

## Guidelines for Essay Courses

### Essay Courses<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup>From the UWO Academic Handbook. See <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/regn/coursenumbering.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> From the UWO Academic Handbook. See <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/english.pdf>.

### 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."<sup>3</sup>

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:<sup>4</sup>

- 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- Copy sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or ideas from someone else's work, published or unpublished, without giving the original author credit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

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<sup>3</sup>Excerpted from HC Black, *Black's Law Dictionary*, West Publishing Co., 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170.

<sup>4</sup> From the San José State University Plagiarism Tutorial [<http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/>]

- 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

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.)

The Economics Department has adopted the citation guidelines used in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15<sup>th</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. An Online version is available through the Western Library's homepage <http://www.lib.uwo.ca>. Either search the catalogue by title or go to "Research Resources > Databases by Title > Chicago Manual of Style." For access from off campus, you must use the *OffCampus Access* sign-in on the Library's homepage.

Economics papers typically use the **author-date** style of references. An explanation of the author-date style and detailed examples are available in the *Chicago Manual of Style Online* (for example, see "Tools > Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide"). The *Chicago Manual* also gives instructions and examples of citations for electronic resources (see, for example, "Documentation II: Specific Content" on pp. 641-754 of the print version or in the Online version).

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 the same authors have more than one publication in the same year, the convention is to add both in the citation and the bibliography lower-case letters behind the year of publication, e.g., 1993a and 1993b.

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 employment 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.

e.g. Wonnacott, Thomas and Ronald Wonnacott. 1984. *Introductory statistics for business and economics*. Third edition. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.

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

Lastname, Firstname. Year. Title of article. *Name of Journal or Bank Review* Volume: pages.

e.g. Geweke, John F. and David E. Runkle. 1995. A fine time for monetary policy. *Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Quarterly Review* 19: 18-31.

(iii) GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

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

e.g. Statistics Canada. 1983. *Logging: Annual census of forestry*. Catalogue No. 25-201.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1975. *Median gross rent by counties of the United States, 1970*.

Prepared by the Geography Division in cooperation with the Housing Division, Bureau of the Census. Washington, DC.

(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).

e.g. Sicular, Terry and Kathleen Hartford. 1989. China's Looming Rural Crisis. *Asian Wall Street Weekly*. July 3.

(v) CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS OR CONFERENCE VOLUMES:

Lastname, Firstname. Year. Title. In *Title of book/volume*, ed. Firstname Lastname, page range. Place of Publication: Publisher's Name.

e.g. Fafchamps, Marcel. 2001. The role of business networks in market development in sub-Saharan Africa. In *Communities and markets in economic development*, ed. Masahiko Aoki and Yujiro Hayami, 186-214. New York: Oxford University Press.

(vi) ONLINE BOOKS:

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

e.g. Mäler, Karl-Göran and Jeffrey R. Vincent, eds. 2005. *Handbook of environmental economics, Vol. 3: Economywide and international environmental issues*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/handbooks/15740099> (July 23, 2007).

(vii) ONLINE JOURNAL ARTICLES:

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

e.g. Ruffle, Bradley J. and Richard Sosis. 2007. Does it pay to pray? Costly ritual and cooperation. *B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy* 7(1): Article 12. <http://www.bepress.com/bejeap/vol7/iss1/art18> (Aug. 7, 2007).

(viii) INTERNET SITES:

Name of Website or Organization. url/web address (access date).

e.g. Transparency International. <http://www.transparency.org> (May 3, 2007).

## Writing an Economics Essay: Starting Points

The best place to start with 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:

McCloskey, Dierdre N. 2000. *Economical writing, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press.

Greenlaw, Steven A. 2006. *Doing economics: A guide to understanding and doing economic research*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co.

## Writing an Economics Essay: Resources

An excellent place to start looking for information and ideas is the **Links website** of the Department of Economics Reference Centre (<http://economics.uwo.ca/econref/links.asp>). This website gives a comprehensive list of places to find 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: A Dictionary of Economics* (DBWREF HB61.N49 1987 v.1-4) is a good place to begin exploring topics in economics. This is the most comprehensive dictionary of economics in existence today.

*EconLit (Economic Literature)* is a comprehensive, indexed electronic bibliography of the world's economic literature from 1969 to the present covering more than 400 major journals, articles in collective volumes (essays, proceedings, etc.), books, book reviews, dissertations, and working papers. Abstracts are provided for many items. *Econlit* is available through the Library catalogue or from the Library homepage under "Resources by Subject > Economics > Articles Using Indexes > Econlit."

You can search, download and print records from the *EconLit* database. Once you have successfully marked records of interest, you can use the menu to 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 to the database can be found at <http://ssnds.uwo.ca/bibliodatabases.html>, through a Western Libraries Catalogue search for *CANSIM*, under Title, or through Weldon Library in the *Resources by Subject* pages for Government Publications <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/resources/#gov>.

## 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/undergradreview.asp>.