Department of Economics  
Carleton University  

ECO 920D – Professional Practice of Economics

Instructor: Dr. Xiaoyi Yan  
2018 Winter

Email: cuLearn  
Lectures: Mondays, 18:05–20:55 SA404
Office: B-850 Loeb  
Office Hours: by appointment
Phone: 613-520-2600 x 1751

Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s): ECON 2030 with a grade of C+ or higher, ECON 2103 with a grade of C+ or higher, ECON 2210 (or equivalent) with a grade of C- or higher, and ECON 2220 (or equivalent) with a grade of C+ or higher.

Students who believe they have taken a similar background course or courses from another university must provide appropriate documentation to the Department of Economics Undergraduate Administrator, Amanda Wright.

Objectives

The course aims to develop the practical skills used by professional economists, including writing professional documents such as policy briefs and memos, data visualization, communication of economic ideas in non-technical terms, presentation skills, and team-based problem solving.

Economists are information workers. A professional economist needs to have the knowledge and the skills required to find, analyze, interpret and explain information. The aim of this course is to provide you with an opportunity to build skills and gain knowledge that will help you achieve professional success, whether it be as an economist or in a related career.

Students are expected to be hands-on practicing and improving their skills and knowledge under the guidance of the Instructor.

Readings/texts

There are no required texts. Reading materials will be identified and/or shared by the Instructor electronically throughout the course.
Course Outline

There will be three broad components in this course:

1) Instruction on writing for economic research and analysis
   - Writing basics
   - Styles of writing
   - Practical writing

2) Information visualization and presentation of empirical material
   - Data source, data quality
   - Spreadsheet, graph, table
   - Infographic

3) Team-based policy analysis and presentation
   - Topics chosen by student teams from a list provided by the Instructor or alternative topic approved by the Instructor. Teams will be chosen by the Instructor. Students will be given class time to meet in their teams, but should also expect to meet outside the class.

Three components will feature approximately equally in the instruction of the course. Class attendance is mandatory as there will be frequent in-class hands-on exercises.

Midterm exam (1.5 hour) in class on February 12, 2018

Winter break no class February 19-23, 2018

Final exam (2 hours) scheduled by the University during the final examination period

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>Attendance in class; participation in team meetings in class</td>
<td>Throughout the term</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(see Sick Notes Policy)</td>
<td>(see Sick Notes Policy)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Group proposal for research or policy analysis on a topic chosen by student groups (groups to be determined by the Instructor)</td>
<td>January 22, 2018</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Preparation of a briefing note and supporting materials on an article provided by the Instructor</td>
<td>February 5, 2018</td>
<td>10%</td>
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## Midterm exam
**In class 1.5-hour exam**
February 12, 2018
15%

**Assignment 3**
Production of infographics based on a topic chosen by students (one-page with multiple formats of information)
March 5, 2018
10%

**Poster presentation**
Individual presentation of a poster related to a component of the Team-based policy analysis
April 2, 2018
15%

**Final examination**
The final exam will cover all material studied during the term. It will involve writing short analysis, data presentation and interpretation. No multiple choice questions.
2-hour exam as scheduled during the final examination period
35%

All written material submitted will be evaluated on the basis of:
1) quality of the economic reasoning;
2) quality of the background information used;
3) quality of the writing including spelling, grammar and stylistics of presentation;
4) choice of appropriate format and structure.

If you are unable to write the midterm due to a valid documented illness, the weight of the midterm will be transferred to the final examination. The credit weights of assignments cannot be transferred.

No course grades are final until approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs. Application to write a deferred final examination must be made by the student at the Registrar’s Office.

### Sick Notes Policy

Sick notes are required only in exceptional circumstances. You may miss up to TWO classes without a sick note.


Other requests for accommodation due to, for example, bereavement or stress, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
Late Assignment Policy

The grade of any assignment that is handed in late will be reduced by 10 percentage points per day late. Please also see sick notes policy.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs at least two weeks prior to the exams. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline of submitting completed forms to the PMC for University-scheduled examinations in December.

For religious and special needs such as pregnancy, students should consult with the instructor and equity services (ext. 5622 or www.carleton.ca/equity).

Plagiarism

Please be aware that plagiarism is a serious offence at Carleton and should be recognized and avoided. For further information on how to do so, please see “Pammett on Plagiarism and Paraphrasing” at www.carleton.ca/economics/courses/writing-preliminaries.

Intellectual Property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).