

**ECO 489 – Senior Capstone
Fall 2024**

**School of Economics
The University of Maine**

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Course Description

The senior capstone course brings together the various threads of the undergraduate program in an experience that typifies the diverse work of economists. Using current economic issues to set the context for the course, students will integrate and further develop the knowledge and skills they acquired as part of their economics major, with guidance and iterative feedback from the instructor and teaching assistant. This includes analytical and professional skills, as well as written and oral communication skills.

This course satisfies the General Education Writing Intensive and Capstone Experience requirements. It is worth three credit hours.

Prerequisites: Major in Economics or Financial Economics, Senior Standing and a grade of C- or better in ECO 220, ECO 221 and ECO 266, or permission of the instructor

Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course are to:

- Provide students with a culminating, integrative academic experience that typifies the work and research of professionals within the discipline of economics.
- Enhance students' analytical and professional skills.
- Improve students' ability to communicate and apply their economics knowledge effectively.

Learning Outcomes

- Become familiar with the work and research of professionals who apply economic thinking and conduct economic research.
- Become proficient at applying knowledge of economics to make arguments and convey ideas, including the application of economic theory and evidence (e.g., literature, data).
- Have improved analytical and professional skills.
- Have improved communication skills (e.g., ability to critique and revise own written and oral communications, tailor communications to distinct audiences, organize ideas effectively, adhere to proper mechanics and style, achieve clarity of expression in language, argument and idea).

Course Structure

This course will be delivered asynchronously online. Every Tuesday, I will post new materials on Brightspace, and there will be a graded component due the following Monday by 11:59pm Eastern. Please refer to the course outline for a list of topics and deadlines.

I will have in-person office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 3pm Eastern in Winslow 307. Solomon will have in-person office hours in the Economics Lab (Winslow 205). He will post the days and times on Brightspace at the beginning of the semester. In addition to in-person office hours, Solomon and I will be available to meet via Zoom. Please email us to arrange an appointment. You are also encouraged to email Solomon or I with questions about the course. We expect you to be professional and concise; long, complex questions/issues should be addressed during office hours or by appointment.

Please be proactive about contacting Solomon and I to arrange an appointment and/or to ask questions about the course. We will respond to email in three days or less. Please send all correspondence from your '@maine.edu' email account. We will not respond to email from other accounts, nor will we respond to Brightspace messages.

Please note that Solomon and I will not have office hours when classes are cancelled due to inclement weather or for other reasons such as Fall Break, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Break, or after classes end on December 13. Likewise, my office hours will be cancelled on Thursday, October 24 and Tuesday, November 26.

Materials

To complete this course, you will need access to Brightspace, your '@maine.edu' email account, Kaltura, Zoom and Microsoft Office365. You are expected to be familiar with these platforms. Solomon and I will not provide technical support. For assistance, please contact Information Technology and Support (<https://itsupport.maine.edu/>).

There is no required textbook. All materials will be provided on Brightspace. You are expected to monitor Brightspace and your '@maine.edu' email account for course materials and updates.

Grading

Your overall grade will be determined as follows:

Discussion Boards	25 Percent
Technical Brief	50 Percent
Science Communication Assignment	25 percent

There will be no opportunities for extra credit. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Your overall grade will be assigned as follows:

A (93 to 100 percent); A- (90 to 92.9 percent); B+ (87 to 89.9 percent); B (82 to 86.9 percent); B- (80 to 81.9 percent); C+ (77 to 79.9 percent); C (72 to 76.9 percent); C- (70 to 71.9 percent); D+ (67 to 69.9 percent); D (62 to 66.9 percent); D- (60 to 61.9 percent); F (less than 60 percent).

Discussion Boards (25 Percent of Overall Grade)

- Economic Questions due Monday, September 9 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Group
- Economic Literature due Monday, September 16 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Group
- Economic Data due Monday, September 30 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Group
- Science Communication due Monday, November 11 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Group
- Reflecting on Your Undergraduate Academic Experience due Monday, December 9 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Individual

Except for the final discussion board, which will be completed individually, the rest of the discussion boards will be completed on a group basis. You will be assigned to a group based on your research interests at the beginning of the semester. Please monitor your '@maine.edu' email account for more information. You will work with the same group on the discussion boards, technical brief and science communication assignment. I reserve the right to assign different grades within a group in case of unequal contributions.

I will accept late submissions for up to 48 hours without penalty, after which they will no longer be accepted. This policy is in place because deadlines may fall on holidays and/or unforeseeable circumstances may prevent you from completing course requirements on time.

Each discussion board will be graded out of five as follows:

- 1 – Contributed to the discussion board on time with poor effort
- 2 – Contributed to the discussion board on time with fair effort
- 3 – Contributed to the discussion board on time with good effort
- 4 – Contributed to the discussion board on time with very good effort
- 5 – Contributed to the discussion board on time with excellent effort

Technical Brief (50 Percent of Overall Grade)

- Literature Synthesis due Monday, September 23 by 11:59pm Eastern – 10 Percent – Group
- Data Analysis due Monday, October 7 by 11:59pm Eastern – 10 Percent – Group
- Draft of Technical Brief due Monday, October 14 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 Percent – Group
- Peer Review of Draft Technical Brief due Monday, October 28 by 11:59pm Eastern – 5 percent – Group
- Final Technical Brief due Monday, November 4 by 11:59pm Eastern – 20 Percent – Group

Each component of the Technical Brief must be completed on a group basis. You will be assigned to a group based on your research interests at the beginning of the semester. Please monitor your '@maine.edu' email account for more information. You will work with the same group on the discussion boards, technical brief and science communication assignment. I reserve the right to assign different grades within a group in case of unequal contributions.

I will accept late submissions for up to 48 hours without penalty, after which they will no longer be accepted. This policy is in place because deadlines may fall on holidays and/or unforeseeable circumstances may prevent you from completing course requirements on time.

The rubric for each component of the Technical Brief will be provided in the instructions.

Science Communication Assignment (25 Percent of Overall Grade)

- Draft Assignment due Monday, November 18 by 11:59pm Eastern – Group – 5 Percent
- Final Assignment due Monday, November 25 by 11:59pm Eastern – Group – 20 Percent

Each component of the Science Communication Assignment must be completed on a group basis. You will be assigned to a group based on your research interests at the beginning of the semester. Please monitor your '@maine.edu' email account for more information. You will work with the same group on the discussion boards, technical brief and science communication assignment. I reserve the right to assign different grades within a group in case of unequal contributions.

I will accept late submissions for up to 48 hours without penalty, after which they will no longer be accepted. This policy is in place because deadlines may fall on holidays and/or unforeseeable circumstances may prevent you from completing course requirements on time.

The rubric for each component of the Science Communication Assignment will be provided in the instructions.

Course Outline

Any updates to the course outline will be posted on Brightspace.

Week	Topic	Graded Component
Tuesday, September 3 to Monday, September 9	Asking and Answering Economic Questions	Discussion Board (Economic Questions) due Monday, September 9 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, September 10 to Monday, September 16	Making Sense of Economic Literature	Discussion Board (Economic Literature) due Monday, September 16 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, September 17 to Monday, September 23	Advancing Economic Arguments in Writing	Literature Synthesis due Monday, September 23 by 11:59pm Eastern 10 Percent – Group
Tuesday, September 24 to Monday, September 30	Finding and Visualizing Economic Data	Discussion Board (Economic Data) due Monday, September 30 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, October 1 to Monday, October 7	Advancing Economic Arguments with Data	Data Analysis due Monday, October 7 by 11:59pm Eastern 10 Percent – Group
Tuesday, October 8 to Monday, October 14	Writing for Peer Professional Audiences	Draft of Technical Brief due Monday, October 14 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, October 15 to Monday, October 21	Fall Break	–
Tuesday, October 22 to Monday, October 28	Peer Review	Peer Review of Draft Technical Brief due Monday, October 28 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group

Week	Topic	Graded Component
Tuesday, October 29 to Monday, November 4	Final Technical Brief	Final Technical Brief due Monday, November 4 by 11:59pm Eastern 20 Percent – Group
Tuesday, November 5 to Monday, November 11	Science Communication	Discussion Board (Science Communication) due Monday, November 11 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, November 12 to Monday, November 18	Science Communication	Draft of Science Communication Assignment due Monday, November 18 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Group
Tuesday, November 19 to Monday, November 25	Science Communication	Final Science Communication Assignment due Monday, November 25 by 11:59pm Eastern 20 Percent – Group
Tuesday, November 26 to Monday, December 2	Thanksgiving Break	–
Tuesday, December 3 to Monday, December 9	Exploring the Economics Profession, Communicating Your Skills and Aspirations, and Reflecting on Your Undergraduate Academic Experience	Discussion Board (Reflecting on Your Undergraduate Academic Experience) due Monday, December 9 by 11:59pm Eastern 5 Percent – Individual

Required Syllabus Statements

Academic Honesty Statement

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, or generated by software or systems without the explicit approval of the instructor, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University. Please see the University of Maine System's Academic Integrity Policy listed in the Board Policy Manual as Policy 314 (***Date Issued:** September 1, 2020): <https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section-314/>

Last Updated: 07.07.2023

Student Accessibility Services Statement

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Services, located at the Center for Accessibility and Volunteer Engagement at the UCU, 139 Rangeley Rd, um.sas@maine.edu, 207.581.2319, as early as possible in the term. Students may begin the accommodation process by submitting an accommodation request form online and uploading documentation at <https://umaine-accommodate.symplicity.com/public/accommodation/>. Once students meet with SAS and eligibility has been determined, students submit an online request with SAS each semester to activate their approved accommodations. SAS creates an accessibility letter each semester which informs faculty of potential course access and approved reasonable accommodations; the letter is sent directly to the course instructor. Students who have already been approved for accommodations by SAS and have a current accommodation letter should meet with me (Angela Daley) privately as soon as possible.

Last Updated: 04.01.2024

Course Schedule Disclaimer (Disruption Clause)

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities (due to COVID-19 or other long-term disruptions), the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

Last Updated: 08.17.2020

Observance of Religious Holidays/Events

The University of Maine recognizes that when students are observing significant religious holidays, some may be unable to attend classes or labs, study, take tests, or work on other assignments. If they provide adequate notice (at least one week and longer if at all possible), these students are allowed to make up course requirements as long as this effort does not create an unreasonable burden upon the instructor, department or University. At the discretion of the instructor, such coursework could be due before or after the examination or assignment. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to a student's grade for the examination, study, or course requirement on the day of religious observance. The student shall not be marked absent from the class due to observing a significant religious holiday. In the case of an internship or clinical, students should refer to the applicable policy in place by the employer or site.

Last Updated: 08.17.2020

Sexual Discrimination Reporting

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of **sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination** involving members of the campus, **your teacher is required to report** this information to Title IX Student Services or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

*For confidential resources on campus: **Counseling Center: 207-581-1392** or **Northern Light Primary Care, University of Maine: at 207-581-4000**. Confidential Resource Advisor: 207-571-5372 (call or text). Or see the [Confidential Resource Advisor website](#) for a complete list of services and resources (open in a new window).*

*For confidential resources off campus: **Rape Response Services: 1-800-871-7741** or **Partners for Peace: 1-800-863-9909**.*

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

*For support services on campus: **Title IX Student Services: 207-581-1406**, **Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409**, **University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040** or **911**. Or [see the Title IX Student Services website for a complete list of services \(open in a new window\)](#). Also, [Student Wellness Resource Center \(opens in a new window\)](#).*

Last Updated: 07.31.2024