

## ECO 359 – Reading and Writing in Economics

----- Fall 2019 -----

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Prof. Office Hours:	Tues. & Thurs. 10:00am - 11:20am Social and Behavioral Sciences building (SBS), Office S-625
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TA Office Hours:	TBA
Prerequisites:	C or higher in ECO 303 and ECO 305; WRT 102
Lecture:	This course does not meet physically and is conducted <b>fully online</b>

### COURSE OVERVIEW:

This **fully online course** will allow you to fulfill the writing requirement in the Economics major. In order to register in ECO359 you need to have completed WRT102, have at least a C in ECO303 and ECO305, and be a graduating senior.<sup>1</sup>

As an economics student, you have taken several courses in economics, you have also read about economics (you have, at least, read a few textbooks) and, hence, you are expected to know a few things about economics. More to the point, you are expected to write as an economics student and not as the ‘average person on the street.’ If writing is a skill, writing like an economist is a specialized skill. It forces you to find out what others before you have done; to do hard thinking; to gain clarity on ideas and concepts and how they relate; and to choose carefully the models, data, and statistics that you will use. As a professional economist you will have to write quite a lot, and it is important you learn a few rules on how to do it well if you want your audience to sit up and pay attention to what you have to say. This course will allow you to learn these fundamental rules through practice.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES / COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course you should feel confident in your ability to put even the most quantitative kind of economic thinking into words, and get important ideas across with **precision**, in a clear, concise, structured and self-contained manner. Do not worry if you are not a native English speaker: while you are, of course, expected to pay attention to syntax, grammar and orthography, the focus of this course is on *economical* writing, that is, on how to **think** like an economist and be capable to express it in writing.

Whether your sole goal is to fulfill the Economics major requirement or whether you are more forward-looking, **follow the guidelines that will be provided in this course** and you will attain your goal. Guidelines will afford you a chance to learn a few rules that may be of great benefit to you in your future career.

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<sup>1</sup> For any and all questions regarding registration in this course, please contact the Undergraduate (UG) Coordinator at [UGeconomics@stonybrook.edu](mailto:UGeconomics@stonybrook.edu), not your TA or me. Registration issues and permissions are now a purely administrative matter and we have no say in them. If you write to us, we will have to forward your message to the UG Coordinator and everything will take longer to resolve.

And, remember, this course is a requirement for all Economics majors. If you do not obtain an “S” (for Satisfactory) in this course, you will not be able to graduate. Take this course and your work seriously, **start working from the beginning of the semester**, follow guidelines, and you will have no problem in fulfilling this requirement successfully. It is what we all want.

## COURSE OUTLINE

You will be required to present **three documents or deliverables: Proposal, First Draft, and Final Version** of your paper. Check the table below for deadlines and *target* length for each deliverable. You **MUST** accompany each deliverable with a **Progress Report (PR)**. A PR is a separate document that states, concisely but clearly, the work you have done, how you have gone about it, what difficulties you have encountered, how you have handled them, and why you have decided to proceed the way you have. Each PR, except the first one (accompanying your Proposal), **must include our feedback to your previous deliverable (copy and paste it in your PR)** AND explain the additions and changes you have made since; which of our suggestions have been incorporated and which not and why. There is no blueprint for a PR: think of it as a log of your thinking process and your work, the ‘backstage’ of your research.

Please, check the Documents section of Blackboard for a document containing the **first set of guidelines for your Proposal**. These guidelines explain what your Proposal must look like and the elements it should contain. After you have submitted your Proposal, I will again post two sets of guidelines: one for your First Draft and one for the Final Version of your paper.

As of now, please check the table below and take note of the due date for each deliverable. Plan accordingly and determine how you will integrate research and writing tasks into your personal and professional schedule. **Bad time management will not be accepted as an excuse for late submissions.**

Week	Day	Deliverable	Target Length
4	Mon. Sept. 16	Proposal and its Progress Report	Proposal: At least one page, plus one page for references (in ONE document). Progress Report: At most one page.
9	Mon. Oct. 21	First Draft and its Progress Report (include previous feedback)	First Draft: About five pages, plus one cover page, plus one page for references (all in ONE document). Progress Report: At most one page + previous feedback
14	Mon. Nov. 25	Final Version and its Progress Report (include previous feedback)	Final Version: About ten pages, plus one cover page, plus one page for references (all in ONE document). Progress Report: At most one page + previous feedback

Present each deliverable as **a single pdf document** and create a **separate pdf for your Progress Report**. Choose the font Times New Roman 12pt for all your text. Pages must be double spaced and have normal margins.

⇒ Failure to fulfill requirements will result on your deliverable not being accepted. Be smart, READ and FOLLOW instructions.

⇒ Your submission will be INCOMPLETE if you fail to submit a PR or to include our feedback to your prior deliverable. Incomplete submissions will NOT BE ACCEPTED and, hence, WILL NOT BE GRADED.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

This course does **not** require you to use a textbook or any other reference material beyond the three sets of guidelines I will post. However, at any stage of our course (and your academic or professional career), you may want to consult either one of these two classics. Both are extremely useful for writing essays, articles, papers and thesis in economics:

- Greenlaw, S. (2006), *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.

McCloskey, D. (2000), *Economical Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Waveland Press, Inc.

And for *any* type of writing, you can always rely on:

Strunk, W. and E.B. White (1979), *The Elements of Style*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, New York, Macmillan.

I will post **three sets of Guidelines**, one per deliverable, on the Documents section of our course Blackboard. These Guidelines will explain what elements each deliverable should contain and will also guide you on how to approach the work you need to do. Follow these Guidelines and you should be fine.

After your Proposal has been submitted, I will also post **several links to sample papers**, authored by both undergraduate students and academics, published in economic scholarly journals that you can use as models for your own paper. You are NOT expected to actually read these papers or to understand and analyze them: these papers are to *illustrate your Guidelines*, and you will just use them as samples. I suggest that, after you have read the Guidelines for your First Draft, you have a look at them and pay attention to their overall structure; their sections and how they are organized; titles of the sections; key words; citation and referencing; etc. Connect all this to instructions in your Guidelines. Likewise, later on, for your Final Version, you will observe the style in which these papers are written, how paragraphs flow from one to the next, how information is conveyed, etc. and connect this to instructions in the Guidelines for your Final Version.

## **COURSE POLICY**

All course materials and all class-related announcements will always be posted on [Blackboard](#). Please, **check the course page regularly and keep current**. Read Guidelines carefully and follow them for each deliverable. Submit your deliverables on time. No deliverables will be accepted after the due date. No exceptions.

***Always use your stonybrook.edu email address to communicate with us.*** When you do so, please include your full name and your Stony Brook ID number. We will do our very best to respond to

your emails as soon as possible, but please allow between 24-48 hours for a reply, as this is a very large class. Plan on checking our course page regularly for course related messages (at least twice per week and, certainly, *shortly before and shortly after due dates!*).

⇒ There is nothing we can do if you do not check your stonybrook.edu inbox and the course site regularly and, as a result, you miss an important announcement, communication or deadline.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Stony Brook expects students to maintain standards of personal integrity that are in harmony with the educational goals of the institution. Each student must pursue her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. **Any suspected instance of academic dishonesty such as cheating, copying, plagiarism and other deceiving techniques and/or attitudes will not be tolerated under any circumstance and must be reported to the Academic Judiciary.** The Judiciary may take disciplinary action, including dismissal from the University.

**Plagiarism is defined as** “the unacknowledged use of another person's work, in the form of original ideas, strategies, and research as well as another person's writing, in the form of sentences, phrases, and innovative terminology.”<sup>2</sup> Students should be clear about their instructors' standards for citing sources and should seek help when in doubt. Whether plagiarism is intentional or unintentional, it is still a violation of the university's Code of Academic Conduct and is prosecutable. The following are all cases in which a student can be charged with plagiarism:

- Using a paper or pieces of a paper from the internet without properly citing the source.
- Buying or selling written work.
- Representing someone else's written work as one's own, even if only the ideas, and not the words themselves, are taken from someone else. If another person's words or ideas are being used, they must be properly cited.
- Unpermitted collaboration (on a paper, homework, lab reports, etc.). Unless an instructor has explicitly approved working together, students should assume, for their own protection, that it is not permitted.
- Helping someone else to plagiarize from one's own paper or homework (for example, by giving them a copy of yours, or giving them the idea on which to base theirs, or doing it for them).

Academic dishonesty includes any act that is designed to obtain fraudulently, either for oneself or for someone else, academic credit, grades, or other recognition that is not properly earned or that adversely affects another's grade or misrepresents one's academic status. The following represents examples of academic dishonesty and *does not constitute an exhaustive list*:

- Collusion: two or more students helping one another on an exam or assignment when it is not permitted.
- Submitting the same paper in more than one course without permission of the instructors.
- Presenting fabricated excuses for missed assignments or tests.

For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at [www.stonybrook.edu/academicintegrity](http://www.stonybrook.edu/academicintegrity)

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<sup>2</sup> Spatt, B. (1983), *Writing from Sources*, St. Martin's Press, New York: p. 438.

Last, but not least, be aware each one of your deliverables will be submitted to **SafeAssign**, an online tool that enables us to compare your submitted deliverable against a set of sources to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. It also allows us to compare your deliverables and see how much work has been done. For example, we can compare your Final Version to your First Draft and see how much your First Draft has changed. You will also have access to your SafeAssign reports, one for each deliverable.

## **GRADING POLICY**

Your grade for this course is **S/U**, that is, at the end of the semester, you will either get S for ‘Satisfactory’ and pass, or you will get U for ‘Unsatisfactory’ and fail, in which case you will have to re-take this same course next semester. Please, note that grading will not be based on effort, but on results. In our experience, students that take their work seriously and follow Guidelines are bound to obtain satisfactory results.

For your deliverable to be graded, it needs to be COMPLETE. That is, **you have to also submit a PR and your PR must include our previous feedback (copy and paste it)**. *If your submission is complete*, your grade *for each deliverable* will be one of the following:

- **S for ‘Satisfactory’**-- If your deliverable receives this grade, it means you have followed instructions in our Guidelines: your deliverable fulfills all requirements and has, therefore, been accepted. You need to take our feedback into account and address it when you proceed to work on your next deliverable.
- **C for ‘Conditional’**-- If you receive this grade, it means your work is either missing required elements (listed in the Guidelines), you are not following instructions, or your deliverable needs substantial work to be accepted. In this case, acceptance of your deliverable is **CONDITIONAL** on your *directly* addressing the issues pointed out in our feedback and correcting them *in your next deliverable*.  
Consequently, one of two things will happen when you submit *your next deliverable*:
  - You do address the issues pointed in our feedback and you obtain an S.
  - You ignore the issues pointed in our feedback and you obtain a U.
- **U for ‘Unsatisfactory’**-- If you receive this grade, it means that your deliverable does not fulfill the minimum requirements to be accepted, or that you are completely ignoring feedback. In this case, your deliverable is beyond revision. This is the end of the road and you cannot proceed to work on your next deliverable (if there is one). You will have to re-take this course next semester.

Please, note that you can receive an S, C, or U in any deliverable, but if you wish to pass this course, you must receive an S or a C in the first two deliverables and **you must receive an S in your Final Version, no exceptions**.

Please, note the following, among others, are reasons for not accepting your deliverable:

- You hand in your deliverable in a format other than pdf (e.g. Word).<sup>3</sup>
- You do not include a Progress Report with your deliverable.

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<sup>3</sup> Documents in pdf will always maintain their original format (spacing, graphs, tables, page numbering, etc.), regardless of the version and system used to save and open them, unlike documents in Word, for example.

- You do not include our feedback to your previous deliverable in your Progress Report. Just ‘copy and paste’ it in your new PR.
- You completely ignore feedback and do not address comments and suggestions, either to accept or rebuke them.<sup>4</sup>
- You skip a deadline or submit your deliverable past the due date, without discussing it with us.
- You **commit plagiarism** or misrepresent somebody else’s work as your own. This is a grave breach of the academic integrity code; you will receive a “U” and will be reported to the Academic Judiciary (see the Academic Integrity section above). There will be no exceptions. You can always express somebody else’s work in your own words and, in this course, you will learn how to refer to, cite, and quote others’ work properly.

Read Guidelines, follow them, and you will fulfill the requirements for this course. Ignore Guidelines and you will not. If you face a grave difficulty, do not wait until the eleventh hour to contact us (your TA or me). Do so as soon as possible so we can discuss your options. If you wait too long, there will be nothing you or us will be able to do.

## **COURSE MATERIALS AND COPYRIGHT STATEMENT**

Course material accessed from Blackboard, SB Connect, SB Capture or a Stony Brook Course website is *for the exclusive use of students who are currently enrolled in the course*. Content from these systems cannot be reused or distributed without written permission of the instructor and/or the copyright holder. Duplication of materials protected by copyright, without permission of the copyright holder is a violation of the Federal copyright law, as well as a violation of Stony Brook’s Academic Integrity.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

For technical assistance or to report a problem with Blackboard you can:

- Visit the Stony Brook University Student Help Desk Page
- Phone:
  - (631) 632-9602 (technical support and Blackboard issues)
  - (631) 632-9800 (client support, Wi-Fi, software and hardware)
- E-Mail: [helpme@stonybrook.edu](mailto:helpme@stonybrook.edu)
- Live Chat: [Chat Live with the TLT Student Help Desk!](#)
- For assistance after **5 PM or over the weekend**, please contact the Open SUNY help desk at 1-844-673-6786 or [OpenSUNYHelp@suny.edu](mailto:OpenSUNYHelp@suny.edu)

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

Stony Brook has a wealth of **free** resources for students. Keep in mind that you should NEVER pay to access a journal or data source: *SBU has an institutional subscription to most academic journals and students, faculty, and staff can access these journals for free using their SBU Library account.*

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<sup>4</sup> Note it is not mandatory to follow our advice or suggestions. It is necessary, however, that you do address our concerns and concisely and *honestly* explain what you have decided to do about them and why. This should be part of your PR and *it is easier and faster to do it than not to do it*. Ignoring our feedback will not advance your work. Keep in mind our objective is to help you, not to hold you back.

Check the following link for information: <https://library.stonybrook.edu/services/access-services/my-account/> And, when in doubt, consult a Librarian; they are the experts and are there to help you.

More specifically, the following could be of great use in this course:

- **Library**: Access to online databases, electronic journals, eBooks, and more:
  - **Library Instruction Website** - <http://library.stonybrook.edu/workshops-this-week-citation-skills-worldcat-and-endnote-the-hsc/>
  - **SBU Library Research Guides and Tutorials**  
<http://library.stonybrook.edu/research/research-basics/>
- **Writing Center**: Students are able to schedule face-to-face and online appointments.  
<https://www.stonybrook.edu/writingcenter/>