

ECON 499 A01 (CRN 23537) Honours Thesis and Seminar

Winter Session: 202601 – CRN: 23537, Unit Value 1.5, Contact hours (classes) 3.0, Course schedule: Monday, Thursday. A01: 1:00pm–2:20pm, BEC Building, Room 371. Updated December 18th 2025.

UVic Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the Lək'ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək'ʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Honours Instructors/Advisors

Name: Dr. Marco Cozzi

Office: BEC 368

Method of contact: E-Mail, mcozzi _@_ uvic.ca (For legitimate questions and concerns, Marco will get back within two business days).

Office Hours (in person): Monday: 2:30pm–3:15pm, Thursday: 5:00pm–5:45pm

Name: Dr. Graham Voss

Office: BEC 370

Method of contact: E-Mail, gvoss _@_ uvic.ca (For legitimate questions and concerns, Graham will get back within two business days).

Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching and assessment modality statement

This course is face to face and most assessments are held in person.

Course Content

Calendar Entry

Seminar for honours students only. Includes oral presentations related to the student's proposed thesis research, which is carried out under the direction of a faculty supervisor.

Course Description

The course is focused on students developing and writing an honours thesis, a work of novel research. It provides students with an opportunity to engage with and produce research at the frontiers of economics. Students will learn about current research methods and how to write and present effectively. The seminar format requires students to interact with both the instructors and each other.

Course Format

The course consists of two 80-minute lectures per week. Readings will be identified before the lectures, and students are expected to have read them before attending class. Students are also expected to prepare for and contribute to class discussions of readings and other material.

Course prerequisites/corequisites

Admission to the Economics Honours Program.

Textbook

There is no text for the course. Readings will be available on Brightspace unless otherwise specified.

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.

Learning Outcomes

By fully participating in and completing the requirements of the honours program, a student will meet the following objectives:

1. Communicate research effectively to general and academic audiences.
2. Develop a feasible research proposal contributing to the existing body of knowledge.
3. Conduct novel and independent economic research.
4. Demonstrate a high level of competence with the research methods relevant to their research.
5. Apply and understand economic analysis to research.
6. Write clearly and compellingly in the disciplinary style of economics.
7. Present research clearly and compellingly.
8. Effectively use software programmes appropriate to their research, such as Latex, Python, Stata, and R.

Class Discussion and Preparation for Class

This course may be very different from other classes you have taken. The quality of the seminar will be determined less by your professors and more by the effort and contributions of each of you. If you show up well-prepared with insightful comments and questions, not only will you contribute to a higher quality of our discussions in class you will also likely produce a much higher quality thesis. Your class participation grade in the course will, in large part, reflect your effort and success at contributing productively to discussions. It is advisable to do your weekly seminar preparation early so that you have time to mull over some of the big ideas we will be discussing. This will also allow you to discuss material with your classmates ahead of time, which is a good way to hone your preparation.

Department Research Seminars

The department hosts weekly research seminars that bring scholars from all over the world to present current research. We encourage you to attend these seminars regularly and we will require you to attend some of these seminars. We will give you at least a week's notice to attend a particular seminar. We will follow up the required research seminars with a discussion in the following honours seminar. Attending required research seminars will count toward your class participation grade.

UVic Economics Research seminars are generally held Fridays from 3:00-4:30pm. The schedule (frequently updated) can be found at [Economics Seminars](#).

Course Structure, Assessments, and Grading

Use of AI

We will discuss AI use as part of the class.

Grading

Grading Scheme

The course grade is determined as follows:

Class participation: Includes the quality of participation and attendance. Carries a weight of 15% of the final grade.

In-class presentations: There will be four in total. Three will count towards your final grade; the fourth is an ungraded practice presentation of the final thesis. Each carries a weight of 5%, thus 15% of total grade.

Written assignments: Four writing assignments in total (excluding thesis). Each carries a weight of 5%, comprising 20% of the total class grade.

Thesis and Presentation: The presentation counts for 10% of the final grade, while the paper counts for 40%. This implies that they are 50% of your final grade together.

Presentations

Students will be asked to present on at least four separate occasions on topics related to their honours thesis. The occasions are described below. Exact dates found in the tentative schedule later in this outline. Times may be amended.

1. Thesis proposal presentation (October 30, November 3)
 - a. 15 minutes followed by 10 minutes of general class discussion.
 - b. You will be encouraged to present your proposal with a simple visual presentation.
 - c. This presentation will count toward the in-class presentation grade.
2. End of semester update (November 27, December 1)
 - a. 15 minutes followed by 10 minutes of general class discussion. You will be required to present your proposal with a visual presentation.
 - b. This presentation will count toward the in-class presentation grade.
3. Presentation of draft thesis (Not Graded, End of March)
 - a. 20 minutes followed by 5 minutes of general class discussion)
 - b. Presentations are to be supported by visuals.
 - c. This is a practice presentation and will not count toward the in-class presentation grade.
4. Thesis presentation (TBA – Will be decided jointly in class)
 - a. 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes for audience questions
 - b. Presentations are to be supported by visuals.
 - c. This presentation will count toward the honours thesis paper and presentation grade.
 - d. This will be a public presentation that other students, faculty, and others may attend.

Written assignments

Students will be asked to write and submit for grading five writing assignments throughout the two terms. These assignments will help develop your writing skills for your thesis.

The assignments are:

1. Proposal for thesis (1-2 pages): September 29th
2. Draft introduction and literature review (2-5 pages): November 13th
3. Draft data and methods sections (3-5 pages): due January 29th
4. Draft of thesis (length as required): due March 30th
5. Final thesis (length as required): due April 20th

Note that the dates and lengths of these assignments may be modified if unanticipated events regarding the term or class arise.

Each of these assignments will count toward your writing assignment grade. We require that all draft writing assignments be well-written, well-presented, and with references properly provided.

We encourage the use of LATEX for all writing in this course. We will be giving a tutorial on its use.

Honours Thesis

Much of the course is structured around the development and execution of a major research project, the honours thesis. Students are encouraged to investigate topics of their own interest and write a thesis that demonstrates command of the topic, constitutes novel research, and advances knowledge on that topic.

After identifying broad questions of interest, students will arrange for a faculty supervisor for the thesis, become thoroughly acquainted with the relevant contemporary published literature on the topic, identify appropriate sources of data if relevant, conduct the necessary research, and write up results in a thesis format. The thesis will be evaluated both on content and exposition. At the close of the course, the students will present a summary of their findings to the class and interested students and faculty.

You are responsible for making progress on your thesis. If you find yourself in difficulties, seek advice early from the honours co-supervisors and your thesis advisor.

Mandatory/Essential Course Components

To pass the course, the thesis paper submission and the scheduled presentation defence are mandatory. A class participation grade of at least 70% is also mandatory to be eligible to submit your thesis and presentation. During both terms, regular attendance is required.

Dates of Assessments, Due Dates of Assignments

Note: it is the student's responsibility to submit assignments in a timely fashion. Unless an in-course extension was agreed upon before the relevant deadline, late submissions will not be accepted.

In the second term, the assignments due dates are:

1. Data and Methods Section (3-5 pages: January 29th
2. Draft of the Thesis (length as required): March 30th
3. Final Draft of the Thesis (length as required): April 20th

Grading Scale

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

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

Missing Assessments

Should students encounter a situation where they 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](#). The instructors will not respond to informal requests of academic concessions.

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.

Appeals

Depending on the nature of your concern, the order in which you should normally try to resolve the matter is:

1. the two course instructors
2. the Associate Chair: econassoc@uvic.ca
3. the Associate Dean of Academic Advising
4. the Senate.

If you're seeking a formal review of an assigned grade, you should also consult the regulations in the academic calendar regarding [review of an assigned grade](#).

The instructors only respond to grading inquiries in writing, sent to both Honours advisors. You must file your question within 1 week of issuance of your grade. The grades of each assessment component are final after one week of being distributed.

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.

The University reserves the right to use a plagiarism software to detect violations of academic integrity.

University Policies and Statements

Please note that this course is executed in a manner consistent with these University statements and policies.

- a. University Calendar - Section "[Information for all students](#)"
- b. [Creating a respectful, inclusive and productive learning environment](#)
- c. [Academic Integrity](#)
- d. [Academic Concession Regulations](#), [Academic Concession and Accommodation](#), Academic Accommodation – [Policy AC1205](#)
- e. [Accommodation of Religious Observance](#)
- f. [Student Conduct](#)
- g. [Non-academic Student Misconduct](#)
- h. [Accessibility](#)
- i. [Diversity / EDI](#)
- j. [Equity statement](#)
- k. [Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response](#)
- l. Discrimination and Harassment [Policy](#)

Resources for students

- a. [Student wellness](#)
- b. [Centre for Accessible Learning](#)
- c. [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.
- d. [Library](#) resources
- e. Centre for Academic Communication ([CAC](#))
- f. Learning Strategies Program ([LSP](#))
- g. [Academic Advising](#)
- h. Economics Undergraduate Advising: ecadvice@uvic.ca
- i. [Student Awards and Financial Aid](#)
- j. [International Student Advising](#)
- k. Indigenous student services ([ISS](#))
- l. [Student groups and resources](#) including UVic [Ombudsperson](#)

Student Experience of Learning (SEL) Survey

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential SEL survey 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.

Course Structure

Week	Monday	Thursday	Due Dates
Week 1	Term Planning	Student Updates	Students 5-7 informal update (no visuals nec.)
Week 2	Writing Applied Economics Papers	Data Management and Presentation	
Week 3	Microeconomics	Microeconomics	
Week 4	Topic TBD	Sweetman Seminar Friday	Data & Methods Section 29 Jan
Week 5	Discussion of the Sweetman Seminar	Economic Inequality	
Week 6	Topic TBD	Student Updates	Students 5-7 informal update (no visuals nec.)
Week 7	Reading Week	Reading Week	
Week 8	Applied Econometrics - SVAR Modelling	Applied Econometrics - Inference	
Week 9	Professional Life as an Economist	Student Updates	
Week 10	Research Day (Flipped Classroom)	Research Day (Flipped Classroom)	
Week 11	Public Finance - BC Budget	Blattman Seminar Friday	
Week 12	Discussion of the Blattman Seminar	Student Draft Presentations	Draft Presentations
Week 13	Student Draft Presentations	Student Draft Presentations	Draft Presentations Draft Thesis 30 March

Important Dates:

The Public presentations could take place April 20-24 (tentative).

The Final Draft of the Thesis is due on April 20th.

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. Note that it is not uncommon for Uvic's spam filters to block emails sent from non-uvic email accounts.

Electronic Devices

Countless studies unequivocally show that using electronic devices in class is detrimental to student

learning. Please refrain from using your phone in class. Taking notes with paper and pencil might prove a useful commitment device to minimize the temptations of social media.

Educational Technology involving storage outside Canada

No educational technology involving storage outside Canada is mandatory for the course. However, you have the option of using various platforms to assist you in your research. Please ensure you are aware of the services privacy policy and terms of use.