Rights and Responsibilities” are also outlined in the current UWO Calendar at http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg111.html. Claiming that “you didn’t know what to do” is not an acceptable excuse for not following the stated procedures.

**Policy Regarding Class Attendance**

If your instructor views your class attendance as unsatisfactory, you can be prohibited from writing the final examination. If there is intent to make use of this University policy, you will be notified in writing.

**Statement on Mental Health and Support Services**

If you or someone you know is experiencing emotional/mental distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for more information and a complete list of resources, as well as how to obtain help.
The University of Western Ontario
Department of Economics

Guidelines for Essay Courses

Essay Courses

An essay course is defined as a course in which the cumulative amount of written work, excluding written work in examinations, is normally at least 2,500 words (for a half course).

In order to pass an essay course the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing as well as the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

English Language Proficiency for Assignment of Grades

Students must demonstrate the ability to write clearly and correctly. Written work on any subject that shows a lack of proficiency in English and is unacceptable for academic credit will be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the student for revision to an acceptable literate level.

To foster competence in the use of the English language within their disciplines, all instructors will take proficiency in English into account in the assignment of grades. Note that this policy applies to all courses, not only essay courses.

Recycling of Assignments

Students are prohibited from handing in the same essay or paper for two different courses. This would be considered a scholastic offence and subject to academic penalties, including but not limited to the possibility of zero on that particular assignment.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as: “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own.”

The concept of plagiarism applies to ALL assignments and their component parts, including essays, reports, diagrams, statistical tables, and computer projects.

Below are examples of some common mistakes that constitute acts of plagiarism. It is plagiarism if you:

- Submit someone else’s work as your own
- Buy a paper from a paper mill, website or other source and submit it as your own work
- Copy sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or ideas from someone else’s work, published or unpublished, without giving the original author credit
- Replace selected words from a passage and use it as your own without giving the original author credit
- Copy any type of multimedia (graphics, audio, video, internet streams), computer programs, music compositions, graphs, or charts from someone else’s work without giving the original author credit
- Piece together phrases, ideas and sentences from a variety of sources to write an essay without giving the original authors credit
- Build on someone else’s ideas or phrases to write your paper without giving the original author credit

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1 From the UWO Academic Handbook. See [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/coursenumbering.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/coursenumbering.pdf)

2 From the UWO Academic Handbook. See [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/english.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/english.pdf)


4 From the San José State University Plagiarism Tutorial [http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/](http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/)
Plagiarism is a serious scholastic offence. Possible consequences of plagiarism include a mark of 0% on the assignment, a mark of 0% for the entire course, and expulsion from the university.

Purchasing an essay is a form of plagiarism and a very serious offence. The UWO Academic Calendar indicates that the penalty can be as severe as expulsion from the university.

Instructors may require students to submit their written work electronically to http://www.turnitin.com. Turnitin.com is a service that assists instructors and students in detecting and avoiding plagiarism.

Students wishing more guidance on how to avoid plagiarism or in doubt about whether their work constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor. Claiming that you did not know you have plagiarized is not an acceptable excuse.

The key to avoiding plagiarism is to correctly and fully cite references for the sources you use in your work. The next section provides a summary of style guidelines for citing references.

Referencing and Citation Guidelines

If you use the work or ideas of others in your work, you must acknowledge the contributions of the original authors and provide citations and references to their work. (See plagiarism above.)


Economics papers typically use the author-date style of references. A detailed explanation of the author-date style and numerous examples of citations for print and electronic sources are available in chapters 14 and 15 of the Chicago Manual of Style Online. See also the handy “Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide” under Tools on the homepage.

Below are some examples. In the body of an essay, citations give the last names of the authors of the piece you are referencing, the year of publication, and, where relevant, page numbers. These in-text citations refer the reader to more complete bibliographic references given in a list of references at the end of the essay. If your paper cites multiple works by the same author(s) with the same publication year, the convention is to add a lower case letter after the date in both the in-text citation and the References, e.g., 1993a and 1993b. This way, the in-text citation points the reader to the correct work in the References.

Examples of in-text citations:

Diamond (1981, 1982) and Mortensen (1982a, 1982b) find these externalities can cause an inefficient level of search activity…

The “new view of unemployment” which emerged during the 1970s emphasized the importance of turnover in the labour force and the brief duration of many employments spells (Hall 1970, 1972; Perry 1972; Marston 1976).

The primary objectives of the LMAS are “1. To provide measures of the dynamic…the Labour Force Survey” (Statistics Canada 1990, 5).

The bibliography or list of references at the end of the essay gives full information about each source cited. In addition to a bibliography, you should also provide adequate referencing of any data sources. This should be done in a data appendix following the text of the paper and before the bibliography.

Examples of the author-date style in a bibliography or list of references for some commonly used materials follow. Notice that when a reference has multiple authors, the format for additional authors is Firstname Lastname.

(i) BOOKS:

Lastname, Firstname. Copyright year. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher’s Name.

(ii) JOURNAL ARTICLES OR ARTICLES IN A BANK REVIEW:


(iii) GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

Government Agency, Bureau or Department. Year. Title. Catalogue or issue number or additional information (where applicable).

(iv) NEWSPAPERS:

Lastname, Firstname. Year. “Title.” Name of Newspaper. Month day. Note that the page number should be given in the in-text citation, for example, (Sicular and Hartford 1989, 14).

(v) CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS OR CONFERENCE VOLUMES:

Lastname, Firstname. Year. “Title.” In Title of Book/Volume, edited by Firstname Lastname, page range. Place of Publication: Publisher’s Name.

(vi) ONLINE BOOKS:

Lastname, Firstname. Year. Title. Place of Publication: Publisher. url/web address (access date).

(vii) ONLINE JOURNAL ARTICLES:

Lastname, Firstname. Year. “Title.” Journal Volume: pages or article number. url/web address (access date).

(viii) INTERNET SITES:

Name of Website or Organization. url/web address (access date).
Writing an Economics Essay: Starting Points

The best place to start a written economics assignment is by reviewing your instructor’s description of and instructions about the assignment. If you have questions about the assignment, you should ask your instructor.

A good way to learn how economists write is to read work written by economists. Examples of economic writing can be found in the course outline, economics journals, working papers series, and other economic publications. Your instructor may be able to suggest good examples of published work or provide examples of good student work from past years.

Two books that provide useful advice on how to write for economics are:


Writing an Economics Essay: Resources

An excellent place to start looking for information and ideas is the Resources Link on the Department of Economics website (http://economics.uwo.ca/resources/index.html). Here you will find a comprehensive list of sources for published and unpublished economic papers, articles, books, theses, government publications, data, and so on.

The DB Weldon Library has an outstanding collection of materials in economics including bibliographies, indexes, handbooks, and periodicals. Library holdings, the online library catalogue, and other resources are available electronically from the Western Libraries Homepage http://www.lib.uwo.ca/. Access is available anywhere there is an internet connection using the OffCampus Proxy Server on the Library main page.

You are strongly encouraged to take a library orientation tour to learn about library resources, where things are located physically and online, and where to go for assistance. You should feel free to consult library staff if you have any questions or are having difficulty using the library.

*The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics* is a good place to begin exploring topics in economics. The most comprehensive dictionary of economics in existence today, it features articles by influential economists in their areas of expertise. It is available online through the library catalogue, or in print in the Weldon’s Reference section (call # HB 61.N49 2008 v. 1-8).

*EconLit* (Economic Literature) is a comprehensive, indexed electronic bibliography of economic literature from 1969 to the present covering major journals, articles in collective volumes (essays, proceedings, etc.), books, book reviews, dissertations, and working papers. Citations, selected abstracts, and links to UWO’s full-text resources are provided. *EconLit* is available through the Library catalogue, or from the Library’s list of Databases found under “Research” on the Library homepage http://www.lib.uwo.ca/.

You can download and print records from the *EconLit* database. Once you have successfully marked records of interest, download your marked records to a text file, send marked records by email, or export them to a citation manager such as *Refworks*.

*Refworks* is a bibliographic and citation software tool that can be used to construct citations and lists of references in the author-date and other styles. *Refworks* is available at http://refworks.scholarsportal.info/Refworks/login.asp?WNCLang=false.

*CANSIM* (Canadian Socio-economic Information Management System) is Statistics Canada's computerized database of time series data covering a wide variety of social and economic aspects of Canadian life. Access the database by doing a Title Search on the Western Libraries Catalogue, or from the Library’s list of Databases found under “Research” on the Library homepage http://www.lib.uwo.ca/.

*Western Undergraduate Economics Review (WUER)*

The Department of Economics encourages students to consider submitting their essays to the *Western Undergraduate Economics Review*. The *WUER* is a journal published by the Department once a year that showcases student work in economics. For information about the *WUER* and its submission guidelines, please visit http://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/undergraduate_economics_review.html.