



**ECON 499**  
**Honours Thesis & Seminar**  
**CRN 13722**

Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

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Office Hours:	By appointment	By appointment
Course Material:	<a href="#">499 Brightspace</a>	

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**Course Content**

*Calendar Entry & Pre-requisites:*

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.

Pre-requisites: Admission to the Economics Honours Programme

*Course Description:*

The course is focused on students developing and writing an honours thesis, a work of novel research, providing students with an opportunity to engage with and produce research pushing the frontiers of economic knowledge. Students will learn about current research methodology, study seminal papers in economics, and learn how to write about and present research effectively. The course is taught in an open seminar style which places an onus on students to interact with both the instructors and each other.

**Textbook**

There is no text for the course. We will read various articles throughout the term—most of which will be available online. Information will be on [499 Brightspace](#).

**Course Format**

The course consists of two 75 minute lectures per week. Readings will be identified before the lectures and must be reviewed prior to the lectures. Class participation will be heavily influenced by preparation and contributions to class discussions of readings and other material.

**University of Victoria Territory Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge and respect the ɫəkʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

For more information about the university's territorial acknowledgement, see [University of Victoria Territory Acknowledgement](#).

**Grading**

The final grade for the course is determined as follows:

Class participation:	15 %
In-class presentations:	15 %
Written assignments:	20 %
Honours thesis paper and presentation:	50 %

The grading scale for the course follows the university's grading system from the *Grading* section of the [Undergraduate Academic Regulations](#) in the University Calendar. Students should review this as well as the other academic regulations.

*In the event of concerns about plagiarism or cheating, we will examine students in person concerning their understanding of their submitted work and adjust their mark accordingly. See also the remarks below on plagiarism and cheating.*

**University and Course Policies**

Students should be familiar with the [Undergraduate Academic Regulations](#) for the University. See also the [Undergraduate Course Policies](#) of the Department of Economics.

The following policies are explicitly included because of their importance.

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 Academic Integrity section of the [Undergraduate Academic Regulations](#) 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](#), which should be reviewed.

For this course in particular, professional and courteous behaviour is essential. Come to seminar prepared and treat your colleagues politely and professionally. Seminars, at their best, are a place of lively discussion and debate. You are encouraged to disagree with each other (and with your professors) but do so respectfully and thoughtfully. You have the privilege of working closely with the very best students in UVic Economics this year. A collegial and supportive atmosphere will make a difficult and stressful honours year that much easier and enjoyable.

University 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. See [General University Policies](#).

**Accessibility and Health Resources**

[Centre for Accessible Learning \(CAL\)](#) – 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 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.

**Health and Counselling Services** – University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic to support students' mental, physical and spiritual health.

**Support Connect** – a 24/7 mental health support service for students.

**Elders' Voices** – The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

### **Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response**

Students are encouraged to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting [Sexualized Violence](#). 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 [svpcoordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca).

### **E-mail and electronic devices**

Use email judiciously. It is bad form to email the professor about a question that was clearly covered in seminar or on the course website.

This is a relatively small class that we hope will be lively and interactive. That will not be possible if students are accessing electronic devices during seminars. The quality of your engagement, which will be limited if you are texting or using electronic devices for non-course related purposes, will influence your overall performance in the class.

## **Details of Course**

### Class Discussion

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

### Presentations

Students will be asked to present on at least five separate occasions on topics related to their honours thesis as follows (presentation times and schedule may be amended):

1. Thesis proposal presentation (15 minutes followed by 15 minutes of general class discussion): October.  
You will be required to present your proposal *without* a visual presentation.  
This presentation will count toward the in-class presentation grade.
2. End of semester update (10 minutes followed by 10 minutes of general class discussion): November-December  
You will be required to present your proposal *without* a visual presentation.  
This presentation will count toward the in-class presentation grade.
3. Presentation of a paper related to the general topic area of proposed thesis (15 minutes followed by 10 minutes of general class discussion): January.  
Presentations are to be supported by visuals.  
This presentation will count toward the in-class presentation grade.
4. Presentation of draft thesis (20 minutes followed by 10 minutes of general class discussion): March-April.  
Presentations are to be supported by visuals.  
This is a practice presentation and will not count toward the in-class presentation grade.

5. Thesis presentation (20 minutes followed by 10 minutes for audience questions): April.

Presentations are to be supported by visuals.

This presentation will count toward the honours thesis paper and presentation grade.

### Written assignments

Students will be asked to write and submit for grading six writing assignments throughout the terms. These assignments will help develop your writing skills for your thesis. The assignments are (lengths and schedule may be amended):

1. Proposal for thesis (1–2 pages): October
2. Plain language presentation of the research topic (1–2 pages): November
3. Draft introduction (1–2 pages): November
4. Draft literature review (3–6 pages): January
5. Draft of thesis (length as required): March
6. Final thesis (length as required): April

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

We strongly 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 which demonstrates command of the topic, constitutes novel research, and advances the state of 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 as well as exposition. At the close of the course, the student 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.