
University of Alberta – Department of Economics – Winter 2022
ECON 591 – Graduate Research Workshop I – Marchand

COURSE OUTLINE

Websites

eClass: <https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/course/view.php?id=76874>

My Teaching: <https://sites.ualberta.ca/~jmarchan/teaching.htm>

Class Hours

Friday
Zoom / HC 2-17: 12:00 - 2:50 PM

Instructor

Joseph Marchand
jmarchan@ualberta.ca

Description

Graduate Research Workshop I (ECON 591) at the University of Alberta serves as a doctoral-level course that establishes the skills necessary for students in the second year of their PhD to conduct independent empirical research in economics. The course will aid students in their presentation and paper writing skills, as well as in the professionalism required of a PhD candidate. All enrolled students are expected to participate, present, and produce research over several scheduled intervals throughout the entire semester.

This course is restricted to second (and sometimes third) year PhD graduate students.

Resources

There are no specific materials for this course. However, a few handouts will be provided.

Evaluation

Students enrolled in this course must actively participate in class, present their own research, and submit a dissertation chapter draft. The purpose is for you to fully begin your fruitful production pipeline of research in economics for the job market and beyond.

Your numerical grade for the course will be calculated using the following weights:

33.0%	Active Class Participation	(from January 7 th to April 15 th)
33.0%	Presentations of Research	(from January 7 th to April 15 th)
34.0%	Dissertation Chapter Draft	(final drafts due by email at end)

Your letter grade is then determined based on your absolute and relative performance to the rest of the class, with a historical grade point average of ~ 3.5 out of 4.0 (~A-/B+).

Active class participation is based on: 1) attendance of workshops, 2) contributions made during workshops, and 3) attendance of economics seminars (especially job market talks). Treat our time like a language course; we will only use our time to talk about research.

Presentations are your opportunity to defend your research to your peers and instructor. These talks should emulate a department seminar, with questions from your audience. Your potential advisors will be identified and then invited to your final presentation.

Dissertation chapter drafts will progress in various forms throughout the semester (from the portfolio, to presentation, to paper draft, to a revised presentation, draft, and so on). To begin, you will show and tell us about every research paper you have ever written and the ideas you would like to pursue as a dissertation chapter (the portfolio). You will then begin to pursue the best idea, while providing detail for each ingredient (1st presentation). Next, you will provide more detail, formatting these ingredients like a typical economics working paper (chapter draft) and a more formal research synopsis (2nd presentation). Lastly, the only form of your research you will submit should be as close to perfection as possible (final chapter). Thus, you should be writing, and rewriting, all semester long.

Presentations and drafts will be evaluated through the following research ingredients:

- 1) A clear statement of your research question.
- 2) An explanation of its importance (use numbers).
- 3) A description of the market and/or policy you examine.
- 4) Your synthesis of the relevant literature with references.
- 5) Potential data sources that you can and do use.
- 6) A theoretical explanation of the main relationships.
- 7) Your identifying variation and empirical strategy.
- 8) The visualization of your evidence (figures and tables).
- 9) Your original contribution to the economics literature.

Grammarly software is also available to help clean up your presentations and drafts.

Schedule

January	7 th	Fri	(1)	Preliminary: Course Outline, Handouts, Job Talk [Zoom]
	14 th	Fri	(2)	Preliminary: Fields, JELs, NEPs, Profs, Targets [Zoom]
	21 st	Fri	(3)	First Round: Portfolios (#1, #2) (90 min each) [Zoom]
	28 th	Fri	(4)	First Round: Presentations (#1, #2) (90 min each)
February	4 th	Fri	(5)	First Round: Papers (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	11 th	Fri	(6)	Second Round: Presentations (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	18 th	Fri	(7)	Second Round: Papers (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	25 th	Fri	*	No Class (Reading Week)
March	4 th	Fri	(8)	Third Round: Presentations (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	11 th	Fri	(9)	Third Round: Papers (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	18 th	Fri	(10)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	25 th	Fri	*	No Class (APPAM Conference)
April	1 st	Fri	(11)	Final Round: Presentations (#1, #2) (with advisors)
	8 th	Fri	(12)	Final Round: Papers (#1, #2) (90 min each)
	15 th	Fri	*	(final chapter drafts due by email at the end of the day)
<p>NOTE: Economics seminars are typically on Fridays from 3:30 to 5:00 pm. However, given that we are hiring, job market talks may be any day, from January to April.</p>				

Policies

“Please note that class times for this course will be recorded. Recordings of this course will be used to allow students enrolled in the course to review the material and will be disclosed to other students enrolled in this section of the class. Students have the right to not participate in the recording and are advised to turn off their cameras and audio prior to recording; they can still participate through text-based chat. It is recommended that students remove all identifiable and personal belongings from the space in which they will be participating. Recordings will be made available until the end of term and accessible on [eClass]. Please direct any questions about this collection to the professor of this course.” (If you feel that a lecture should not be posted, then please let me know.)

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the Evaluation Procedures and Grading System section of the University Calendar.” (If there is a problem, let me know ASAP.)

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (Dean’s office makes decisions.) (<http://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/academic-resources/academic-integrity>)