



Carleton University

Department of Economics

Carleton University - ECON 4905

Honours Capstone Seminar

Winter Term 2024

Instructor: Matt Webb, Loeb Building, B-846

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TA: Brendan Bray

Lectures: Tuesdays 8:35-11:25

Office hours - Prof: Tuesdays 12:00 - 1:00, Wednesdays 10:00-11:00 Loeb Building, B-846

Office hours - TA: TBD

Course Webpage: brightspace

Course Location: Log into Carleton Central to view the location on your timetable.

Lectures are held for three hours per week.

Prerequisites and Preclusions:

ECON 3900 with a grade of C+ or higher, ECON 3920 with a grade of C+ or higher, and registration in an Honours Economics program. 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, Renee Lortie.

Precludes additional credit for ECON 4890, ECON 4900 (no longer offered), ECON 4901 (no longer offered), and ECON 4902 (no longer offered).

Programming Languages:

Students are free to use whichever programming language they wish for the assignments. However, bonus marks, or an equivalent incentive, will be given if multiple programming languages are used for assignments.

Table 1: Evaluation:

Item	Due	Weight
Proposal Presentation	Feb. 4	10%
Proposal	Feb. 6	15%
Peer Feedback	Feb. 16	10%
Early findings presentation	Feb. 26	15%
Early findings report	Mar. 5	10%
Final Presentation	Apr. 1	20%
Final Paper	Apr. 10	20%

Presentations:

Each student will give three presentations during the course, one for the proposal, one for preliminary findings, and a final presentation. These presentations are anticipated to occur on the scheduled dates, and in person. Under exceptional circumstances some of the presentations may be moved forward or backward by a week. Under extremely exceptional circumstances students may be able to present via zoom. Please email Prof. Webb as early as possible if you have a conflict with one of the dates.

If presentations are missed without advance notice or a valid absence then an alternative date will be found and a 20% penalty will apply. For instance, a presentation worth 10% of the final grade, which would have earned 90% (or 9 grade points) if presented when scheduled would earn a grade of 72% (or 7.2 grade points) as a result of the unexcused absence.

Presentation Technology:

In order to fit all the presentations into one lecture we need to some advanced preparation. Specifically, we will need to have all the slides pre-loaded onto the computer. To do this, students will need to submit their slides as a **PDF** online a few days ahead of the presentation. Specific details of the submission procedure and deadlines will be announced closer to the presentation deadlines. In the interest of fairness, all presentations of a specific type will be due at the same time, despite half the class presenting one week later.

We will also need to adhere strictly to the set time limits for each presenter in order to get through all presenters.

Critiques and Peer Support:

Each student will be assigned randomly to a group of 3-4 students. These groups will be responsible for offering critiques and feedback on each members work. This feedback should be similar to referee reports or conference discussants and take the form of professional, constructive feedback. Students will be asked to fill out critique forms for both the proposal and the proposal presentations of the other members of their group. These will be marked for completeness, but not for content.

Students are also encouraged to communicate with their group members throughout the term, especially during the weeks without formal lectures. These groups can be helpful in keeping students accountable and motivated to make steady progress on their final papers.

Late Submissions

All uploaded graded material is subject to a 10% per day penalty for late submissions. For instance, an item worth 20% of the final grade, which would have earned 90% (or 9 grade points) if submitted on time would earn a grade of 81% (or 8.1 grade points) as a result of the unexcused late submissions.

Honours Essay

The end goal of this paper is to produce a novel research paper, your honours essay. The essay should be **5,000 words** or less. The due date for the paper is **April 10th**. The paper can be on any topic related to economics.

Most students can write an empirical paper, students are also allowed to write an original theoretical paper. Papers summarizing or reviewing an extensive literature are not allowed. Given the tight timeline most students choose to write an empirical paper. Along with the final paper students will have to make a final presentation of their main findings.

Students must submit a single zipped folder containing three files:

1. `firstname-lastname.pdf` - The PDF of their paper.
2. `firstname-lastname.csv` - A CSV file containing the data for their main analysis.
3. `firstname-lastname.do` - A Stata DO file, or a script from another programming language which uses the data in their csv folder to produce the main figures or tables from their paper.

Honours Essay Evaluation Criteria

1. the quality of the question or hypothesis
2. the quality of the literature review
3. analytical and empirical rigour
4. explanation and implications drawn on the basis of the results
5. organization, clarity and readability of the submitted research paper
6. the number of typographical and grammatical errors
7. the replicability of the results using the data and the submitted code
8. the length of the paper relative to the suggested length.

Table 2: Lecture Schedule:

Week	Date	Topics	Notes
1	Jan. 9	Where to find ideas & data	
2	Jan. 16	Course overview - productivity tools	
3	Jan. 23	Exploring your data	
4	Jan. 30	Analyzing your data	
5	Feb. 6	Proposal presentations	
6	Feb. 13	Additional topics	
7	Feb. 20	Reading Week	no class
8	Feb. 27	Early Findings Presentations	
9	Mar. 5	Early Findings Presentations	
10	Mar. 12	meetings	no class
11	Mar. 19	meetings	no class
12	Mar. 26	meetings	no class
13	Apr. 2	Final presentations	
14	Apr. 9	Final presentations	

Notes: Meetings will be 1:1 on zoom to discuss progress and ask questions about your essay and analysis.

Additional Information

Course Standing

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Department Chair and the Faculty Dean. This means that course grades may be scaled upwards or downwards in a rank preserving manner to better fit the relevant departmental distributional norm. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Academic Misconduct - Plagiarism

Please be aware that plagiarism is serious offence at Carleton and should be recognized and avoided. For information please see

<https://carleton.ca/economics/plagiarism-resources-and-accommodations/>.

Copyright of Course Materials

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).

Accessibility and Accommodation

For Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (ext. 6608) to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. After registering with the Centre, please set up an appointment with me to discuss your

needs at least two weeks prior to a test or in-class mid-term exam. This is necessary in order to ensure sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.

For Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.