**ECONOMICS 498: SEMINAR IN ECONOMICS**
Fall 2021
TR 2pm – 3:15pm
213 Bryan Building

**INSTRUCTOR:** Professor Martin Andersen  
**Office:** 448 Bryan Building  
**E-mail:** msander4@uncg.edu

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**Office:** 448 Bryan Building  
**Office Hours:** Thursday 10 am – 12 pm or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines public policy issues using microeconomic theory and data. It provides students with the opportunity to apply economic reasoning to analyze a government policy of their choice. This course is a speaking- and writing-intensive course. The purpose of this course is to help students improve their ability to engage in independent economic policy research and communicate the results of that research professionally.

**PREREQUISITES:** ECO 301, ECO 302, and ECO 350.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of this course, students should be able to:
1) use their knowledge of economics to conduct policy analysis; and
2) communicate their findings orally and in writing in a clear, coherent, professional, and informative manner.

Successful completion of the course includes:
- Producing a major paper and a presentation on a public policy of the student’s choice;
- Learning how to formulate economic policy questions;
- Knowing how to find and use appropriate data to address economic policy questions;
- Knowing how to find, read, and cite appropriate scholarly works related to a given policy issue;
- Understanding the difference between correlation and causation; and
- Using economic theory to predict the effects of a government policy.

**COURSE MATERIALS:**
Make sure that you buy the 4th edition. You can purchase it through the UNCG Bookstore.
- Intermediate microeconomic theory textbook. You can use your ECO 301 text.
- Supplemental materials on the Canvas website for the course. You must have an active UNCG e-mail account to access UNCG Canvas.
- Library resources specific to the class.
- Materials specific to your project. Both Steve Cramer, the reference librarian specializing in economics and business, and I will be available to help you find these materials.
COURSE SCHEDULE: Dates, details, and expectations about all assignments will be provided in class and on the course Canvas site. This course has a complex, multi-faceted structure and you are expected to understand and adhere to its calendar and requirements. This schedule is subject to change and students will be notified by email or Canvas announcement if there are any changes in the schedule or course syllabus.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES: The structure of this course is unlike that of a typical course. There will be some lectures. However, student participation in class is crucial for success. The course’s emphasis is on in-class discussions and presentations in which students and I will work together to develop economic research and communication skills.

Over the course of the semester, students are expected to:

- Attend class regularly and arrive on time. Since there is no textbook for this class, it is essential that students attend all classes. Students will receive a score of 0 for all assignments that they miss due to being late or absent.
- Use instructor-provided feedback about their writing and speaking assignments to improve later writing and speaking assignments.
- Read assigned material ahead of time, be willing to share their thinking and work – however incomplete – with the class, and be willing to support fellow students through praise and criticism of their work.
- Not use cell phones during class. Students may use a tablet device to download reading materials. Unless otherwise specified or used to attend class remotely, laptops are not allowed.
- Approach me sooner rather than later with any concerns they have about the class.

I will ask students to leave class if they are consistently violating the policies outlined here.

GRADES: The final course grade will be based on the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper topic</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline and annotated bibliography</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data report</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft of theoretical model</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rough draft of paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final draft of paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance, Participation and Other Assignments</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outlines of journal articles</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short presentations:</td>
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<td>Presentation on writing style</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Presentation on paper topic</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Final Exam: The final exam for this class is scheduled for 3:30 – 6:30 pm on Saturday, December 4. The final will consist of short-answer questions covering topics we have discussed during the semester. You will be allowed to use your class notes but no other materials. I will provide more details in class.

Attendance and participation: I expect students to come to class prepared and to participate in discussions. Part of the participation grade will be based on completing non-graded assignments, such as signing up for presentation slots when I ask students to do so. Other in-class assignments will also count towards attendance and participation. If you miss an in-class assignment due to being absent or late, you will not receive credit for this assignment. You will be allowed to make up in-class assignments only if you have an approved excuse to miss class. Approved excuses are limited to: illness documented by doctor’s note specifying that you are unable to attend class; death in the immediate family; travel for athletic events approved by the UNCG Department of Athletics; travel for a conference presentation.

Reading reflections: On days when there is a reading assignment, students will be expected to write a short (about ½ page) response to a question I ask about the reading. Students will write these responses either at the beginning of class or as a discussion board post before class. I will specify before each assignment how it should be submitted. These reading reflections will be part of the attendance and participation grade.

Late submission penalty: I will not offer any extensions. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by the beginning of class on the due date. I will deduct 10 percentage points for each day that your assignment is late. If you turn in your assignment at 2:01 pm when it was due by 2 pm, this counts as being 1 day late.

Final grades: No extra credit assignments will be available at the end of the semester. All grade disputes must be addressed in writing. I utilize the following scale to convert number into letter grades:

- A: 93% to 100%
- A-: 90% to 92.9%
- B+: 86% to 89.9%
- B: 83% to 85.9%
- B-: 80% to 82.9%
- C+: 76% to 79.9%
- C: 73% to 75.9%
- C-: 70% to 72.9%
- D+: 66% to 69.9%
- D: 63% to 65.9%
- D-: 60% to 62.9%
- F: below 60%

I do not round the numbers. For example, a final score of 85.9% corresponds to a B, but a score of 86.0% will guarantee a B+. 
**Writing and Speaking Centers:** I encourage students to visit the UNCG Writing Center and Speaking Center to get help with their paper and presentations.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Students are expected to know and abide by UNCG’s Academic Integrity Policy in all matters pertaining to this course. Violations will be pursued in accordance with the Policy. Please visit the UNCG Academic Integrity webpage and read the Academic Integrity Policy. Note that the Academic Integrity Policy states the following regarding plagiarism:

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- submitting work done by another, whether a commercial or non-commercial enterprise, including the Internet, as one’s own work
- failure to properly cite references and/or sources
- submitting, as one’s own, work done by or copied from another including work done by a fellow student, work done by a previous student, or work done by anyone other than the student responsible for the assignment
- Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more members of the group does none of the group’s work and participates in none of the group’s activities, but attempts to take credit for the work of the group.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class.

**Accommodations:** UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center, 334-5440, oars.uncg.edu.

Students may request accommodations for religious holidays under applicable laws. See https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/university-policies for more information.

Students should remind the instructor in advance when accommodation affects course activities, e.g., before taking exams, to ensure that the instructor has updated systems accordingly.

**Absences for University-Sponsored Activities:** The University recognizes the importance of certain extra-curricular and co-curricular activities (including travel days) that enhance student learning, personal development, and professional growth. Instructors will excuse absences of students for participation in University-sponsored events under the following conditions:

1) Students who expect to miss one or more class meetings due to participation in University-sponsored activities should:
   a) Notify the instructor(s) at least five class days in advance;
   b) Arrange to complete all missed work *in advance* of the absence whenever practicable as judged by the instructor(s). When missed work cannot be completed in advance, the
instructor(s) should provide students with the opportunity to make up the work. Students should be aware, however, that not all kinds of work can be made up. The instructor(s) have the discretion to deny make-up work if (i) alternative assignments place an unreasonable demand on the instructor, (ii) the original assignment is such that not completing it at the originally assigned time impedes student learning.

c) Present relevant documentation of participation in a relevant University-sponsored activity to the instructor(s) upon request.

Students who expect to miss more than three class periods of any single course of any kind in a term or more than two consecutive meetings of a laboratory course in order to participate in University-sponsored activities should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. In the case that the faculty member cannot make reasonable accommodations for make-up work, the student may appropriately be advised to drop the course.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**: Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the University, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at [https://shs.uncg.edu/](https://shs.uncg.edu/) or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting [https://shs.uncg.edu/srp](https://shs.uncg.edu/srp) or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.

**COMMUNICATION AND COURSE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES**:
Technical support: Students with technical issues with the course and e-mail should contact 6TECH for support either by e-mail or phone or chat ([https://its.uncg.edu/Help/6TECH/](https://its.uncg.edu/Help/6TECH/)). Please also make your instructor aware of the issue, and if there will be any delays in resolving the issue.


**COVID-19 Health and Safety**

As we return for fall 2021, the campus community must recognize and address continuing concerns about physical and emotional safety, especially as we will have many more students, faculty, and staff on campus than in the last academic year. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG’s culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Following face-covering guidelines
- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene when possible
● Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
● Staying home if you are ill
● Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

To make it easier for students to hear their instructor and/or read lips and if conditions permit, instructors who are fully vaccinated and who can maintain at least six feet of distance from students may remove their masks while actively teaching if they choose, but will wear a mask at all other times while in the classroom, including during the periods before and after class.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact OARS (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.