

ECON 4200: Honours Thesis

Mondays 15:35-18:25, Economics Seminar Room 1

Prof. Mevlude Akbulut-Yuksel

Dalhousie University, Department of Economics

Office: 6214 University Avenue, ground floor (C12)

Phone: 494-8011 or 494-2026 (secretaries)

E-mail: mevlude@dal.ca

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 14:30-16:30 (no appointment needed during this time).

Meetings at any other time must be arranged in advance, preferably via e-mail.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is required for all honours students, and has two linked objectives. First, you will develop economic research skills. These include carrying out research in the library and on the internet, critical reading of economics articles, data management and analysis, writing for economics, and presentation skills. Second, you will put these research skills into action to produce and present your Honour's Essay.

The Honour's Essay can be on any topic of particular interest to you, subject to the approval of the course instructor. It will involve data analysis and should add something new to economic knowledge. At the beginning of the course, we will discuss ways of developing a clearly defined and narrowly focused research question. You will also be given the chance to read good examples of honour's papers from past years to give you an idea of what is expected. You will be guided step by step through the process of carrying out your research. In order to complete your honour's paper it is critical to complete each step on time. Please note that your final grade will not simply evaluate the final finished product, but will involve assessment of each step along the way.

You will have the opportunity to present your research as it progresses to your colleagues in the honour's class. You will both give and receive helpful feed-back. At the end of the year, you will make a final presentation of your research at the Honour's conference that will be attended by fellow students as well as faculty members from the economics department. Each student will be advised by both the course instructor and a faculty advisor knowledgeable in the field of his/her research.

Since listening to other researchers is invaluable both to help you understand alternative ways to approach economic research and to help you see how best to present research findings to others, attendance at the Friday afternoon department seminars is mandatory

Email Policy: I will do my best to respond to e-mail within 24 hours on a weekday, 48 hours on a weekend, according to the following policy:

- a. I will only respond to e-mails posing questions that can be answered in a sentence or two. For detailed questions, please see me in office hours.
- b. I will not reply to e-mails that request information that can be found on BLS or the syllabus, so you should check those places first.
- c. I will not reply to e-mails regarding the results of graded material—for that, please see me in office hours.
- d. I will not respond to email sent to my other accounts.

Course Requirements/Evaluation:

Please note that deadlines are *firm*. For each day that an item is overdue, a penalty of 20% will be imposed. The Dalhousie University Calendar discusses legitimate reasons for not submitting work on time under the section “Academic Regulations.”

Requirement	Details	Due Date	Points
FALL 2011			
Assignment #1	Essay on General Research Interests	September 19	5%
Assignment #2	Essay on Research Question 1	September 26	2%
Assignment #3	Essay on Research Question 2	October 3	2%
Assignment #4	Essay on Research Question 3	October 17	2%
Assignment #5	Summary of Old Honour’s Paper	October 31	3%
Assignment #6	Summary of Key Article + Bibliography	November 14	4%
Essay Step #1	Research Proposal/Presentation	November 21	8%
Essay Step #2	Data and Summary Statistics	December 5	5%
Summaries	Friday Seminar Summaries (5 per term)	December 5	5%
WINTER 2012			
Essay Step #3	Estimation Results/Class Presentation	January 23	8%
Essay Step #4	Literature Review	February 13	5%
Essay Step #5	First Complete Draft/Presentation	March 5	10%
Assignment #7	2 Peer Comments/Reviews	March 12	6%
Final Conference Presentation		TBA	10%
Essay Step #6	Revised Draft	April 2	20%
Summaries	Friday Seminar Summaries (5 per term)	April 11	5%
Total			100

Grading: Grades will be determined according to the following scale:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
90+	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	50-59	<50

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as quickly as possible at the Student Accessibility Services if they wish to receive academic accommodations. To do so please phone 494-2836, email access@dal.ca, drop in at the new Mark A. Hill Accessibility Centre or visit their new website www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca. Students are also reminded that all forms are now available on the website.

Class Schedule:

Find the potential class schedule for Fall 2011. If there is any change in this schedule, it will be announced in the previous class.

<u>Week of</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Lecture Time</u>
Sept. 12	Week 1	Introduction to Honours Class	3 hours
Sept. 19	Week 2	Research and Graduate School	3 hours
Sept. 26	Week 3	Panel on Future Job Opportunities	3 hours
Oct. 3	Week 4	Research in Macroeconomics and International Trade	3 hours
Oct. 10	Week 5	Thanksgiving	No class
Oct. 17	Week 6	Research in Econometrics and Graduate School	3 hours
Oct. 24	Week 7		No class
Oct. 31	Week 8	Discussion of Old Honours Thesis	3 hours
Nov. 7	Week 9		No class
Nov. 14	Week 10	Discussion/Short Presentation of Key Articles	3 hours
Nov. 21	Week 11	Research Proposal/Presentation	1,5 hours
Nov. 28	Week 12	Research Proposal/Presentation	1,5 hours
Dec. 5	Week 13	Discussion of Research Proposals and Data	1,5 hours