



# ECON 423 A01

## Economics and Indigenous Nations

Spring Session: 2025 01 – 21031, 1.5 Unit Value, Contact hours 10:00-11:20, MR, MAC D287.

### UVic Land Acknowledgement

*We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. Note: We will discuss land acknowledgments in this class.*

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Donn. L. Feir

**Office:** BEC 380

**E-Mail:** dfeir@uvic.ca

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 2:30-3:20 pm.

**TA Name:** Megan Brink

**E-Mail:** meganbrink@uvic.ca

### Course Content

Provides an introduction to economic theory and policy analysis relevant for Indigenous nations in Canada and elsewhere; draws on literature in development economics, health economics, economic history, and labour economics; applies economic principles to policy design in Indigenous contexts; introduces Indigenous research methods to economics students. Provides basic guidance on principles of conduct for working with Indigenous communities. Topics may include an economic history of specific Indigenous peoples, self-governance, labour market outcomes and property rights.

The course is designed to introduce you to the economic theory and policy analysis relevant for Indigenous nations and settlers in Canada and elsewhere. The course will use economic principles and literature to discuss the history of Indigenous-settler relations, modern economic development, and the broader social policies salient to Indigenous contexts, such as health, education, property rights, and governance.

Resolving the economic questions surrounding land claims, governance, and service delivery are some of the most significant questions you will face as you move forward a policy maker, business person, analyst or resident in Canada. This course will give you the opportunity to become aware of some of the history and policies relevant in Indigenous contexts, to think about Indigenous economies from the perspective of the discipline of economics, and to think critically about the discipline of economics from the

perspective of Indigenous scholars. Finally, the course's delivery and design will seek to aid in the decolonization and Indigenization mission of the University of Victoria.

The course is a 400 level course with 300 level pre- or co-requisites covering theory and empirical methods. Students will be expected to read and contribute to the technical literature on Indigenous economic development. This course is what is known as a "cap-stone" course usually taken near the end of your program since you will be given the opportunity to integrate all the knowledge you have gained in your economics program with important real world topics.

Class will sometimes involve lectures, but will often be based on discussions of readings and require student active engagement.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Broadly describe of the history of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada, modern institutions and legislation facing Indigenous peoples and nations, a basic set of facts regarding Indigenous nations in Canada and
2. Identify a set of economic theories relevant for Indigenous economic development by economists and Indigenous scholars;
3. Identify errors in reasoning of policy proposals or the assessment of causal relationships;
4. Apply basic economic concepts to Indigenous policy contexts;
5. Discuss the creation, interpretation, and ethics of data regarding Indigenous peoples and have a basic grasp of causal statistical arguments.
6. Write and articulate clear and concise economic arguments for policy and academic audiences.

In addition to the learning outcomes, by taking this course you will have the opportunity to:

1. to synthesize the literature on a specific economic topic facing Indigenous peoples;
2. practice "two-eyed" seeing in policy evaluation and statistical analysis;
3. practice your oral communication skills;
4. enhance your written communication skills for policy and other audiences; and
5. learn from your colleagues.

## Course prerequisites/corequisites

ECON 313; ECON 345 or 365; or permission of the department

## Textbook

All required readings will be posted on Brightspace and will consist of journal articles and chapters from textbooks and other readings.

## Brightspace

*Brightspace* is used extensively for the course. All students are expected to be fully functional with the system. The lecture notes will be posted in *Brightspace*. Please note that the lecture notes online are only outlines of the actual lectures.

All announcements will be posted in *Brightspace*. Students are advised to check it frequently.

## Grading

### Grading Scheme

The course grade is determined as follows:

**Four in-class assignments, each carrying a weight of 10% (total of 40%).** These assignments will be submitted in two components. The first component is to be prepared before class. The second component will be completed in class based on class discussion. All students should submit independent work.

**One in-person midterm, carrying a weight of 30%.** The midterm will be in class, based on course material, and conducted independently.

**In-class participation carries a weight of 15%.** The participation grade is based on both attendance and demonstrated active engagement in the class. If you cannot attend a lecture because of a valid reason, e.g. you are sick, please notify me by email before the start of the lecture. Excused absences will not affect your attendance score. Speaking up in class can be intimidating for some students, but learning to ask questions in public spaces is an important life skill. To help encourage students who might be less used to sharing their ideas or questions, thinking about these before class can help.

**One in-person Final exam worth 15%.** The final will be in class, based on course material, and conducted independently.

*In lieu of the written midterm, students can choose a creative project that reflects a deep knowledge of the material, advances in skills related to the material, and/or an oral demonstration of knowledge. This is due the same time as the midterm exam and the first week of the exam period. The project must replace BOTH the midterm and final. If students opt for the project, the midterm submission will be 15% while the final submission will be 30%. Students should speak to me and receive approval before pursuing this option.*

### Mandatory/Essential Course Components

To pass the course, you must pass the in-person class participation grade. This can not be deferred.

### Dates of Assessments, Due Dates of Assignments

The assignments, which are to be completed in class as a product of discussion with classmates and myself, will be January 16<sup>th</sup>, January 30<sup>th</sup>, March 6<sup>th</sup>, and March 20<sup>th</sup>. The midterm will be on February 13<sup>th</sup>, and there will be an in-class final exam on the last day of class. These dates may be shifted by class agreement.

### Grading Scale

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F or N
90-100	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	65-69	60-64	50-59	0-49

Students should review the University's more detailed [summary of grading](#).

## Missing Assessments

Should students encounter a situation where they miss an exam or cannot submit an assignment at its due date, they may qualify for an academic concession. Students are required to indicate the specific grounds on which they are requesting an academic concession and to provide a justification outlining the impact of the circumstances on their ability to complete course requirements. For in-course extensions, please [fill in the form and follow the instructions on the form](#) *[or specify alternative means of communicating a request such as filling in a request on Brightspace]*. I will not respond to informal requests of academic concessions. *[Note any automatic academic concessions such as putting the weight of a missed midterm for a legitimate reason on the final, dropping the two worst grades of quizzes etc.]* In case you miss the final exam, fill in a [request for a deferral](#).

Students are advised not to make work or travel plans until after the examination timetable has been finalized. Students who wish to finalize their travel plans at an earlier date should book flights that depart after the end of the examination period. Students do not qualify for an academic concession if travel plans conflict with the examination.

## Course Policies

This course adheres to the [Undergraduate Course Policies](#) of the Department of Economics that deal with the following issues:

- Academic concessions
- Academic integrity (plagiarism and cheating)
- Attendance
- Grading
- Inclusivity and diversity
- Late adds
- Late assignments
- Repeating courses
- Review of an assigned grade
- Sexualized violence prevention and response
- Students with a disability
- Term assignments and debarment from examinations
- Travel plans
- Waitlists

The following policies are explicitly included because of their importance:

## Waitlist Policies

- Instructors have no discretion to admit waitlisted students or raise the cap on the course.
- Students on the waitlist should discuss with the instructor how to ensure they are not behind with coursework in the event they are admitted.
- Registered students who do not participate as specified in this outline during the first 7 calendar days from the start of the course may be dropped from the course.

- Registered students who decide not to take the course are responsible for dropping the course and are urged to do so promptly out of courtesy toward waitlisted students.
- Waitlist offers cease after the last date for adding courses irrespective of published waitlists.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students are expected to observe the same standards of scholarly integrity as their academic and professional counterparts. A student who is found to have engaged in unethical academic behaviour, including the practices described in the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) in the University Calendar, is subject to penalty by the University.

Review [What is Plagiarism](#) for the definition of plagiarism. Note: Submitted work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

## Student Code of Conduct

The Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences Faculties have adopted this [Student code of conduct](#). Please, review.

## University Policies

- University Calendar - Section "[Information for all students](#)"
- [Creating a respectful, inclusive and productive learning environment](#)
- [Accommodation of Religious Observance](#)
- [Student Conduct](#)
- [Non-academic Student Misconduct](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Diversity / EDI](#)
- [Equity statement](#)
- Discrimination and Harassment [Policy](#)
- [Policy on Human Rights, Equity and Fairness](#) - The University is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

## Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. Students are encouraged to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting [www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp). If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Contact [svpcordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcordinator@uvic.ca).

## Resources for Students

[UVic Learn Anywhere](#) - UVic Learn Anywhere is the primary learning resource for students that offers many learning workshops and resources to help students with academics and learning strategies.

[Centre for Accessible Learning](#) - Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, you are free to approach me; however, you must register with the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) for formal arrangements to be made. The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

[Centre for Academic Communication](#) - Offers coaching on [academic integrity](#), including preventing accidental plagiarism. Provides support to students with time management, reading, writing, speaking, understanding academic expectations, and other aspects of academic communication as well as creating academic posters, blogposts, PowerPoint slides, and e-portfolios.

[Health Services](#) - University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.

[Support Connect](#) - a 24/7 mental health support service for students

- Toll-free (calls from North America): 1-844-773-1427
- International collect calls: 1-250-999-7621

[Counselling Services](#) - Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.

[Indigenous Student Services](#) - Indigenous UVic students have access to many sources of support on campus. Before, during and after your time at UVic, you are encouraged to explore programs and services available to you, such as [Indigenous counselling services](#) and the [Elders in Residence](#), as well as non-academic programs that may be of interest to you.

[International Student Support](#) - The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's [International Centre for Students](#) is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the [UVic Global Community Initiative](#), including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program.

For academic advising-related questions, students in the Economics Department are also encouraged to meet with the Economics Undergraduate Advisor (Brooklynn Comish-Trimble, [ecadvice@uvic.ca](mailto:ecadvice@uvic.ca)) as well as an academic advisor in the [Academic Advising Centre](#) early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the [Centre for Academic Communication](#) and the [Math and Stats Assistance Centre](#).

The International Student Liason in the Economics Department is Dr. Paul Schure who can help you connect with other international and domestic students in the Department. His email address is [schure@uvic.ca](mailto:schure@uvic.ca). Please, reach out if you are interested.

## Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future.

When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to the [CES log-in](#). You will use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be completed on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

What strengths did your **instructor** demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?

Please provide specific suggestions as to how the **instructor** could have helped you learn more effectively.

Please provide specific suggestions as to how this **course** could be improved.

## Course Structure

Topic	Week	Due Dates and Exam Information
Introduction	1	
Philosophy & Pre-contact Economies	2	Assignment 1
Historical Development	3	
Historical Development	4	Assignment 2
Culture and Identity	5	
Discrimination	6	Midterm
<i>Reading Week</i>	7	
Property Rights	8	
Governance	9	Assignment 3
Restitution and Economics and Law	10	
People vs Place-Based Policy	11	Assignment 4
People vs Place-Based Policy	12	
Student Presentations	13	Classes end on April 3. Final Exam during last class.

## E-mail Correspondence

Emails should be limited to critical matters, such as inability to attend class, an exam, or prolonged illness, and should include the course name and number in the subject line. Questions on course material should be asked during office hours or in class. The standard format for writing a letter must be used. This means it should begin with a salutation (e.g. Dear....), include full sentences and it must conclude with a signature that includes your **full name and V#**. Text message lingo should not be used.

## Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are not permitted during exams and students are not permitted to use devices that may be distracting to others in the class.

## Use of AI

AI assistance can be used in this class. However, you must provide detailed information about how AI was used in your work and you are responsible for the accuracy of your submissions and appropriate citation.