Instructor

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Phone: (765) 494-4251 (office line)  
Office Hours: By appointment

Scheduled Meeting Times

Days: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday  
Time: 8:30am – 9:20am  
Location: Rawls Hall 1071

Course Description

From the course catalog: Research methods, scientific methodology, problem identification, and the nature of policy problems including economic policy readings, case studies, and practice project proposals.

This course provides an introduction to research design and communication in applied economics, with a particular focus on problems in agriculture and natural resources. The course is built around three broad themes:

1. Idea development
2. Research execution
3. Presentation of research discovery.

Each theme is divided into specific topics.

Learning Outcomes

After this course, you should be able to…

- Identify a precise research question and articulate research objectives.
- Develop a research prospectus, including a literature review, conceptual foundation, and empirical modeling strategies.
- Write clearly, precisely, concisely, and persuasively.
- Critically evaluate your own work and the work of others.
- Conduct scholarly research in an ethical manner.
Leaning Resources

Primary texts:


Booth et al. (2016) is available electronically through the Purdue Libraries [here](#). If you wish to purchase a hard copy, there are also previous editions available which are typically much cheaper and will be sufficient for our purposes. Booth et al. (2016) is a great resource, but it does not “cover research techniques that are specific to particular fields” (Booth et al., 2016, pp. xiii). A more focused discussion of research methodology in applied economics is provided by Ethridge (2004).

Strunk and White (2009) is the *de facto* writing style guide for academics, for better or worse. It’s simple, straightforward, and easy to digest. The motivated student should also consider reading Williams and Bizup (2012) or McCloskey (2019). There are previous editions for each book as well.

Lovitts and Wert (2009) is a helpful resource as you write your thesis.

Additional course readings: A list of additional required and suggested readings will be provided for each topic.

Policy on course readings: Prior to each course meeting, students are expected to read the relevant material. Students should come to class prepared to discuss, in a meaningful way, the major points of each reading. This means that every assigned reading should be read at least once, often more. One of the primary objectives of 602 is to become a better writer, and in order to be a good writer, you have first be an active reader. In addition to the course readings, you should actively read the academic literature in your area, as well as newspapers, magazines, blogs, fiction, and popular nonfiction. Read whatever moves you or excites you. Read a book just for fun. But seek out good writers. Try to figure out why their writing is effective.

Grades

The course grade is determined by the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short writing assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short research presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question (final project part 1)</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction &amp; literature review (final project part 2)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project (draft, part 3)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written review of classmate’s proposal (final project part 4)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project (complete, part 5)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>( \geq 92.0 )</td>
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<tr>
<td>A–</td>
<td>90.0 – 91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88.0 – 89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.0 – 87.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B–</td>
<td>80.0 – 81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78.0 – 79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.0 – 77.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C–</td>
<td>70.0 – 71.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68.0 – 69.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62.0 – 67.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D–</td>
<td>60.0 – 61.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>( \leq 59.9 )</td>
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Writing Assignments

The course will include short, weekly writing assignments, such as written summaries or responses to readings or practicing an exercise from the lecture material. Students should schedule a time every day to write.

Course Project

At the end of this course, you will have a complete and concise thesis proposal. The course project will be broken into parts.

- Part 1: Written research question (1 page) and 3-minute oral presentation of research idea: due Friday, February 7
- Part 2: Introduction and literature review (3 pages): due Friday, February 28
- Part 3: Revised introduction and literature review (3 pages); description of conceptual model, empirical procedures, and data requirements (4 pages): due Friday, March 27
- Part 4: Formal review of a classmate’s proposal (2 pages): due Friday, April 10
- Part 5: Fully revised proposal (7 pages), response to the reviewer (4 pages), and oral proposal presentation: due Monday, April 27

Students are expected to work independently, but it will be helpful to consult with your major professor throughout the project.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. If you have a critical issue preventing you from completing the course work on time, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience to find an agreeable solution.

Attendance

Attendance is a necessary condition for successful completion of this course. Please contact me, as soon as possible, if you have to miss a class meeting. Attendance, however, is not a sufficient condition for successful completion of this course. Students should come to class meetings prepared to have a substantive discussion of the course materials. All 602 students are also expected to attend at least on Department Seminar during the Spring semester.
**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern.

*Purdue Honor Pledge:* As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together – we are Purdue.

**Nondiscrimination**

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

**Students with Disabilities**

Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

**Emergency Preparedness**

*As we begin this semester I want to take a few minutes and discuss emergency preparedness.* Purdue University is a very safe campus and there is a low probability that a serious incident will occur here at Purdue. However, just as we receive a “safety briefing” each time we get on an aircraft, we want to emphasize our emergency procedures for evacuation and shelter in place incidents. Our preparedness will be critical *IF* an unexpected event occurs!
References


