



**Carleton  
University**

Department  
of Economics

Winter 2025

ECON 3920 B Professional Practice of Economics

Course Outline

Instructor: Simon Power  
Office: B853 LA  
Phone: 613-520-2600 x3764  
Email: [simon.power@carleton.ca](mailto:simon.power@carleton.ca)  
Office Hours: TBA

TA: TBA  
Office: TBA  
Email: TBA  
Office Hours: TBA

Brightspace Course Page: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d21/home/292376>

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Welcome to Professional Practice of Economics!

"Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy-protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s)."

Prerequisites

The prerequisites for this course are 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, as outlined in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar. Students who believe that they have taken a similar background course or courses

from another university must provide appropriate documentation to the Department of Economics Undergraduate Administrator, Sean Hall [seanhall3@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:seanhall3@cunet.carleton.ca)

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

### Introduction

This course involves the development of 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.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- 1) have been exposed to and have developed a working knowledge of an array of different professional writing skills, focusing on the ability to be persuasive
- 2) have had the opportunity to both use and further develop their general oral presentation skills
- 3) be conversant with and be able to reproduce a range of basic data visualization items, such as charts, graphs, and maps, using modern data visualization software
- 4) have discussed and reflected upon their future career development and a broad range of contemporary workplace issues
- 5) have considered a diverse range of topical economic policy issues and thought about how to communicate economic ideas to non-specialists effectively
- 6) have gained extensive experience in group work

### Organization

This is an in-person, participatory course and is NOT suitable for online students. The class will meet once a week at 8:35 a.m. on Fridays for a 2 hour and 50 minute session with a short intermission.

There will be 9 in-class group exercises (together with 2 individual presentations), 4 individual assignments, a group project, and an in-person final exam.

Please note that Brightspace and the Carleton email system will be used extensively as a means of communication with students. Therefore, students are strongly advised to access Brightspace and to check their Carleton email at regular intervals in order to check for new information. To access Brightspace and the Carleton email system, students require a MyCarletonOne account. For questions about MyCarletonOne accounts, students should access [carleton.ca/its/get-started/](http://carleton.ca/its/get-started/) (and then click on either New Students or New Grad Students, as appropriate) or contact the ITS Service Desk.

### Attendance

If you plan to succeed in this course, then I cannot overstate the critical importance of regular class attendance and active participation, together with the allocation of regular and consistent study time outside the classroom. Due to the nature of the course material, many students find that it is very difficult to catch up, should they fall behind.

### Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Please ensure that you are familiar with and comply with the [Academic Integrity Policy](#)

And, more specifically, with regard to the written work required for this course, please be sure to avoid any form of plagiarism:

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotation marks.

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.

### In-Class Group Exercises

After the first (introductory) class, there will be an in-class group exercise in each of the following 9 classes. (There are 12 classes in total.) In-class group membership will vary from class to class and will be determined by the instructor in each of the relevant classes. In each

class, one member of each in-class group will give a brief presentation, which will be related to the in-class group exercise.

### Individual Assignments

Assignments will be posted on Brightspace and will be submitted through Brightspace according to the following schedule:

	<u>Posted</u>	<u>Due</u>
Assignment 1	January 31	February 14
Assignment 2	February 14	March 7
Assignment 3	March 7	March 21
Assignment 4	March 21	April 4

Students may wish to work together on assignment material, BUT each student MUST write up their own assignments INDEPENDENTLY.

### Group Project

There will be a written group project with an associated presentation. Details will be posted on February 14. Project group membership will be determined by the instructor. The presentations will be given in class on March 28 and April 4, and the written group project will be due on April 4.

### Final Exam

The final exam will be in-person and comprehensive, and will be scheduled by Examination Services during the regular final examination period (April 11-26).

### Evaluation

The final % grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

In-Class Group Exercises: 12% (1% for participation in each in-class group exercise to a maximum of 7%, and 2 individual presentations, 2.5% each)

Individual Assignments: 40% (4 assignments, 10% each)

Group Project: 13% (3% presentation, 10% written component)

Final Examination: 35%

Total: 100%

This % grade will then be converted into the alphabetical grade system using the standard equivalences, as outlined in Section 5.4 of the Academic Regulations of the University in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar.

In the event that one or more components of the term work are not completed, the weight of the incomplete component(s) will not be transferred to the final examination without a documented and compelling reason.

If you require academic consideration for one or more components of the term work, then you should contact the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor may then require you to complete the appropriate Academic Consideration for Coursework Form, as per the [Academic Consideration Policy](#)

Students who do not write the final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply to write a deferred final examination. In order to write a deferred final examination, students must contact the Registrar's Office. (For further details, see Section 4.3 of the Academic Regulations of the University in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar.) In the event that a student writes a deferred examination, the deferred examination will carry the same weight as the final examination in determining the course grade. Needless to say, any deferred examination will not be identical to the original final examination.

Finally, please note that: "Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean."

#### Required Textbook

The main textbook for the course will be the open-access (free) web edition of

Dougherty, J. and Ilyankou, I. (2024), [Hands-On Data Visualization](#)

available at <http://HandsOnDataViz.org> and distributed under a [Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International License](#) Note that the content may be shared for non-commercial purposes, with a source credit to <http://HandsOnDataViz.org>

Two other important references for this course will be the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) available at [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) and the open-access (free) edition of Atkinson, D, and Corbitt, S. (2022), [Intermediate College Writing](#), available at <https://www.oercommons.org/courses/intermediate-college-writing-building-and-practicing-mindful-writing-skills> and licensed under a [Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International License](#) Note that the content may be shared for non-commercial purposes, with a source credit to <https://www.oercommons.org/courses/intermediate-college-writing-building-and-practicing-mindful-writing-skills>

Specific topic references to these three key sources, as well as additional references where appropriate, will be given as the course proceeds.

#### Computer Packages

The Google Sheets and Datawrapper software packages will both be used extensively for data visualization in this course. Access to these packages is available free of charge. Details will be provided in due course.

### Course Content

The course will interweave the (further) development of general professional writing skills with the learning and use of data visualization tools, together with discussion of such important workplace skills as email etiquette, how to write a policy brief, how to market yourself, career development, how to give a presentation, effective leadership, explaining economic concepts in non-technical terms, and how to work effectively in teams. Attention will also be paid to post-graduation training and educational options. Examples used in class will encompass a selection of contemporary workplace challenges and concerns.

#### Class 1

Introduction, Course Overview, Presentation Skills

#### Classes 2-10

Data Visualization – Intermission – In-Class Exercise, Brief Lecture

#### Class 11

Data Visualization – Intermission – Brief Lecture, Project Group Presentations

#### Class 12

Project Group Presentations, Course Review, Final Exam Preparation

### Mental Health Resources and Academic Accommodations

Please note that you are responsible for reading and being aware of the information relating to Carleton University and other resources for mental health and academic support, as well as academic accommodations, found [HERE](#)

**IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THIS COURSE, PLEASE LET ME KNOW!**

**IF I DON'T KNOW THAT YOU HAVE PROBLEMS, I CAN'T FIX THEM!**