

## **Master Syllabus**

### **Course: ECO492 Senior Seminar**

### **Cluster Requirement: 5A**

This University Studies Master Syllabus serves as a guide and standard for all instructors teaching an approved in the University Studies program. Individual instructors have full academic freedom in teaching their courses, but as a condition of course approval, agree to focus on the outcomes listed below, to cover the identified material, to use these or comparable assignments as part of the course work, and to make available the agreed-upon artifacts for assessment of learning outcomes.

#### **Course Overview:**

The Senior Seminar in Economics is a course with in-depth coverage of an economic topic of contemporary interest; the topic varies by section. The required research paper and presentation include a synthesis of the literature in the field, an analysis of data or policy implications, and an evaluation of the results which illustrate the student's ability to explain fundamental theories and apply general economic concepts to a specific field of economics.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

##### Course-Specific Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the Senior Seminar, students will be able to:

1. Explain fundamental theories, concepts, and analytical methods of economics.
2. Apply the general concepts learned from principles of economics to specific fields of economics.
3. Apply mathematical tools and techniques and evaluate the results obtained from such application to analyze economic problems.
4. Communicate, in writing and orally, fundamental economic theories, concepts, analytical methods, and policy choices.

##### University Studies Learning Outcomes:

For 5A:

Upon completion of the capstone study, students will be able to:

1. Synthesize the knowledge and skills gained within major courses, independently complete a research-based project or creative work and integrate the results of both in an open-ended project or experience (projects within the major are encouraged).
2. Integrate knowledge and principles from the field of study with those of the broader University Studies curriculum.
3. Demonstrate advanced information literacy skills by selecting, evaluating, integrating and documenting information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing.
4. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, the results of the project or experience.

#### **Examples of Texts and/or Assigned Readings:**

The texts and assigned readings will vary greatly depending on the topic of the seminar, but will include relevant portions of research methods and subject-matter textbooks and extensive reading of peer-reviewed academic journal articles. In addition, assigned readings may include relevant government publications and policy briefs.

## Example Assignments:

### Preliminary Research

Using the EconLit database, search for and locate academic journal articles on the topic you intend to research. Prepare for a discussion about the topic including scope, potential sources of data, and research questions.

### Annotated Bibliography Assignment and Rubric

You must use a minimum of 8 approved sources. Approved sources include academic journal articles, government publications, business periodicals, and books. You may use internet sources if they are from academic journals, national newspapers (Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, etc.), business periodicals (Business Week, The Economist, etc.), or government agencies (Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, GAO, etc.) Wikipedia and other online encyclopedias and all private websites are NOT approved sources and should not be included. If you have a question about the suitability of a source, please ask.

- An annotated bibliography is a list of sources with a brief summary of the important information, relevance, and quality of the source. For an example and additional information, please consult [this source](#) or [this source](#).

- Chicago style, MLA, and APA formats are acceptable. For guidance, please see [www.lib.umassd.edu/get/bibstyleguides.html](http://www.lib.umassd.edu/get/bibstyleguides.html)

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	Exemplary	Meet Expectations	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
<b>Annotated Bibliography</b>	<b>10 Points</b> Submitted by due date and includes references to 8 or more approved (as defined in the assignment above) sources. Each source is followed by a clear, thorough 2-3 sentence description of the information provided by the source that will be used in the paper.	<b>7 Points</b> Submitted by due date and includes references to 8 or more approved (as defined in the assignment above) sources. Each source is followed by a brief description of the source but descriptions are not clear and thorough and/or it is not clear what contribution the source will make to the paper.	<b>3 Points</b> Submitted by due date and includes references to fewer than 8 approved (as defined in the assignment above) sources and/or descriptions are unclear or missing.	<b>0 Points</b> Annotated bibliography was not submitted by the due date or it did not reference any approved sources.

### Outline

Prepare a detailed outline of your research paper including an introduction, motivation, literature review, methodological approach, data analysis, results, and conclusion.

### Final Paer Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Meet Expectations	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
<b>Completion</b>	<b>10 Points</b> Contains an introduction, body, and conclusion in a 6-7 page paper.	<b>7.5 Points</b> Contains an introduction, body, and conclusion in a 4-5 page paper.	<b>5 Points</b> Final version is fewer than 5 pages in length and/or does not contain an introduction, body, and conclusion.	<b>0 Points</b> Final version was not submitted.
<b>Literature Review</b>	<b>20 Points</b> Thoroughly explains the current state of literature in the field integrating references to academic journal articles, government publications, and any other appropriate sources. Articulates the contribution of the thesis to the field.	<b>15 Points</b> Explains the literature in the field referencing academic journal articles, government publications, and any other appropriate sources.	<b>10 Points</b> Explains some of the literature in the field but significant contributions are missing and/or inappropriate sources are included and/or conclusions from prior research are misinterpreted or misconstrued.	<b>0 Points</b> No literature review is included in the thesis.
<b>Analysis</b>	<b>30 Points</b> Analysis clearly and thoroughly articulates the thesis, includes and articulates the significance of compelling evidence in support of the conclusions. All recommended changes to draft were made.	<b>22.5 Points</b> Analysis articulates the thesis and includes evidence in support of the conclusions. Most or all recommended changes to draft were made.	<b>15 Points</b> Analysis articulates the thesis but evidence is not sufficient to reach the stated conclusion, and/or no conclusions are drawn and/or analysis has errors and/or most or all recommended changes to draft were not made.	<b>0 Points</b> Analysis does not state a thesis and/or errors in analysis are pervasive and/or no recommended changes to draft were made.
<b>Integration and Synthesis</b>	<b>20 Points</b> Provides evidence of integration and synthesis of knowledge from economics courses and independent research through correct use of economic terms, accurate	<b>15 Points</b> Provides some evidence of integration and synthesis of knowledge from economics courses and/or contains fewer than three of the following: incorrect uses of	<b>10 Points</b> Provides little evidence of integration and synthesis of knowledge from economics courses and independent research and/or contains incorrect uses of economic	<b>0 Points</b> Provides no evidence of integration and synthesis of knowledge from economics courses and independent research.

Criteria	Exemplary	Meet Expectations	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
	interpretations of findings of other economists, and insightful conclusions.	economic terms, inaccurate interpretations of findings of other researchers, invalid conclusions.	terms and/or inaccurate interpretations of findings of other researchers.	
<b>Writing Style and Format</b>	<b>10 Points</b> Final version uses formal, professional language, errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation are rare. Writing is succinct and coherent; source documentation is explained and supportive of the arguments made in the paper.	<b>7.5 Points</b> Final version contains fewer than 5 errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and style flaws are rare and/or language impedes meaning in some, but not most, of the paper.	<b>5 Points</b> Style is inappropriate and/or final version contains more than 5 errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation and/or language impedes meaning in most of the paper.	<b>0 Points</b> Most or all of the writing is incoherent.
<b>Sources and Documentation</b>	<b>10 Points</b> Final version references a minimum of 12 approved sources using correct parenthetical documentation and a formal bibliography.	<b>7.5 Points</b> Final version references a minimum of 12 approved sources but requires minor corrections in documentation and/or bibliography.	<b>5 Points</b> Final version references fewer than 12 approved sources and/or requires major corrections in documentation and/or bibliography.	<b>0 Points</b> Final version does not include sources and/or documentation.

### Reflective Statement

Write a 1-3 page reflective statement summarizing what you learned through this research process. Include in your statement challenges you faced and how you overcame them and a reflection on the skills and tools you used in the process. Include a section discussing the knowledge and ideas that you incorporated from fields other than Economics. That is, in what ways does this thesis reflect the culmination of your undergraduate learning experience?

### Sample Course Outline:

The course outline will vary based on the thesis topic and advisor, but will include a customized schedule of meetings between the student and advisor with various checkpoints throughout the process such as: completion of preliminary research, discussion of scope and definition of thesis, discussion of source(s) and quality of data, preliminary data analysis, revisions to data analysis, review of annotated bibliography, review of detailed outline, review of draft paper, discussion of further revisions. Each student is required to present the final thesis to the Economics Department Seminar Series open to all, but attended primarily by ECO faculty, majors and minors.