

Welcome to ECON 494

Honors Thesis in Economics Workshop

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Jason Dunick

In-Person Office Hours: 1-3pm Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

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Course Overview

Catalog Description:

This is a seminar on academic writing and research methods in economics for students preparing to write an undergraduate honors thesis. Students will develop skills in finding and evaluating sources, oral presentation, and academic writing.

Learning Outcomes:

This course will be designed to address the learning objectives of a Scholarly Inquiry course. Students will be able to articulate and refine a scholarly question and follow ethical principles in economics. Students will also learn how to gather appropriate evidence for their proposed research question and assess the key assumptions and validity of economic arguments. These objectives will be achieved through the completion of a research proposal with a revision process as well as annotated bibliography assignments.

Seminar Components:

- Individual Meetings: 10%
- Source Logs (5): 5% each
- Peer Review Assignment: 10%
- Presentation: 15%
- Draft Proposal: 10%
- Revised Proposal & Literature Review: 30%

Assignment Descriptions:

1. Individual Conferences (6)

After our first class meeting, students will be required to meet with me at least six times to develop their research question and literature review. These meetings can be done face-to-face, in a detailed email, or through Skype.

2. Source Logs (5)

There are a total of **five source logs due** and each source log should contain a review of **three academic sources**. Each source must be appropriate to be used as evidence in an academic research paper. Each entry in a source log should include a complete citation in APA format followed by two or three paragraphs that answer the following questions:

- Who is the author and what is the nature of the publication?
- What is the research question and how is that question answered?
- What are the main conclusions of the research?
- What are the unanswered questions from this research?

Source logs will be evaluated based on the quality of the source and completeness of each entry. Source logs must be in your own words—no direct quotes.

3. Draft Proposal

Students must submit a draft research proposal prior to starting the research project. This research proposal should be 2 to 3 pages in length and should answer the following questions:

- What is the research question and why is it important?
- How is this question relevant to economics?
- What are some examples of relevant research?
- What type of research method will you employ?

4. Oral Presentation of Research Proposal

Students will be expected to put together an 8 – 10 minute presentation covering their research proposal. This will be done at our class meeting in late July. If students are unable to attend, an alternative method to submit a presentation will be offered.

5. Peer Review Assignment

Students will be asked to type up a formal review of a draft proposal. In the review, students should consider the importance of the question, the quality of the supporting research, and the clarity of the proposal.

6. Final Draft and Literature Review

The final draft of the research proposal as well as an 8-10-page literature review of at least 15 sources relevant to the chosen topic.

Course Schedule:

Weeks	Meeting Type	Assignments Due	Due Date
Week 1	Class Meeting	No Assignment is Due	
Week 2	Individual Meetings	Source Log #1	May 30 th
Week 3	Individual Meetings	Source Log #2	June 6 th
Week 4	Individual Meetings	Source Log #3	June 13 th
Week 5	Individual Meetings	Source Log #4	June 20 nd
Week 6	No Meetings	Source Log #5	June 27 th
Week 7	No Meetings July 4 th	No Assignment is Due	
Week 8	Individual Meetings	Draft Proposal	July 13 th
Week 9	Individual Meetings	Peer Review Assignment	July 20 th
Week 10	Class Meeting	Presentations	July 24 - 27 th
Week 11	No Meetings	Final Draft and Literature Review Due	July 31st by 9:00am

Course Policies:

Communication:

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Students should expect a response within 48 hours Monday - Friday. Questions related to the course requirements should be posted to the “Ask the Instructor” discussion board. I will monitor [*the Blackboard class site*](#) daily during the work week.

Make-Up Work:

Late work for Research Assignments will not receive credit. Late work for all other major assignments will be accepted but with a grade penalty. If students are facing extraordinary circumstances, then the due dates for assignments can be adjusted *but only if arrangements are made with the instructor before the due date of the assignment.*

Honor Code:

Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code in its entirety in completing all requirements for this course. The Honor Code parameters will differ depending on the assignment and will be clearly explained for each assignment. If at any time you are unsure about the Honor Code implications for a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

Important:

No person should be denied educational access because of a disability. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Grading Scale (as a percentage):

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A +	100-97
A	96 – 93
A -	92 – 90
B+	89 – 87
B	86 – 83
B-	82 – 80
C+	79 – 77
C	76 – 73
C-	72 – 70
D	66 – 60
F	59 – 0