

ECON 5900/5900H--Senior Thesis
Office: Brooks 537
e-mail: drobinso@uga.edu

Dr. Robinson
Office Phone: 706-542-3494

For this course you will write an extensive economics research paper under the direction of a faculty member. The course should be taken just prior to the student's planned graduation. Pre- or corequisite: ECON 4010.

There are no required or recommended texts for this course, but the UGA Main Library has a useful online resource for term papers, www.libs.uga.edu/researchcentral. Our faculty especially recommend EconLit among the databases you will find there, because it indexes scholarly journals in economics. To see lists of papers written by previous students, click here (http://www.terry.uga.edu/economics/directory/past_senior_papers.html). You can also click here (http://www.terry.uga.edu/economics/directory/senior_paper.html) to view the complete texts of a few papers selected as the outstanding ones for their school year; their authors have given us permission to post them. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Students with disabilities that require certain accommodations should see me as soon as possible.

Course Goals

You are to research an economics issue of your choice and write a documented argumentative paper about it. Unless it is an honors thesis, the body of the paper should be a MAXIMUM of 20 pages (about 5000 words)—some advisors may ask for much shorter papers. If the body of a rough or final draft is longer than this, I will immediately return it to you for editing. This paper is required for the economics degree because it demonstrates your mastery of economic concepts and proficiency in writing. It should be an original synthesis of material, primarily in your own words, and cannot have been submitted in another course.

Your research will be directed by an Economics faculty member of your choice. (Page 6 of this syllabus is a permission sheet that he or she will sign and that you will return to me; be sure to give all the requested information.) Your faculty advisor will judge the paper's content, and I will grade it for organization, style, documentation, format, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The final course grade is the average of these two grades, but you must get a C (71) or better from both readers for course credit. If the second draft is not up to this standard, you will have to revise the paper again. When assessing the paper's content, your faculty advisor will consider many criteria, including originality and relevance of the topic, use and interpretation of economic data, use of economic concepts and ideas to explain and support the thesis, use of analytical methods to evaluate and support the thesis, and development of and ability to sustain logical arguments.

Course Policies and Requirements

1. Attend all classes. Important information about researching, writing, and documenting your paper will be covered in class. However, I will not drop you from the course for nonattendance, nor will I lower your grade for that reason alone.

2. All assignments beginning with the proposal must be typed or printed on a letter-quality printer, double spaced. Please do NOT send me the assignments in electronic form, since the department is experiencing a paper shortage; turn in printed versions only. For your own protection, keep copies of these assignments. For more about format, see class handouts and documents following this syllabus.

3. Plagiarism means presenting someone else's work as your own. Types of cheating range from not citing sources for direct quotations and paraphrases to submitting an entire paper written by someone else. Penalties may include an F in the course and suspension from the university. As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the student honor code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor. If your advisor and I are suspicious about a paper, we will contact the Office of the Vice President for Instruction and follow the procedures it recommends.

I will thoroughly cover documentation procedures in class. If you are in any doubt about whether you are using a source appropriately, see me.

4. At the same time you turn in your final draft, you must submit a course evaluation form to either Mrs. Warren or Lauren Hutchison, the Economics Dept. receptionist. *Please see the last page of this document for the evaluation form.* I will not see these evaluations, and your grade will not be affected by them; after the semester I will see only a summary of the ratings and average score, and a typed, anonymous version of written comments.

5. See the separate class schedule (right after the permission sheet on this syllabus) for important dates. Your work will follow the pattern below.

A. You begin to research a topic (or a few topics), taking notes in the process.

B. You discuss the topic with one or more faculty members. Once a faculty member agrees to advise your paper, bring me the permission sheet (p. 6 of this document) with your topic, your name, and his or her signature. Submit it, and all subsequent assignments, to me either in person or in the "In" basket on top of the file cabinets next to my office (Brooks 537). Students enrolled in ECON 5900H will have another form signed instead of the permission sheet; see the "ECON 5900H" section below.

C. You turn in to me (not your advisor; I'm the one who assigns grades) the proposal, which consists of a title page, a summary, a tentative outline, and a list of sources. (The source list may include people you intend to interview as well as printed materials.) I read and comment on this and pass it on to your advisor, who also writes comments. He or she returns the proposal to me, and I put it in the "Out" basket (also on the file cabinets outside my office) for you to examine. (Retrieval of all written assignments is your responsibility. You cannot proceed from one stage to the next if you do not get your proposal and rough draft with the advice you need.) You may make an appointment with your advisor or me to discuss questions you have about our comments.

D. If the proposal is not approved, you must submit a new one to us for approval. Until the proposal is approved, I will not read a rough draft.

E. You submit to me your rough draft, along with the proposal we have returned to you (so that we can see how you responded to our comments). The rough draft should include copies of every page, including the title page, the abstract, and the reference list, so that I can check the format. I comment on the draft and send it along to your advisor, who adds his or her comments and returns it to me. I keep the proposal in a file with your name and return the rough draft to you via the "Out" box. At this point, too, you may meet with your advisor or me to discuss our comments.

F. You turn in the second draft to me along with the rough draft we have responded to, so that we can see what changes you have made. I read this draft; your advisor then reads it and returns it to me. At this point we usually give the paper a grade, and I add it to your file. But please remember that your advisor and I may ask you to do several drafts of the paper before we are satisfied with it. If the advisor is still not satisfied with the third version, he or she may refuse to give it a grade, and the student may be obliged to start a new topic with a new advisor. **(Remember to turn in your course evaluation along with your final draft at this time.)**

You might consider submitting your finished paper to the Michigan Journal of Economics, which publishes one issue each year of undergraduate essays. For more information, see its website, <http://www.umich.edu/~michje/>. Or you may enter the International Atlantic Economic Society's annual Best Undergraduate Paper Competition; for details, go to www.iaes.org.

Your file, from permission sheet through final draft, will stay in my office. You may come to see our comments on the final draft, and the semester after you have completed your paper, you may request a pdf version from me. Requests for papers will be honored only for 12-24 months after completion; after that the papers will be discarded.

G. No draft will be accepted unless the proposal was first submitted and approved; no draft is final unless the rough draft was first read by me and your advisor. If you miss the rough-draft and/or final-draft due dates, your paper may not be graded during this semester. Please note that according to Economics Dept. policy, a faculty member has up to a week to read and return a proposal from the time he or she receives it from me, and up to two weeks to read and return drafts. A grade of "Incomplete" is given

only to students who complete the entire four-step process; a proposal and rough draft are not sufficient for such a grade. If you receive an “I,” you do not need to re-register for the course the following quarter. A rough draft unaccompanied by the approved proposal, or a final draft unaccompanied by the rough draft, may be penalized according to what or how much is missing. I strongly recommend that you make copies of the proposal and the various drafts as you complete them. Please put your name, home address, e-mail address, and phone number on each assignment so I can contact you easily if I have questions. Unless you indicate otherwise, I will first try to reach you by e-mail, so check your messages regularly.

ECON 5900H

Honors theses differ from the regular ECON 5900 papers in two ways. 1) For honors theses there will be a higher expectation of quality and higher standards of assessment, determined by each faculty advisor. 2) For theses there is no formal page limit; again, the appropriate length for each thesis will be determined by the faculty advisor. Students enrolled in 5900H will not turn in a permission sheet as the other students do. They must instead submit the following forms. 1) The Application for Undergraduate Research Course (available from the Honors CURO Handbook website). The faculty advisor and Mrs. Warren will sign this form before the end of Drop/Add; Mrs. Warren will make a copy of the form for me, and the student will then take the original copy to the Honors Office. 2) The Notice of Faculty Mentor and Reader Conference (also available from the CURO website). This form should accompany the final draft; when the advisor and I have read the draft, we will sign this form and return it to the Honors Office. The Honors website also has instructions for the title page of the final draft of honors theses. The faculty advisor and I will sign these forms, too.

Tutoring

If your skills in composition need sharpening, you may wish to consult the Writing Center in Park Hall (room 66). It offers free services from morning to late afternoon on weekdays throughout the semester, but requires students to make appointments. You do not need a referral from me to get an appointment, but if I think you need such tutoring, I may recommend an appointment or include a Writing Center Referral Form when I return your assignment. In the latter case you must go to the Center, which will notify me of your sessions, before you submit your next assignment. Call the Center at 542-2119 for more information.

Economics Faculty

Areas of Specialization

ATKINSON	Econometrics, industrial organization & public utilities, environmental economics
BATEMAN	Economic history
CHATTERJEE	International macroeconomics
CLOUD	Applied microeconomics, health economics
CORNWELL	Econometrics
HARTMAN	Monetary economics, money and banking, macroeconomics
KAMERSCHEN	Industrial organization, public utilities
KEENAN	Economic theory, public finance, international trade
LASTRAPES	International finance, monetary theory & policy, macroeconomics
LEIVA	Industrial organization
MOORE	Labor economics
MUSTARD	Applied microeconomics
RUDBECK	Applied microeconomics, health economics
SANDIFER	Industrial organization, health economics, labor economics
SELGIN	Monetary economics, banking, economic history
SNOW	Public finance, microeconomics
TRANDEL	Public finance, industrial organization
TURNER	Industrial organization
WARREN	Labor economics, public finance
WILLIAMS	Applied econometrics, industrial organization, applied microeconomics

PERMISSION SHEET

1. Tentative topic:

2. I have agreed to work with _____
on his/her senior paper during _____ semester, 200__.

Faculty signature: _____

ECON 5900 CLASS SCHEDULE FOR FALL SEMESTER 2009 Dr. Robinson

3:30 p.m., TR

Office hours: 3:30-4:30 MWF, 9:30-10:30 TR and by appointment

The class meets five times during the semester—three times at the beginning of the semester, and twice later in the term. Between these class meetings, students may meet with me and their faculty advisers individually. Class material and assignments are given below.

Tuesday, 8/18

Class material: course goals and policies

Thursday, 8/20

Class material: the paper process, choice of advisors, choice of topics

Tuesday, 8/25

Class material: thesis statements, resources, note-taking, rules of good writing

Tuesday, 9/1

Class material: writing the proposal

SIGNED PERMISSION SHEETS DUE

Tuesday, 9/15

Class material: writing the rough and final drafts

WRITTEN PROPOSALS DUE

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, 10/19

ROUGH DRAFTS DUE

Thursday, 10/22

Last day to withdraw with a "W"

Thursday, 12/3

**FINAL DRAFTS AND COURSE
EVALUATIONS DUE**

The above dates are designed for those who wish to finish their papers this semester. Students who wish only to get an "Incomplete" for fall semester must have FINAL drafts in no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, 12/17.