**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this class, you will learn how to formulate a question about economics, how to find and analyze data to answer the question, and how to communicate that answer to others. You will practice using these methods in writing a memo, a questionnaire, a report, and many smaller exercises. In this "hands on" course, you will define tasks, describe economic concepts and units, find and use economic data, conduct a survey, develop and test hypotheses, read and interpret economics articles, make economic forecasts, and make recommendations on business decisions. There's not a lot of reading but there is a lot of "doing."

**WIC REQUIREMENT:** Research is of little value unless the results are communicated to others. Because most economic research is communicated through written research reports or articles, this course has been designated a university-approved writing intensive course for economics majors. University standards for WIC classes require that students write at least 5,000 words, of which at least 2,000 be in polished papers which students have revised after receiving feedback and criticism; that a significant part of the grade be based on evaluation of writing, particularly individually written papers which have been revised after feedback; and that the course discuss writing issues pertinent to that discipline (not grammar and punctuation). The focus here is on learning to write about economics as a professional and on writing to learn about conducting economic research through homework, ungraded exercises in class and formally-graded papers.

**PREREQUISITES:** Students are expected to be familiar with basic micro and macro economic concepts and theories. ECON 201 and 202 plus either ECON 311 or ECON 315 are required prerequisites. Those who have had only 201 and
202 do not have the necessary prerequisite and will probably find this course difficult.

**TEXTS:** Readings to guide you in these endeavors are from *A Guide to Everyday Economic Statistics*, 5th edition, by Gary Clayton and Martin Giesbrecht, *The Craft of Research* by Wayne Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams and *The Survey Research Handbook*, 2nd edition, by Pamela Alreck and Robert Settle. Some other readings will be distributed in class. Your reading assignments are given on the [Course Outline](#). In addition, if you do not already have a writer's guide or handbook, I strongly recommend you purchase one. The OSU Bookstore has many to choose from; pick one that appeals to you. Reading the *Wall Street Journal* on a regular basis is recommended but not required. Please see me to subscribe at special students rates.

**ATTENDANCE:** We will be doing a number of in-class writing and research exercises so your attendance is essential. Some of the work on team projects will be done in class; those who do not participate will receive a zero on the group portion of these assignments. Many other in-class exercises have been designed to help you learn about research or guide your paper writing. These will not be graded but will be collected and counted to determine your class participation grade.

In addition, each student will be responsible for providing certain pieces of information for others in the class. Failure to complete your assignment and turn it in on time will make it difficult for others to complete their work. Reviewing and revising are considered to be essential components of a WIC class. Failure to turn in a draft in a timely manner will make it difficult for others to complete the peer review assignment.

**GRADES:** The final grade will be based on the following:

- **2 Quizzes** (7% each) 14%
- **Final exam** 10%
**Group projects (2 at 7% each)** 14%

**Recession paper** 30%

**Peer review of recession paper** 7%

**Graded Homework** 20%

**In-Class Exercises** 5%

**GRADING POLICIES:**

- All homework and papers are due at the start of class unless otherwise noted. Late papers will be penalized 0.3 grade points (i.e., from a B to a B-) for each business day late up to a maximum of 2.0 points. Thus, a paper which is more than a week late can earn no more than a C even if revised to top quality. If you have some emergency (hospitalization or something equally serious) which causes you to miss a deadline, contact me as soon as possible to discuss an extension. Extensions are granted only in the case of a true emergency which one could not anticipate.

- All graded writing assignments which do not meet minimally acceptable (C) standards in content, organization, or evidence will be graded as incomplete and returned to be rewritten.

- Similarly, papers with excessive spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors will be returned as incomplete. We will discuss content, organization, evidence, and style in class. I assume, however, that you know the basics of grammar and punctuation. If you have doubts, consult your handbook.

- The recession paper may be revised and resubmitted after receiving my comments and your initial grade. I will use the score on the last version read in computing the course grade. Rewrites are due by noon on June 10.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

- You should take care to avoid plagiarism or cheating in any form. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and may be punished by failure on the exam, paper, or project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion from the university. The handout distributed in class may help clarify what constitutes plagiarism.

- In addition, behaviors which are disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Behaviors which create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office.

- Students with documented disabilities should inform me of the disability at the beginning of the term and discuss appropriate accommodations.

**HELP:**

- If you have any questions, please feel free to ask at any time. Let me know if you are having trouble with any assignment. I have office hours in Ballard 319 on Monday and Wednesday from 12:00 - 1:30 or by appointment. You can also e-mail questions to me at Martha.N.Fraudorf@orst.edu or call me at 737-1477.

- You may also get help with writing assignments at the University Writing Center in Waldo 123. They prefer you call (737-5640) for an appointment.

- I will post announcements of any changes in assignments or due dates as well as other pertinent information under [announcements](#) on the main ECON 428 web page. You should make a practice of checking there frequently.
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| April 1    | Booth, pp. 1-11, 29-34 | I. Introduction to economic research  
A. Introduction to research-lecture and discussion  
B. Introduction to the course- questionnaire, distribution of assignments |
| April 3    | Booth, Ch. 2-4 and pp. 255-8; read project 1 and complete the planning sheet | II. Getting Started  
A. Defining the research question -discussion and in-class activity  
B. Defining the audience  
C. Planning the research  
1. Asking questions  
2. Developing hypotheses - lecture and in-class activity  
3. Outlining specific tasks-- work on project 1 |
| April 8    | Homework 1 due; Clayton, Ch. 1-4, appendix 1; Handout, "Reading..." | B. Locating and Understanding previous economic research --lecture and in-class exercise.  
C. Understanding common economic variables - lecture and discussion of recession paper. |
| April 10   | Project 1 due; Clayton 5-7 | D. Finding economic data--Complete discussion of economic variables  
1. Planning your search  
2. Evaluation of sources |
| April 15   | Homework 2 due "Econ on the web" | 3. Locating sources: Meet in Milne 201 for computer demonstration and exercise. |
| April 17   | Homework 3, 4 due Handout | Discussion of homework 1 and 2, recession paper  
C. Collecting your own data  
1. Designing experiments-- lecture and in-class exercise |
| April 22   | Review questions Alreck, pp. 3-13; 18-44; Read project 2 assignment | QUIZ 1  
2. Designing surveys -- lecture and discussion of survey project; formation of groups  
a. Overview of survey design. |
| April 24   | Homework 5-1 due Alreck, Ch. 3-5 | b. Sampling  
c. Questions design and writing-- lecture and discussion; group work on survey project. |
| April 29   | Draft of questions due Alreck, Ch. 6; pp. 187-9, 194-208; skim Ch. 8-9 | Discussion of draft survey questions  
d. Preparing and distributing the survey  
2. Processing the surveys --lecture and discussion |
| May 1      | Final questions due Booth, pp. 64-93, 101-2 | IV. Conducting Economic Analysis  
A. Developing claims; thinking about evidence - lecture and discussion; in-class activity  
B. Evidence  
1. Using the results of others' research-- lecture and discussion on summarizing and citing. |
| May 6      | Recession paper thesis due Booth pp. 94-148 | 2. Using data to support claims -- lecture and in-class activity; discussion of problems and progress on recession paper |
| May 8      | Study for Quiz 2 handout; Booth Ch. 11 | QUIZ 2  
C. Presenting your information-- Bring Calculators |
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| May 13     | Recession paper outline due Booth, pp. 149-198; Alreck, pp. 267-282, 347-380     | 3. Presenting economic data--lecture and discussion, in-class exercises. Bring calculators  
   a. Describing data  
   b. Transforming economic data- in-class exercises  
   c. Presenting data with graphs |
| May 15     | Homework 6 due Booth, Ch. 13-14                                                  | D. Explaining your analysis to the reader  
   1. Structuring your paper  
   2. Writing clearly --lecture and in-class discussion |
| May 20     | Draft of recession paper due Alreck, pp. 282-91; 380-383                          | Discussion of peer review  
   E. Correlations and causality  
   1. Ways of showing correlations |
| May 22     | Peer review due Booth, Ch. 12, 13; handout                                        | Discussions with peer reviewer; discussion and in-class activities on revising. |
| May 26     | NO CLASS                                                                          | Revise paper                                                             |
| May 29     | Recession paper due Alreck, pp. 291-304; 319-346                                  | 2. Formal hypothesis testing-- lecture and in-class exercise              |
| June 3     | Homework 7 due                                                                    | E. Extrapolations and forecasting--lecture and in-class activity          |
| June 5     | Slide show due                                                                    | Power point presentations and disucssion of survey results.              |
| June 10    | Revised recession paper due                                                       |                                                                         |
| June 13    | Review sheet                                                                      | FINAL EXAM: 14:00 (2:00 PM)- regular classroom                           |