

# Ottawa-Carleton Graduate School of Economics

ECO7001 (Ottawa)/ECON 6513 F&W (Carleton)  
PhD Second-Year Research Paper  
2023-24 Academic Year

## Instructors

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## Meeting Times

- Fall semester: Wednesdays, 8:35a-11:20a
- Winter semester: Thursdays, 2:35p-5:20p

Note: Students are expected to be available to attend in-person at the above hours. However, with some important exceptions, we will typically only meet for 1.5 hours each week (9:30a-11:00a in the Fall, 3:00p-4:30p in the Winter), alternating location between UO and CU. Actual time and location will be confirmed in advance.

**Course Website:** [Brightspace \(Carleton\)](#)

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## Course Description

This course aims to help students transition from consumers to producers of research, and to guide them towards the completion of a second-year research paper. Students are expected to (i) form their own research questions based on a comprehensive and thorough review and understanding of the literature in their topic of interest; and (ii) produce original research outcomes, culminating in a second-year paper (2YP) which will be evaluated by a jury.

## Class Meetings

Students are expected to attend weekly meetings in person. No online option will be available. Approximately half of the meetings will take place on the University of Ottawa campus, and half on the Carleton campus.

## Course requirements

Students are expected to complete the following requirements:

1. Make short presentations on a key paper in the literature of interest (3 times, Fall semester).
2. Submit a critical literature review paper (roughly 10-15 pages, due week #6 in the Winter semester).
  - Students are expected to show a deep command of 15 recent, high-quality research papers in their intended area of research. The focus should be on identifying clear gaps in the literature.
  - The first draft will be graded by the First Reader as one of:
    - Category I: minor improvements needed
    - Category II: major improvements needed, to be re-evaluated simultaneously with the research proposal (see below)
    - Category III: substantially poor quality, resubmit before moving on to the research proposal
  - Students also present the critical literature review (Winter semester, week #2-6).
3. Submit a research proposal (roughly 5 pages, due week #11 in the Winter semester).
  - The proposal should clearly explain the research question, significance of the research based on the gap in the literature identified in the literature review, proposed methodology (and datasets if empirical), and expected outcome and contribution.
  - Students also present the research proposal (Winter semester, week #7-11).
4. Submit the 2YP (due at the end of August 2024).
  - See “Expectations for Second-Year Paper” below.
  - The paper submitted at the end of August will be graded by the Readers as Pass/Adjourned.
    - If graded as Adjourned, the student should resubmit a revised draft by the end of the Fall semester of the 3rd year.
    - The resubmitted paper will be graded as Pass/Fail by the Readers.
    - If the decisions by the Readers are not unanimous, a third evaluator will be identified.
  - Students also present the 2YP (September in the 3rd year; students with “Adjourned” in September may be asked to present the revised draft in December).

## Expectations for Second-Year Paper

The final 2YP submitted by students will be a solo-authored research paper (approximately 5000 words, plus references, figures, tables, and appendices—roughly equivalent to a journal article). The format of the paper should be in accordance with what is commonly done in working papers and published articles in economics (e.g. in-text citations, properly formatted references, formatting of tables of results, etc.).

The necessary ingredients in the 2YP paper will differ depending on the type of project undertaken (more below), but the following are required for all papers:

1. Precise research question;
2. Motivation (e.g., why should economists care?);
3. (Expected) contribution to the literature;
4. Review of the literature.

## Project type-specific requirements and expectations

### Empirical papers

Students who write empirical papers should be sure to do the following:

- Precisely describe the source of data used and why these data allow the research question to be answered;
- Present the methodology used to answer the research question;
- Describe the pros and cons of this methodology;
- Present and discuss findings.

Note that, for an empirical paper, **empirical analysis using actual data must be a significant component of the paper**. In cases where a student identifies a data set that could be used to answer their research question, but where they will not be able to get access to that data in time to complete the 2YP (e.g., due to the time required to obtain permission to access confidential data, or to get ethics approval to run an experiment), the student must do all of the following in their 2YP:

- Find an alternative publicly available data set, and use it to go as far as possible in conducting a partial empirical analysis.
- Discuss in detail the key limitations of this alternative data set, and explain how the desired data set would allow them to overcome these limitations.
- Discuss what steps they have taken to access the desired data set, and what the expected timelines are for gaining that access.

NOTE: If no alternative publicly available data set exists that would allow the student to conduct a significant (if incomplete) empirical analysis, then the student must choose a different research project for the 2YP (though of course they can keep that other research project in mind for the thesis).

### Theory papers

Students who write theoretical (including applied theory) papers should be sure to do the following:

- Precisely describe the model;
- Present and discuss model results and/or implications.

## Readers

Students will be matched by the instructors to a faculty First Reader based on the topics of interest during the Fall semester. The First Reader will be involved in grading the literature review, the research proposal, and the final 2YP.

Towards the end of the Winter semester, students will also be matched to a Second Reader, who will be involved only in the grading of the 2YP.

Following submission of the 2YP, if the decisions by the two Readers are not unanimous, a third evaluator

will be identified.

Note that there is no requirement or expectation that a student's reader for the second-year paper course will become the student's thesis supervisor or one of their thesis committee members. Finding a thesis supervisor/committee is entirely the responsibility of the student, and is completely separate from the second-year paper course.

## Expected Timeline

Expected meeting location: UO = University of Ottawa, CU = Carleton University.

NOTE: The following schedule is tentative and subject to change as the semester progresses.

<b>YEAR TWO (Fall)</b>	
Week #1 (Sep. 6) UO	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> Course introduction. Introduction to the research process.</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Students begin taking field courses and attending classes related to second-year paper (2YP) course.</p> <p>Students submit the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Fields of interest</li> <li>(ii) Topics of interest</li> <li>(iii) Whether have any Readers in mind and whether have already contacted someone.</li> </ul>
Week #2 (Sep. 13) UO & CU	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> 3rd-year students present their completed 2YPs. Two parallel sessions, one at Carleton, one at Ottawa. 2nd-year students are expected to attend one of these parallel sessions (of their choosing).</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Begin making list of 15 papers to be covered in lit review.</p>
Week #3 (Sep. 20) UO & CU	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> 3rd-year students present their completed 2YPs. Two parallel sessions, one at Carleton, one at Ottawa. 2nd-year students are expected to attend one of these parallel sessions (of their choosing).</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Continue making list of papers for lit review. Students expected to be matched to First Reader by this week.</p>
Week #4 (Sep. 27) UO & CU	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> 3rd-year students present their completed 2YPs. Two parallel sessions, one at Carleton, one at Ottawa. 2nd-year students are expected to attend one of these parallel sessions (of their choosing).</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Complete the list of papers for lit review.</p>
Week #5 (Oct. 4) CU	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 1, session 1 (3-4 students). Each student presents one key paper from their lit review list.</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Obtain feedback on the list of papers for lit review. Start working on the literature review.</p>
Week #6 (Oct. 11) UO	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 1, session 2 (3-4 students).</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.</p>
Week #7 (Oct. 18)	<p><b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING.</p> <p><b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.</p>

Week #8 (Nov. 1) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 2, session 1 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.
Week #9 (Nov. 8) UO	<b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 2, session 2 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.
Week #10 (Nov. 15)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.
Week #11 (Nov. 22) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 3, session 1 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.
Week #12 (Nov. 29) UO	<b>Classroom activities:</b> 2nd-year student short presentations, round 3, session 2 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.
Week #13 (Dec. 6) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Overflow session: To be held only if necessary (in case short presentations are not completed). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on literature review.

<b>YEAR TWO (Winter)</b>	
Week #1 (Jan. 11)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Start writing the literature review paper. Due in Week #6.
Week #2 (Jan. 18) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Recap session. How to write in the academic economics style. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the literature review paper.
Week #3 (Jan. 25) UO	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Literature review presentation, session 1 (2-3 students). Note: The literature review presentation should (i) give an overview of where the literature on your topic stands as a whole, (ii) identify a clear gap, and (iii) explain how you plan to fill that gap. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the literature review paper.
Week #4 (Feb. 1) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Literature review presentation, session 2 (2-3 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the literature review paper.
Week #5 (Feb. 8) UO	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Literature review presentation, session 3 (2-3 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the literature review paper.
Week #6 (Feb. 15)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Submit the literature review paper. Start working on research proposal. Due in Week #11.

Week #7 (Feb. 29)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the research proposal.
Week #8 (Mar. 7)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the research proposal.
Week #9 (Mar. 14) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Research proposal presentation, session 1 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the research proposal.
Week #10 (Mar. 21) UO	<b>Classroom activities:</b> Research proposal presentation, session 2 (3-4 students). <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Keep working on the research proposal.
Week #11 (Mar. 28) CU	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Submit research proposal.
Week #12 (Apr. 4)	<b>Classroom activities:</b> NO MEETING. <b>Outside of the classroom:</b> Discuss with readers to improve the research plan. Start working on the research paper.
Apr.-Aug.	Work on 2YP. Submit by end of August.

<b>YEAR THREE</b>	
Sep.	Present paper in workshop. 2YP to be graded as either “pass” or “adjourned”.
Oct.-Dec.	If the final draft is not graded as “pass” in September, then the student must submit a revised draft by the end of the Fall semester. The student may be asked to present the paper at the end of the Fall semester. The resubmitted paper will be graded as “pass” or “fail” by the Readers. A third evaluator will be identified if the decisions are not unanimous. If this draft is graded as a “fail” then the student is normally required to withdraw from the program.

### Important deadlines for students

1. Fall Week #1 (Sep. 6): Proposal of field/topic/reader(s).
2. Fall Week #4 (Sep. 27): Submit list of 15 papers for lit review.
3. Fall Week #5-#6 (Oct. 4-Oct. 11): 1st short presentation of key paper from literature.
4. Fall Week #8-#9 (Nov. 1-Nov. 8): 2nd short presentation of key paper from literature.
5. Fall Week #11-#12 (Nov. 22-Nov. 29): 3rd short presentation of key paper from literature.
6. Winter Week #3-#5 (Jan. 25-Feb. 8): Present lit review.
7. Winter Week #6 (Feb. 15): Submit lit review.
8. Winter Week #9-#10 (Mar. 14-Mar. 21): Present research proposal.
9. Winter Week #11 (Mar. 28): Submit research proposal.
10. Summer 2024: Submit 2YP at end of August.

11. Fall 2024: Present 2YP in mid-September.

## **Plagiarism, Resources and Mental Health, Academic Accommodations**

You are responsible for reading and knowing the information about plagiarism, Carleton University resources, and academic accommodations found [here](#).