Prerequisites: 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. A grade of C+ or higher is required to qualify for ECON 4905. DEF(ered final grade) status at the end of this course precludes (continued) registration in any other course for which the former is a prerequisite. 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.

Textbooks and Laptops: There is no required text. Some written materials will be shared by the instructor electronically, via cuLearn. Students are requested to bring a laptop computer and smartphone to lectures.

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

Course format: The emphasis in the course will be on learning-by-doing. Students are expected to work through material independently. The class time will be devoted to in-class writing exercises, group discussions, spreadsheet and data analysis practice, working on assignments, and short lectures. Some of the lectures will be given by the professor, others will be given by guest lecturers.

CuLearn: Typically lecture notes and other course materials will be posted on CuLearn. Assignments will also generally be collected through CuLearn. For assistance with cuLearn contact the ITS Service Desk (4th Floor, MacOdrum Library, telephone: 613-520-3700)
**Evaluation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Total value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class exercises, class attendance and class participation (best 15 grades)</td>
<td>In class</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 - Evaluating two sides of a policy debate</td>
<td>28 Sept</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 – Policy brief, first draft</td>
<td>5 Nov</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4 – Policy brief, final draft</td>
<td>5 Dec</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Files containing images and text used in poster. Submit through Culearn.</td>
<td>10 p.m. Nov 18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster presentations – held in the Discovery Centre, Room 482 in the Library.</td>
<td>Nov 19/21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>35</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**In-class exercises, class attendance and class participation:** In class exercises will typically take the form of short writing assignments, but may also include spreadsheet and graphing exercises, team exercises, or multiple-choice quizzes. The best 15 grades will count for the class participation grade. If you are unable to attend all of the classes, you can partially recover up to 5 lost class participation grades by taking on-line workshops through student services: [https://carleton.ca/csas/learning-support-workshops/](https://carleton.ca/csas/learning-support-workshops/) (each workshop makes up for one missed class; maximum of five workshops will be counted; academic integrity workshops not included).

**Assignments and final examination:** Descriptions of the four assignments are attached. The final examination will consist of short answer and multiple choice questions (e.g. “How do you judge the credibility of a reference source?” or “What kind of chart would you use to represent this data?”) as well as essay-type questions (e.g. “Would it be a good idea to increase the degree of differentiation in the Canadian university system?”)

**Grading:** assignments, projects, exam questions – will be graded on the quality of your economic analysis, the quality of your writing, and the skills you demonstrate in making tables and graphs.

**Re-grading:** Any requests to have work re-graded should be submitted to the professor in writing, along with an explanation of why the student believes the grade should be changed. The professor will re-mark the assignment in question. After the review, the initial grade may be increased, decreased, or remain unchanged.

**Late work:** The grade of any assignment handed more than 72 hours late will be reduced by x percentage points, where x=10*(number of days late-3). Late in-class assignments will not be accepted. No course grades are final until approved by the Faculty Dean. Application to write a deferred final examination must be made at the Registrar’s Office.
**Sick Note Policy:** Sick notes are only necessary if you hope to hand in an assignment more than 3 days late and not be penalized. In these situations, please provide me with a sick note dated **before the assignment is due.** Any requests for accommodation due to sickness must be accompanied by a Carleton University medical certificate: https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/med_cert.pdf and a signed third party release of information form allowing me to verify the authenticity of the medical certificate: https://carleton.ca/eurus/wp-content/uploads/fippa_release_form.pdf. Other requests for accommodation due to, for example, bereavement or stress, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Plagiarism:** The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment; • using another’s data or research findings; • failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Requests for Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

**Religious obligation** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca PMC

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton’s Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline
Course outline and readings

*Please bring a piece of paper, a pencil and an electronic device to each class. I recommend bringing a laptop to class if possible.*

I have written a book for this class called Professional Practice for Economists. You can find it here. [https://docs.google.com/document/d/117VFfrR2if91ic9qQix1cmOva75mYmWywggQN3Kq2xY0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/117VFfrR2if91ic9qQix1cmOva75mYmWywggQN3Kq2xY0/edit?usp=sharing) Each week please read the appropriate chapter in the Professional Practice book, plus any other assigned readings. Note: the reading list here is a guide only and may change as the course evolves.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 - Sept 12 and 17</td>
<td>Making an argument con’t. How to structure an argument. Finding a job with an economics degree. Guest speaker (Sept 17): Tobi Fakorede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 – Sept 19 and 24</td>
<td>Finding and evaluating economic data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 – Sept 26 and Oct 1</td>
<td>Catch up. Assignment 1 due September 28th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 Oct 15 and 17</td>
<td>Assignment 2 due October 17. Creating and interpreting tables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 Oct 29 and 31</td>
<td>Data visualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 Nov 5 and 7</td>
<td>Data visualization con’t. Assignment 3 due November 5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 Nov 12 and 14</td>
<td>Policy analysis example and application: education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10 Nov 19 and 21</td>
<td>Nov 18th: materials for poster presentation due. Poster presentations. Class held in Discovery Centre, Fourth Floor, MacOdrum library, room 482.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 Nov 26 and 28</td>
<td>Policy analysis example application: cannabis legalization and taxation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 – 13 Dec 3, 5, 7</td>
<td>Catch up and final examination review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Assignment 1: Evaluating two sides of a policy debate. Due September 28, 2018.**

Please submit your assignment, and copies of the two sources you used, on cu-learn. It is not necessary to submit your assignment in hard copy.

For this assignment, you need to find two sources that take two different sides on a debate about a policy issue. The issue could be something like decreasing the minimum price of beer, paying surrogate mothers, how high the tax on cannabis should be, should beer and wine be sold in corner stores, should Canada have a basic income, should Canada have a carbon tax, Brexit, tariffs, or any other topic. If you’ve having problems finding a topic, please come and see me during office hours, or write me an email.

1. **(10)** Find two sources that take opposing sides on an economic policy issue. State what the policy issue you are interested in is, and cite each source using a proper academic format.

   One of the sources should be a quality economics source, for example, an economic journal article, a report by a government agency, a working paper by academic economists, or a report by a high-quality independent think-tank such as IRPP or the CD Howe Institute. It’s fine if the other source is a newspaper article or a lower-quality source – as long as it takes an opposing side on the issue. You will be graded on the originality, relevance and appropriateness of your sources. For example, if you use the same sources as several other people in the class, you will get a lower grade. If you use sources that no one else uses, and one of those sources is authoritative and clearly focused on economic issues, you will get a higher grade.

2. For both sources (25 marks each) answer the following questions. Please use quotation marks and proper citations for quotations. Other than direct quotations, please use your own words, and avoid paraphrasing as much as possible.
   a. Is the source authoritative? Unbiased? How can you tell?
   b. Identify the thesis statement. How do you know it’s the thesis statement?
   c. What arguments or evidence does the author give to support the thesis statement?

3. **(40)** In two or three paragraphs, describe the issue, and explain why people disagree about the issue. Summarize the evidence on each side of the debate, say which side of the debate is more credible, and why. Aim for 250 words, but it’s o.k. if you go up to 500 words. Your paragraph(s) should
   a. Have a clear topic sentence
   b. Be well-organized, spell-checked and grammar checked, and in your own words.
   c. Include at least one direct quotation from each of your two sources
   d. Clearly reference all sources used.
Assignment 2: The Wikipedia Project. Choice of page due October 3 2018, final project due October 17, 2018

The first step in doing this assignment is to find a page in Wikipedia that has some economic content, and needs updating. The updating could be something as minimal as updating links so that they are still live, updating numbers, or adding new sources. Alternatively, it could involve creating a whole new section on an existing page. (If you want to create an entirely new page, please get approval from the professor beforehand.)

If you’re looking for ideas, a list of Wikipedia pages that are relevant to the Canadian economy can be found here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Economy_of_Canada. Many of the pages here need updating. You can choose a page about a country other than Canada – or a general page on a topic like unemployment insurance.

Alternatively, you could start by finding a high quality report or some interesting information. Then you could try to find a Wikipedia page that you could enter that information on. For example, you could take something like this report on disability benefits in Canada and the US by Tammy Schirle and Kevin Milligan http://faculty.arts.ubc.ca/kmilligan/research/push-pull.htm and use the information on it to update this page on disability benefits https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disability_benefits (that disability benefits page is so bad we could have a bunch of people working on it!)

1. (10) Enter the title of the web page that you are planning to update in this spreadsheet by October 3 on https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1W2yKI9u-0Ta4D3Wy2fruOBtNf452cD8x8DLybcUidcY/edit?usp=sharing. Please do not pick a page that someone else is already editing without consulting with me first. If you have difficulty finding a page to edit, please come and see me or the TA in office hours. If you wish to form a group and do a substantial edit of a page that needs a lot of work, please get approval from me beforehand.

2. (5) Before you start editing the document, save a .pdf copy of the page. (In google chrome on windows, right-click, then choose “print” and then choose “save as .pdf”).

3. (15) Is the page authoritative? Credible? How can you tell? In your answer, please include a description of what the terms authoritative and credible mean.

4. (15) Explain what it means to say that evidence is relevant. Assess the relevance of the page by (a) thinking about who is likely to be using this Wikipedia page, and what kinds of information are they going to be looking for (where are the users located? What kind of educational background do they have? Why would they want this information?) and (b) whether or not the information on the page is appropriate for that user.

5. (30) How could this page be changed to make it more authoritative, credible and relevant? Explain.

6. (25) Make the changes that you outline in number 5 above to the Wikipedia page. Save a .pdf copy of the revised page. Note on your assignment the email address and username you used to make the changes to Wikipedia.

7. Submit your assignment, the old version of the page and the new version of the page on Culearn. There is no need to submit a hard copy of this assignment.
Assignments 3, 4 and poster session: Policy Brief

In assignments 3 and 4, as well as the poster session, you will be asked to come up with a policy proposal (a “claim of policy”), analyze it, and recommend for or against that proposal. I would like you to keep your analysis to 500 to 100 words, and include one or two data visualizations, charts, or graphs. The final policy brief should have this format:

**Executive Summary:** (One to two paragraphs). This should do two things. (1) make and explain a “claim of fact” – a statement that identifies a problem that needs remediating. (2) make and explain a “statement of policy” – a statement about what should be done to solve the problem.

For example, an executive summary might say “Milk prices in Canada are X% higher than milk prices in...” and then come up with a statement of policy, e.g. “Therefore children in low-income families should be provided with free milk at school.” In the executive summary it’s not necessary to defend the claims at length, just make and explain them.

**Context or Scope of Problem:** This section defends the claim of fact in one or two paragraphs. For example, if the policy brief was about milk prices, this might present facts and statistics about milk prices and milk consumption. Because this is a policy brief, it should draw primarily from secondary sources, e.g. reports, journal articles, summary statistics in CANSIM, OECD data, World Bank or UN data, etc.

**Policy Alternatives:** (3 to 4 paragraphs) In this section I would like you to explain and evaluate the proposed policy, and also describe one other alternative policy. E.g. the proposed policy might be to provide children with free milk, the alternative might be to abolish supply management. Again, this section should draw from secondary sources, e.g. reports, journal articles, summary statistics in CANSIM, OECD data, World Bank or UN data, etc. It should also use basic economic reasoning, e.g. supply and demand curves.

**Policy Recommendations:** Explains the proposed policy response in detail, and how that policy response could be implemented.

**References:** List of sources used.

**Assignment 3** should contain a first draft of the executive summary section and the context or scope of the problem section, a first draft of the data visualization, and a list of sources. The **poster session** should use graphs, charts, and text to convey your argument in a visually interesting way. **Assignment 4** should be a complete version of the policy brief, spell and grammar checked, and include a word count.