

**University of Waterloo**  
**Department of Economics**  
**Econ 472**  
**Senior Honours Essay**  
**Winter 2018**  
**10:00-11:20 TTh, RCH 109**

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Lutz-Alexander Busch  
Office: HH 127  
Office Hours: W 13:00-14:00; Th 14:00-15:00  
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**Resource Partners:**

Amy Greene, Writing & Communication Centre, SCH 2nd floor, X84410, [amy.greene@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:amy.greene@uwaterloo.ca)  
Sandra Keys, Library, LIB 224, X32279, [skeys@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:skeys@uwaterloo.ca)  
Amanda McKenzie, Office of Academic Integrity, NH 3006D, X38562, [am3mcken@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:am3mcken@uwaterloo.ca)

**Notes on contacting the instructor**

When sending email, please use your official edu.uwaterloo account and have ECON 472 in the subject line. It is generally a good idea to also have a signature line that includes your full name and student ID. Please treat email correspondence as a somewhat formal venue of communication. Email is not a text message and therefore looks different.

**Course Description**

This course is meant to ‘pull together’ the material in your degree. It helps you to learn the skills of scholarly research and communication needed for either graduate school or the work place. Unlike the traditional lecture format, the course gives students an interactive classroom environment to develop critical thinking, research methodology, economic analysis, library tools, data handling, peer review, and interpersonal communication. Previous experience in writing term papers is not required.

A key part of the course is for students to find a faculty supervisor who agrees to work with them on a research topic of mutual interest.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

A. Project Completion in a fixed time frame

The due date for the essay is the last day of class of the term (Wednesday, April 4, 2018). This date is firm. Just as ‘in real life’ – if you are not ready at the deadline, your chance has passed you by. Time management skills and ‘expectation modification’ are essential.

To achieve this goal, students must continually work on their project from the start of term. The project demands discipline and hard work through the term (not just a few nights before the due date). This is a class that students work hard to stay on track. The time commitment is very dependent on progress and may balloon if you do not recognize dead-ends early enough.

## B. Research Experience

While this course is demanding in terms of time commitment and discipline, it offers students a valuable research experience not found in a typical lecture-based course where students attend lectures, do homework, and write exams with little or no interaction with peers and classmates.

This class provides students with a rare (in our program) opportunity to spend a term working at close range with their supervisor on a topic of mutual interest. This research experience is different from a term paper, as students writing a term paper often work with little guidance or contact with the instructor. While it is possible to write a typical term paper in a few late nights before the due date, this is not possible in this course. There exists a strict schedule of work in progress submissions throughout the term. These form an essential part of the course.

It is important to keep in mind that an essay submitted without regular consultation with the supervisor, regular class attendance, and regular submission of work in progress for peer review will lead to a Fail. To be very clear on this: submission of an essay at the end of the term without interaction with the class, instructor, and supervisor is not enough to pass the course.

## C. Communication Skills

Economic writing takes many forms, from a research article for a specialist audience in a refereed journal to a 'policy brief' which is meant to convey key ideas and insights to an 'uninformed' audience. The required approach differs, but in all cases the goal is to communicate successfully with your audience and to have an impact. This course will help you to 'write like an economist' so that your output will be considered seriously and not dismissed just because of its form. (Yes – readers are 'shallow' and will judge text as to form, presentation, organization, grammar -- as well as the economic content.)

### Required Text

There is no formal text. Useful references are

- Greenlaw, Steven A. 2009. Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research, South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Dudenhefer, Paul. 2009. A Guide to Writings in Economics. EcoTeach Center, Department of Economics, Duke University (<http://lupus.econ.duke.edu/ecoteach/undergrad/manual.pdf>)
- Turabian, Kate L. 2010. Student's Guide to Writing College Papers. 4th edition. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

### Readings Available on LEARN

- Assorted readings and supporting documents.

### Course Requirements and Assessment (\*see special notes below)

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Class attendance and participation		20*
Assignment submission (instructor marked)	Various (see LEARN)	10
Supervisor Progress reports	Various dates	10*
Final Essay	DUE APRIL 4th	60
Total		100%

NOTES: There will be no adjustments to the above grading scheme. \* Please note that you will fail this course if you do not achieve a pass (10/20) in Class attendance and participation. Your essay will be the main component of your grade, BUT, without a credible performance in the course you will not receive credit.

#### *Expectations of Class Participation*

1. Fully attend all class meetings. Here are some examples of failure to 'fully attend' classes:
  - a. arriving late or leaving early more than 50% of the class time;
  - b. being in class but not participating in class activities, such as studying for other courses, inappropriate use of computers and electronic devices.
2. Fully participate in all class activities, e.g., discussions, peer reviews, exercises, Flex Lab sessions.
3. Submit assignments on-time (electronic copies on LEARN and hard copies in class) and participate in peer reviews and class discussions. It is not enough to submit assignments (online, in class) without attending class peer reviews, in which case the assignments will be given a zero mark. Peer reviews have to be done in class.
4. It is worth repeating that merely submitting an essay at the end of the term without class participation during the term is not enough to pass the course. An essay written without regular faculty supervision, peer reviews, class exercises, class attendance, etc. will lead to a 'Fail'.
5. Given the interactive nature of the class activities, there will be no substitutions or weight transfers for missed classes and/or course activities.
6. Students missing six or more scheduled classes will fail the course. (Note: a few scheduled lecture times are expected to be cancelled/optional/for consultation. This rule refers to those classes/lectures for which attendance has been announced as mandatory.)

#### *Expectations of Regular Contact with Supervisors*

Students are expected to maintain regular contact with their supervisor throughout the term in order to work on, and progress in, their research.

1. Students are expected to work out a mutually agreeable regular meeting schedule with supervisors (normally once a week) and follow it through. Occasional deviations from the regular schedule (e.g., illness, midterm, job interview) should be properly discussed and agreed upon by both parties.
2. Given the short twelve-week span of the term and the busy schedules of both supervisors and students, maintaining regular scheduled contacts is the key to success in this course.
3. In case of a lack of regular contact with the supervisor it is within the power of the supervisor to refuse further supervision and to refuse any submitted essay.
4. Face-to-face meeting is the usual primary meeting format. Other forms of communication (telephone, email, skype) may be used if there is a mutual agreement of both sides.

\*Students must maintain a record of meetings and contacts with the supervisor for the entire term. This record must be submitted together with the final essay at the end of the term. In case this log is not submitted or indicates only sporadic contact, a penalty of up to a 50% reduction from the progress mark could be applied.

## **Course Outline**

This course will be fairly dynamic with no set schedule and actual activities governed by progress within the group. Yet there is a logical progression, which is not necessarily linear:

- Overview and Introduction to the Course; Special resources
- Selection of topics and supervisors
- Library resources and use, including 'public' data
- The 'nuts and bolts' of writing
- Writing an Economics paper
- Literature reviews
- Writing your paper

## **Information on Plagiarism Detection**

Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen submitted work in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in submitted work is properly documented. Students will learn to use the software to pre-screen their own work for potential issues of academic integrity. For information about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin, see Turnitin at Waterloo (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo>). Students who do not wish to have their work screened by Turnitin should inform the instructor in writing or email no later than the end of the second week to arrange for an alternative option.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

University policy prohibits a prohibition of laptop use in class. However: cell phones, tablets and other electronic devices are not welcome. The recording of lectures (audio or video) is prohibited by University policy unless explicit permission has been given. The use of photography is prohibited. This includes pictures taken with a cell phone.

Please ensure your phones are set to silent (ideally to airplane mode) and are off your desk.

## **Attendance Policy**

As outlined above, attendance will be taken and should be considered mandatory. More than six absences for mandatory meetings will lead to a fail in the course.

## **Institutional-required statements for undergraduate course outlines**

### **Academic Integrity**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

### **Discipline**

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

### **Grievance**

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

### **Appeals**

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

### **Note for Students with Disabilities**

The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.