

## Faculty Liberal Arts and Professional Studies Department of Economics

**Course:** AP/ECON 4089 3.0 A: Research Seminar in Economics (Online)

**Course Webpage:** <http://eClass.yorku.ca>

**Term:** Winter Term 2021

### **Prerequisite / Co-requisite:**

**Prerequisites:** 78 credits including AP/ECON 2300 3.0, AP/ECON 2350 3.0, AP/ECON 2400 3.0, AP/ECON 2450 3.0, and AP/ECON 3210 3.0 or equivalent courses.

**Course credit exclusions:** None

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### **Course Instructor**

Name: Tsvetanka Karagyozeva  
Email: [tkarag@yorku.ca](mailto:tkarag@yorku.ca)

**Virtual Office Hours:** Fridays, 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM via Zoom, and by appointment

### **Time and Location**

Virtual Seminars                      F 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM                      via Zoom

Please note that this is an **online course**. The entire course will take place on the course's eClass website.

### **Technical Requirements for Taking the Course**

This is a fully online course, and I will use two platforms (eClass and Zoom accessed through eClass) through which you will interact with the course materials, course director, community partners and with one another. Please review the syllabus to determine how the class meets (in whole or in part), and how office hours and seminars will be conducted.

Please note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

To participate in our virtual seminar and attend virtual office hours, it is preferable (but not required) if you have a computer with webcam and microphone or a smart device with these features.

Here are some useful links for student computing information, resources and help:

Student Guide to eClass

Zoom@YorkU Best Practices

Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide

Computing for Students Website

Student Guide to eLearning at York University

## Course Organization

Technology is extensively used for delivering instruction in this online course. This is a seminar course which meets synchronously through video conferencing via Zoom at the scheduled class time. Your class attendance and participation in in-class activities is necessary for your learning experience. Please note that I do not plan to record our meetings. Although **class notes** will be provided on eClass, they **are not** meant to be **a substitute for class attendance**. Readings will be assigned a week in advance and you are expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss them. **You are responsible to make up for the material covered in class if you miss a seminar**. Please make it a habit of checking the course website on a regular basis for current course announcements, class notes, and assigned readings.

**Please use your York email account for correspondence.** Do not forget to sign your name. I will communicate with you via e-mail on a regular basis, so please make sure you check the e-mail account that you have on file with eClass on a regular basis.

I will appreciate if you can participate in class activities with both audio and video so that we can create a small virtual community. However, I completely understand if you prefer to have your videos turned off for privacy or other reasons.

The course will be organized in **three** distinct modules.

The **first module (6 weeks)** will introduce you to our class project portfolio, walk you through the steps in the research process, and direct you to relevant scholarly work that can be used to frame the problem at hand and the appropriate analytical and technical tools necessary for the successful completion of your project. If the need arises, I will introduce you to the appropriate econometric methods/analytical tools and will build the necessary skills for estimating and testing econometric models using statistical software (STATA).

The added element of this course is that the research project you will be working on has been identified in conjunction with a community partner with the dual goal of addressing the partner's needs and providing you with a meaningful educational experience. Community partners will visit our virtual classroom to discuss the projects with you. Your preferences will be taken into account in assigning the projects in our class portfolio along with the constraint that at least five students will be assigned to work individually on each project. Group work is highly encouraged, particularly among those of you who work with the same community partner. However, each assignment that you turn in should reflect your own work.

In the **second module (3 weeks)**, you will focus your efforts on conducting independent research. Our in-class meetings will be dedicated to presentations and discussions of your ongoing work in a group setting. I will be available outside the classroom for one-on-one appointments to discuss any questions that you may have.

In the **third module (3 weeks)**, you will work on finalizing your research project and presenting your research to your classmates, community partners, and faculty during the last two weeks of classes.

## Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The course offers a first-hand experience in how the core methods and tools of economic analysis can be applied to understand and solve economic problems faced by business organizations and policymakers. The course aims at providing you with the opportunity to conduct community-based research in order to: (1) gain the research skills and interpersonal qualities necessary to operate in a professional working environment, thus facilitating your transition from academic to professional life; (2) participate in, and contribute to, a contemporary economic issue or policy debate.

The course builds upon theoretical knowledge and quantitative and analytical skills developed in the prerequisite courses to guide you in producing an original research study on a topic of interest to you and to a community partner under the supervision of the course director.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

- Formulate research questions, which both address community partners' needs and reflect contemporary economic thought on the subject.
- Use the correct theoretical approach to frame the economic issue identified in conjunction with the community partner.
- Perform bibliographic search and identify relevant theoretical and empirical scholarly articles as they relate to the project at hand.
- Write literature review by critically assessing, comparing, and contrasting scholarly work relevant to the project at hand.
- Collect the data needed for your research.
- Identify and master the appropriate technical and analytical tools for addressing the problem at hand. In the case of an econometric project, you should be able to formulate an empirical model and testable hypotheses.
- Apply the appropriate technical and analytical tools to conduct basic economic research.
- Articulate evidence-based conclusions/policy recommendations.
- Identify the major limitations in the analysis carried out.
- Communicate research findings clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing, to your peers and community partners.

## **Course Text / Readings**

### **Required Text:**

- There is no required textbook for this course
- Class notes and assigned readings available on eClass

### **Optional:**

- Adkins, L, and R.C. Hill, 2008, *Using Stata for Principles of Econometrics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley).
- Creswell, J.W., 2014, *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage).
- Greenlaw, S.A., 2009, *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research* (Mason, OH: South-Western).
- Hill, R.C., W.E. Griffiths, and G.C. Lim, 2008, *Principles of Econometrics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley).
- McCloskey, D., 1999, *Economical Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press).
- Strunk Jr., W., and E.B. White, 1999, *The Elements of Style*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Saddle River, NJ: Pearson).
- Resources made available on eClass

## **Evaluation**

All the elements that comprise your final grade complement each other and are designed to develop your writing and communication skills as well as the knowledge and research skills necessary to produce a tangible evidence of your ability to do economics.

**1. Midterm progress report (15 % of grade), due: Feb. 16.** You can think of the midterm progress report as the first draft of your paper. You will submit the report to both the instructor and your community partner. The report is meant to ensure that you are making a steady progress on your term

project while meeting the partner's needs. It is also an opportunity for you to receive feedback on your progress from the instructor, community partner, and classmates.

**2. End-of-term research presentation (10 % of grade).** You will present your finalized research project in class during the last two weeks of classes. The 10-minute presentation should demonstrate that you have made a substantial progress in completing your paper.

**3. Communication with the partner (10 % of grade).** Once you are assigned a project, I will introduce you to your community partner via e-mail. You can communicate with your partner any questions on the project that you may have. At a minimum, I expect you to update the partner on the progress of your work at least once every 2 weeks via e-mail. E-mails should be sent from your York e-mail account and copied to me and your classmates who work on the same project. You will receive full credit if 1) you update the community partner at least once every two weeks (notice that it is the timing of your e-mails that matters rather than their number; for example, you will not receive full credit if all your e-mails are dated within 2 weeks of the end of the term); 2) everyone working on your project and the instructor are copied to all e-mail exchanges with the partner; 3) I receive an **electronic copy** of your e-mail exchanges with the partner, dated and organized in a chronological order, by **April 15<sup>th</sup>**.

**4. Class participation (15 % of grade).** Your participation grade will be based on 1) in-class discussions on assigned readings during the first module of the course; 2) one presentation (5-10 min) of your ongoing work and your input on the work of your classmates during the second module; and 3) feedback on your classmates' presentations during the third module.

**5. Peer review (5 % of grade)** of the midterm progress report of one of your classmates (1 page long, 1 ½ spaced, size-12 Times New Roman font). **Due: March 5<sup>th</sup>**.

**6. Term project (45 % of grade), due: April 20<sup>th</sup>.** Your major goal in this class is to produce a polished research project (12 to 15 pages long, 1 ½ spaced, size-12 Times New Roman font, excluding tables, graphs, appendices and references), which both showcases your substantial knowledge of economics and addresses the community partner's needs. The term project will be assessed based on academic standards and the extent to which it meets the needs of the community partner.

**Concerns about apparent grading errors will be considered during the term, but requests for "extra credit" or other special considerations in assigning grades will be ignored.**

## Grading

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments will bear a number grade that you can convert into a letter grade using the standard York University conversion table (e.g., A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.). For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar:

<https://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2020-2021/grades-and-grading-schemes>

Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.

## Assignment Submission

By taking this course, you agree that all written assignments (except for e-mail exchanges with the partner) will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin via eClass for the detection of plagiarism. You need to submit only an electronic copy of your midterm progress report, peer review, and term paper.

## Missed Deadlines Lateness Penalties

Please note that all announced **deadlines are firm and there are no make-ups for in-class activities.**

Late assignments will be penalized by a **10% reduction of the grade** for every day of delay unless you have a **valid** reason (e.g., medical emergency). In such a case, e-mail me within a week of the due date with a detailed explanation of the reason for missing the deadline.

For students who fail to submit the final draft of their paper by the deadline, the Department of Economics Guidelines on Deferred Standing apply (<https://www.yorku.ca/laps/econ/undergraduate-programs/academic-resources/department-policies/deferred-standing/>). In such cases, students should submit a completed Deferred Standing Agreement form to the Department of Economics to my attention. Those who are granted deferred standing will be given a deadline by which to submit their paper. Students who may require further extensions will have to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

### Tentative Course Schedule:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<b>Jan. 15</b>	<b>Introduction: What is community-based research? Overview of the research process in economics</b> <b>Discussion of the project portfolio</b>
<b>Jan. 22</b>	<b>Discussion of the project portfolio</b> <b>Guest Speakers: John Anania, Ontario Ministry of Finance</b>
<b>Jan. 29</b>	<b>Guest Speakers: Green Party of Ontario, Royal Bank of Canada</b> <i>Identify 3 of the projects you will be willing to work on. Please let me know as soon as possible but no later than Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> how you rank these projects. Projects are assigned on first-come, first-served basis.</i>
<b>Feb. 5</b>	<b>Online library session</b> <b>Guidelines and grading criteria: Midterm progress report and Term paper</b> <b>Making sense of published research: How to write an effective literature review</b>
<b>Feb. 12</b>	<b>How to build a strong argument</b> <b>Writing: a tool for compelling economic research</b>
<b>Feb. 16</b>	<b><i>Reading week – Midterm progress report due (electronic copy via Turnitin)</i></b>
<b>Feb. 26</b>	<b>Plagiarism and how to avoid it</b> <b>How to provide constructive feedback to peers</b>
<b>March 5</b>	<b>In-class presentations in small groups and discussions of ongoing research</b> <b><i>Review of a classmate's midterm progress report due</i></b>
<b>March 12</b>	<b>In-class presentations in small groups and discussions of ongoing research</b>
<b>March 19</b>	<b>In-class presentations in small groups and discussions of ongoing research</b>
<b>March 26</b>	<b>How to give a powerful presentation</b>
<b>April 9</b>	<b><i>In-class presentations in front of the class and community partners</i></b>
<b>April 12</b>	<b><i>In-class presentations in front of the class and community partners</i></b>
<b>April 15</b>	<b><i>Electronic copy of your e-mail exchanges with the partner due</i></b>
<b>April 20</b>	<b><i>Electronic copy of your term paper due via Turnitin</i></b>

*Note: The above schedule is tentative and subject to change.*

## IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the University Secretariat webpage - <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca>.

- Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and the Academic Integrity Website <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>.
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

### Course ADD/Drop Deadlines

	<b>Winter 2021</b>
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Jan. 25
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Feb. 8
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	March 12
<b>Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)</b>	<b>March 13 – April 12</b>