

**EconS 529**  
**Research Methods**  
**Research and Professional Writing – 2 credits**  
**Fall 2016**

**Instructor:** Dr. Hayley Chouinard  
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Office Hours: 11-12 Wednesday or by appointment

**Classroom:** Hulbert Hall room 23, MW 1:10-2:00

**Class Website:** [people.ses.wsu.edu/chouinard/econs529/](http://people.ses.wsu.edu/chouinard/econs529/)

**Required Text:** “Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research” by Steven A. Greenlaw

**Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:**

This course will prepare students for completing high quality research. We will focus on identifying appropriate research questions, completing professional-quality research and preparing it for publication in professional outlets, i.e., learning how to identify, develop, and communicate research results effectively. Specifically, it will focus on how to choose a topic, write for academic journals, and see a manuscript through to publication.

The primary academic goals of this course are to:

1. learn research methods
2. identify and articulate a precise research question and objectives
3. understand how to develop and organize a professional paper
4. learn the appropriate tools to write an interesting and informative paper
5. complete a high quality research paper

The learning outcomes of this course are that by the end of the course the students are able to:

1. think critically through the processes needed to develop and review academic papers
2. clearly organize and write an original research paper (Ph.D.) or proposal (M.S.)
3. analytically evaluate the research of others

**Assignments:**

Completing a paper is the major assignment for the course. The paper will be broken down into several assignments. Students may select a research topic they are already using for another class if they specifically obtain permission from the other instructor. The final draft of the paper should read like a journal article.

Students will provide a referee report based on the work of another student. Students are required to include a response to the student review with their final draft of their paper.

Class participation is a vital component of the course. Students are expected to come to class prepared and to engage with the material, instructor and other students.

Master's students will prepare a research proposal that is not a complete paper, but will include a description of each section of a research paper.

**Grading:**

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Research question-----    | 10% |
| Related literature-----   | 10% |
| Results-----              | 10% |
| First draft-----          | 10% |
| Referee report-----       | 15% |
| Final draft-----          | 25% |
| Response to reviewer----- | 10% |
| Class participation-----  | 10% |

**Grade Determination:**

A letter grade will be assigned at the end of the semester based on points accumulated in class. No extra credit will be given. The grading schedule is subject to change during the semester, but will not become more difficult.

A tentative grading schedule is as follows:

|    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| A  | 93-100%          |
| A- | 90-92.99%        |
| B+ | 87-89.99%        |
| B  | 83-86.99%        |
| B- | 80-82.99%        |
| C+ | 77-79.99%        |
| C  | 73-76.99%        |
| C- | 70-72.99%        |
| D+ | 67-69.99%        |
| D  | 60-66.99%        |
| F  | less than 59.99% |

**Writing Assistance on Campus:**

Grad writing lab:

<http://universitycollege.wsu.edu/units/writingprogram/units/writingcenter/grad&prof/>. The writing lab is open for all graduate students.

The Intensive American Language Center offers a Thesis & Dissertation Writing Support Course for graduate students. There is a charge not covered by waivers.

ENGL 303 – Revision Workshop – ESL Summer session: Dr. Nancy Bell teaches a course on research writing during the summer. You will have to pay tuition, but if your writing is weak it could be worthwhile. Dr. Bell's contacts are [nbell@wsu.edu](mailto:nbell@wsu.edu) or 335-1322 if you want more information about the course.

**Disability Resource Accommodation:**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center (Washington Building 217) or call 509-335-3417 to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. Please see <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu> for more information or email [Access.Center@wsu.edu](mailto:Access.Center@wsu.edu).

**Academic Honesty:**

As an institution of higher education, Washington State University is committed to principles of truth and academic honesty. All members of the University community share the responsibility for maintaining and supporting these principles. When a student enrolls in Washington State University, the student assumes an obligation to pursue academic endeavors in a manner consistent with the standards of academic integrity adopted by the University. To maintain the academic integrity of the community, the University cannot tolerate acts of academic dishonesty including any forms of cheating, plagiarism, or fabrication. Washington State University reserves the right and the power to discipline or to exclude students who engage in academic dishonesty.

Any student found cheating will at a minimum receive an F on the assignment and will be reported to the Office of Student Standards and Accountability. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC. For more information please see <http://conduct.wsu.edu/academic-integrity-policies-and-resources>.

**Safety:**

Washington State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its faculty, staff, and students. Safety is the responsibility of every member of the campus community and individuals should know the appropriate actions to take when an emergency arises. In support of our commitment to the safety of the campus community the University has developed a Campus Safety Plan, <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>. It is highly recommended that you visit this web site as well as the University emergency management web site at <http://oem.wsu.edu/> to become familiar with the information provided.

## Course Outline

| Dates           | Day                 | Topic  | Readings  | Assignment                         |
|-----------------|---------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| 8/22<br>8/24    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Introduction to class expectations<br>Scientific method                | McCloskey1994; G ch 1<br>G ch 2; Popper                                 |                                    |
| 8/29<br>8/31    | Monday<br>Wednesday | What is economics? Topic<br>Define a question/hypotheses               | AEA; Varian1-3; Davis; Top notes<br>G ch 7 p134-137; Q-Hypoth notes     |                                    |
| 9/5<br>9/7      | Monday<br>Wednesday | Labor day – no class<br>Paper organization/outline                     | -<br>Boonpramote; Sand-J; Org notes                                     |                                    |
| 9/12<br>9/14    | Monday<br>Wednesday | No class<br>Question/hypotheses workday                                | -<br>-  | Question draft                     |
| 9/19<br>9/21    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Introduction<br>Related literature                                     | Introduction Formula<br>G ch 3; Related Lit notes                       | Question final                     |
| 9/26<br>9/28    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Writing skills<br>Related literature workday                           | Mankiw; Just; WS notes<br>-   | Related lit draft                  |
| 10/3<br>10/5    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Data<br>Theory   | G chs 8 and 9; Data notes<br>G ch 7; Varian4-6; Cheng; T notes          | Related lit final                  |
| 10/10<br>10/12  | Monday<br>Wednesday | Theory<br>Empirical model and analysis                                 | -<br>Cochrane 3; Empirical notes  |                                    |
| 10/17<br>10/19  | Monday<br>Wednesday | Results<br>Conclusions   | Results notes<br>Conclusions notes                                      |                                    |
| 10/24<br>10/26  | Monday<br>Wednesday | Where are we?<br>Results workday                                       | -<br>-  | Results draft                      |
| 10/31<br>11/2   | Monday<br>Wednesday | Title page and end pages<br>Reviewing the work of others               | Title/End notes<br>Choi; Reviewing work of others note                  | Results final                      |
| 11/7<br>11/9    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Response to reviewers<br>Veteran’s Day – No class                      | Response to reviewers; Choi2<br>-                                       | First draft                        |
| 11/14<br>11/16  | Monday<br>Wednesday | Selecting a journal; Strategies to<br>keep working<br>Dare to disagree | Oster; Impact factor; Selecting j<br>notes; G&S; Romer; Stkw notes<br>- | Referee report                     |
| 11/21-<br>11/25 |                     | No class - Thanksgiving  |   |                                    |
| 11/28<br>11/30  | Monday<br>Wednesday | Job market review<br>Professional ethics                               | Ph.D. or M.S. notes<br>DeMartino; Ethics notes                          |                                    |
| 12/5<br>12/7    | Monday<br>Wednesday | Panel discussion & questions<br>Final discussion                       | -<br>-  | Final draft and<br>review response |

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus is subject to change to facilitate instructional and/or student needs.