

Department of Economics

Carleton University

ECON 3920 – Professional Practice of Economics

Fall, 2019

Instructor: Professor Frances Woolley

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Lectures: Monday and Wednesday, 8:35 to 9:55, 402 Southam Hall

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10:30 to 11:30.

Office: Loeb D888/9.

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. 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. Please see the course outline and lecture notes for a list of required readings, and for the lectures for which a laptop is to be brought to class. Some weeks you are expected to bring a laptop to class. If you do not have a laptop, or if you have computer problems on a given day, you can borrow a laptop from IT help desk on the 4th floor of the library. Please tell the people at the IT desk that the laptop is for ECON 3920 (if you have any problems borrowing a laptop, get in touch with me directly).

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.

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:

Assessment. Please submit electronic copies only unless hard copy submission is required.	Due date	Total value
Assignment 1: Finding and evaluating sources of information	23 Sept	10
Assignment 2: Assessing relevance. Editing. Identifying and avoiding plagiarism	30 Sept	10
Assignment 3: Essay on Bank of Canada Museum Field Trip	4 October	10
Assignment 4: Professional Communications	30 October	10
Assignment 5: First draft of Chart to Watch. Please submit electronically. Bring hard copy to class on Nov 18	Nov 15	10
Assignment 6: Final copy of Chart to Watch	Dec 6	10
Poster session: Last name A-K: December 2 Last name L-Z: December 4	Dec 2 and 4	5
Final examination	As scheduled	35

Writing exercise and final examination: The examinations for this course of short answer and multiple choice questions designed to test knowledge of the course material, as well writing designed to measure students' ability to organize and express their ideas appropriately.

Grading: Assignments and examinations will be graded on your demonstrated knowledge of the course material, the quality of your economic analysis, the quality of your writing (for example, paragraph structure), and the skills you demonstrate in making tables and graphs. No course grades are final until approved by the Faculty Dean.

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

Poster presentations: Participation in both poster sessions is mandatory. The grade on the poster session will be based on (a) the poster (b) engagement with other students (students who show up late and spend the poster sessions standing around talking to friends will get a low mark, students who show up on time and spend the poster session listening carefully to other students' presentations and offering good comments will get a high mark and (c) ability to answer other students' questions. Evaluation of the posters will be based partly on the prof's and TA's observations, and partly on peer evaluation.

Peer and self-assessment of Assignment 5: The grade for Assignment 5 will be based, in part, on a peer and self-assessment of the assignment, which will be carried out in class on November 18th.

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 submitted late will be reduced by x percentage points, where $x=10*\text{number of days late}$. All assignments are due at 11:55 p.m. on the day stated. At the end of the course one late penalty amounting to a maximum of 5% of the final course grade will be forgiven.

Sick Notes/Deferred Finals: Sick notes are only necessary if you hope to hand in multiple assignments late and not be penalized. (Recall that one late penalty worth up to 5% of the course grade will be forgiven). If you really are genuinely sick and need special accommodations, 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. Other requests for accommodation due to, for example, bereavement or stress, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Application to write a deferred final examination must be made at the Registrar's Office.

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/wpcontent/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

<p>Weeks 1 and 2 September 4th through September 16th</p>	<p>Introductions. Finding and evaluating information. Types of economic information: articles, commentaries, newspaper articles/blogs/other media. Identifying the purpose of a piece of writing. Identifying relevant and irrelevant material. Evaluating evidence – logical fallacies.</p> <p>Special lectures: Sept 9 Class meets in room ML252 in the library. Guest lecturers: Jane Fry, data librarian. Matt Gertler , economics librarian (TBC). Tour of library.</p> <p>Readings: Professional Practice for Economists, chapters 1 and 3, Finding and evaluating economic data, available on-line here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/117VFfR2if91cl9qQixlcm0va75mYmWywgqQN3Kq2xY0/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Mike Palquist, the Bedford Researcher, 6th edition, chapters 5 and 13 (on reserve in library).</p> <p>Sept 23rd: Assignment 1, Finding and Evaluating Sources of Evidence due.</p>
<p>Bank of Canada Special events</p>	<p>Special lecture: Sept 25 Bank of Canada Deputy Governor Timothy Lane on How the Bank of Canada Conducts Monetary Policy (held during class time). Bank of Canada Museum Field Trip. Please sign up for one of the following times: Monday Sept 16th - tour starting at 11:00. Friday Sept 20th – tour starting at 2:00 Sat Sept 21st – tour starting at 11:00 You may also visit the Museum on your own during regular visiting hours. Oct 4: Assignment 3, Essay on Bank of Canada Museum visit and/or Deputy Governor Lane’s talk due.</p>
<p>Weeks 3 to 4 September 18 to 30th</p>	<p>Identifying and avoiding plagiarism. Developing and defending a thesis statement. Structuring writing through paragraphs.</p> <p>Readings: Professional Practice for Economists, chapter 2, How to structure an argument. Available on-line here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/117VFfR2if91cl9qQixlcm0va75mYmWywgqQN3Kq2xY0/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Paragraph Power. On reserve in library.</p> <p>How do I write an Intro, Conclusion and Body Paragraph: https://lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/undergraduates/writing-guides/how-do-i-write-an-intro--conclusion---body-paragraph.html</p> <p>Sept 30: Assignment 2 due</p>

<p>Weeks 5 to first half of week 6</p> <p>October 2nd to 9th</p>	<p>Professional communications and career planning. Writing an email. Writing a cover letter.</p> <p>October 7: Career services presentation.</p> <p>October 30 – Assignment 4 – Professional Communication - Due</p>
<p>Weeks: Second half of week 6 to week 9</p> <p>October 16 to Nov 13th</p>	<p>Please bring a laptop to class. Learning how to use spreadsheets. Downloading, viewing, formatting and sorting data. Line charts. Bar charts. Principles of data visualization. Pivot tables and applications: converting quarterly to annual data, comparing multiple data series. Brainstorming ideas for Chart to Watch Assignment. Finding data for Chart to Watch assignment.</p> <p>November 6: class cancelled (to offset Bank of Canada Museum field trip). Note: this date was chosen for cancellation because it is one day before the first draft of the ECON 3900 essays are due.</p> <p>November 13: Presentation by Stephen Tapp, Deputy Chief Economist & Trade Research Director @ExportDevCanada Vice President @OEAEconomics; Chart connoisseur</p> <p>Readings: Lecture notes plus the series of videos here: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/excel2016</p> <p>Edward Tufte, Beautiful Evidence. On reserve in library. Focus especially on the basic principles for data visualization.</p> <p>November 15– Assignment 5 – first draft of Chart to Watch assignment due.</p>
<p>Week 9.5-10.5</p> <p>November 18 and 20th</p>	<p>November 18: Peer and self-evaluation of Chart to Watch. Bring hard copy of Assignment 5 chart to class. Attendance required.</p> <p>Nov 20: Presentation and panel on post-graduate options (TBC)</p> <p>Catch up and review.</p>
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Nov 25 and 27</p>	<p>Work in-class on revising Chart to Watch assignment; advanced use of spreadsheets. Introduction to tableau (time permitting).</p>
<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Dec 2 and 4 poster presentations (Family names A to K Dec 2; family names L to Z Dec 4). Held in room 482 of the library. Dec 6 final exam review and final draft of Chart to Watch assignment due.</p>