
University of Alberta – Department of Economics – Spring 2021
ECON 999 – Directed Research Project – Marchand

COURSE OUTLINE

Websites

eClass: <https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/course/view.php?id=70194>

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

Class Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
REMOTE: 10:30 - 11:40 AM

Instructor

Joseph Marchand
jmarchan@ualberta.ca

Description

Directed Research Project (ECON 999) at the University of Alberta serves as a masters-level course that provides guidance for students to complete the research requirement of their MA by conducting 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 an economist. All enrolled students are expected to participate, present, and produce research over several scheduled intervals throughout the entire semester.

The prerequisites for this course are ECON 503, ECON 581, ECON 598, and ECON 599.

Evaluation

Students enrolled in this course must actively participate in class, present their own research, and submit a final research paper. The purpose of these tools is for you to fully demonstrate your level of understanding of the production of research in economics.

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

20.0%	Active Class Participation	(from May 10 th to June 23 rd)
30.0%	Presentations of Research	(from May 10 th to June 23 rd)
50.0%	Final Research Paper	(final papers due by email)

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 ~ 3.15 out of 4.0 (~B+/B).

Active class participation is based on your attendance of classes and contributions made. 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 papers will progress in various forms throughout the semester (from portfolios, to presentations, paper drafts, and final papers). To begin, you will show and tell us about every research paper you have written and ideas you would like to pursue (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 (paper draft) and then into a more formal research synopsis (2nd presentation). Finally, the only form of your research you will submit should be as close to perfection as possible (final paper). Thus, you should be writing, and rewriting, all semester long. Your final paper will be evaluated by the instructor and a second reader who will advise the instructor as to the quality of the paper within its field. Resubmissions are permissible if your grade is not satisfactory, and you request to do so.

Presentations and papers 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 papers.

Policies

“Please note that class times for this course will be recorded. Recordings of this course will be used for the purposes of allowing 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 [July 12th, 2021] 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 make a request of me, and I will review it and ask the class if that is OK.)

“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>)

Schedule

May	10 th	Mon	(1)	Preliminary: Course Outline, Themes	
	11 th	Tues	(2)	Preliminary: Fields, JELs, NEPs, Targets	
	12 th	Wed	(3)	First Round: Portfolios (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5) (10 min)	
	13 th	Thu	(4)	First Round: Portfolios (#6, #7, #8, #9, #10)	
	14 th	Fri	(5)	First Round: Portfolios (#11, #12, #13, #14, #15)	
	17 th	Mon	(6)	Preliminary: Production, End Goals, Research Ingredients	
	18 th	Tues	(7)	Second Round: Presentations (#1, #2, #3, #4) (15 min)	
	19 th	Wed	(8)	Second Round: Presentations (#5, #6, #7, #8)	
	20 th	Thu	(9)	Second Round: Presentations (#9, #10, #11, #12)	
	21 st	Fri	(10)	Second Round: Presentations (#13, #14, #15) (+ example)	
	24 th	Mon	*	No Class (Victoria Day)	
	25 th	Tues	(11)	Third Round: Papers (#1, #2, #3, #4) (15 min)	
26 th	Wed	(12)	Third Round: Papers (#5, #6, #7, #8)		
27 th	Thu	(13)	Third Round: Papers (#9, #10, #11, #12)		
28 th	Fri	(14)	Third Round: Papers (#13, #14, #15) (+ example)		
31 st	Mon	*	No Class (Congress 2021)		
June	1 st	Tues	*	No Class (Congress 2021)	
	2 nd	Wed	*	No Class (Congress 2021)	
	3 rd	Thu	*	No Class (Congress 2021)	
	4 th	Fri	*	No Class (Congress 2021)	
	7 th	Mon	(15)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#1, #2, #3) (20 min)	
	8 th	Tues	(16)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#4, #5, #6)	
	9 th	Wed	(17)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#7, #8, #9)	
	10 th	Thu	(18)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#10, #11, #12)	
	11 th	Fri	(19)	Fourth Round: Presentations (#13, #14, #15)	
	14 th	Mon	(20)	Fifth Round: Papers (#1, #2, #3) (20 min)	
	15 th	Tues	(21)	Fifth Round: Papers (#4, #5, #6)	
	16 th	Wed	(22)	Fifth Round: Papers (#7, #8, #9)	
17 th	Thu	(23)	Fifth Round: Papers (#10, #11, #12)		
18 th	Fri	(24)	Fifth Round: Papers (#13, #14, #15)		
21 st	Mon	(25)	Sixth Round: Presentations (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5) (10 min)		
22 nd	Tues	(26)	Sixth Round: Presentations (#6, #7, #8, #9, #10)		
23 rd	Wed	(27)	Sixth Round: Presentations (#11, #12, #13, #14, #15)		
<p>NOTE: Your final papers are due at the end of the day on Wednesday, June 23rd. Resubmissions (if you request it) are due by the end of the day on Monday, July 12th.</p>					