

Economics 291

Undergraduate Learning Assistant (ULA) Seminar

Spring 2020

Instructors:	Michelle Sheran-Andrews (sheran@unc.edu) and Andrew Hanson (ashanson@live.unc.edu)
Credits:	<i>1st semester in the program (with ULA Seminar):</i> 3 credits, not to fulfill ECON degree requirements <i>2nd through 4th semester in the program (without ULA Seminar):</i> 1 credit, not to fulfill ECON degree requirements
Meeting Times:	<i>ULA Practicum:</i> As specified by supervising faculty member, 8-12 hours per week <i>ULA Seminar</i> 4:40-5:40 pm on Wednesdays for 10 weeks in Gardner 308.
Website:	http://sakai.unc.edu
Prerequisites:	The Undergraduate Learning Seminar is by invitation only. Each Faculty member can recruit ULAs in any method they deem appropriate. All ULAs should fulfill the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economics major, at least 9 in-major credit hours• Sophomore standing or above• At least a 3.5 overall GPA• At least a 3.5 in-major GPA• If possible, received credit for class for which they will be a ULA (preferably with that professor) and received at least a B+• Instructor-specific requirements to be defined for each class• Permission of the Instructor for which they will be a ULA
Textbook:	Ambrose, Susan, et. al. <i>How Learning Works, 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching</i> , Jossey-Bass. (This is available in electronic form from the UNC Library.)

Course Description

Studies have shown that courses which utilize ULAs have improved quality of instruction, sensitivity to student concerns, and overall student contact. In addition, ULAs gain an improved knowledge of the subject matter, heightened communication skills, and a sense of membership in the academic community.¹ The aims of ECON 291 are to give students: 1) experience in facilitating undergraduate education in economics; 2) a deeper understanding of underlying economic principles; 3) exposure to pedagogical theory and best practices; and 4) participation in a vibrant economics learning community.

¹ Fernald, Chiseri, Lawson, Scroggs, & Riddell, 1975; Hogan & Norcross, 2012; Hogan et al., 2007; Komarraju, 2008; McKeegan, 1998; Komarraju, 2008; Rives and Jabker 1976

Course Structure

1. **ULA Practicum** – With faculty guidance, undergraduate students will serve as Undergraduate Learning Assistants. Responsibilities will be focused on enhancing the learning experience in each course and promoting interaction and collaboration among students (with no grading responsibilities). Each faculty will submit a list of specific responsibilities which can include, among others, facilitating group learning exercises in large lectures, holding supplemental help sessions, providing peer tutoring, and preparing supplemental course content.
2. **ULA Seminar** – Students will attend a weekly seminar to receive pedagogical training designed specifically for the ULA program. Students will explore learning styles, pedagogical best practices, study skills and metacognition through weekly readings, class discussion and homework assignments.

Grading

For ULAs who have already completed the seminar, 100% of their grade comes from the ULA Practicum. For ULAs in their first semester of the program, $50\% + \epsilon$ of their grade will be determined by their performance in the ULA Practicum and $50\% - \epsilon$ of their grade will be determined by their performance in the ULA Seminar.

ULA Practicum:

Each instructor utilizing ULAs will be responsible for creating a grading rubric according to the tasks each ULA must perform. At a minimum, the rubrics must contain guidelines for satisfactory performance. Students will be assessed by their supervising instructor according to the rubric. Instructors will provide students with a midsemester report by fall break.

ULA Seminar:

Students will be assessed based on weekly homework assignments, seminar participation, and an end-of-semester reflective essay. The seminar grade will be calculated as the weighted average of these three components.

- Class participation: 30%
- Assignments: 50%
- Reflective essay: 20%

Class Participation: This seminar is based on collaborative discourse. As such, being prepared to participate in discussions is a course requirement. You are more than welcome to have a different interpretation or opinion than a classmate or me; just be sure to share your perspective in a productive and supportive manner. If you're reluctant to speak up, please talk to me and we'll figure out ways for you to participate.

Class participation will be assessed in two ways. First, Andrew and I will give each student a participation score for each seminar based on the following rubric.

Score	Description
5	Comes to class prepared; contributes readily to class discussion without dominating it; makes thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups.
4	Comes to class prepared and makes thoughtful comments when called upon; contributes occasionally without prompting; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups. A 4 score may also be appropriate to an active participant whose contributions are less developed or cogent than those of a 5 but still advance the conversation.
3	Comes to class prepared but does not voluntarily contribute to discussions and gives only minimal answers when called upon. Does show interest in the discussion, listens attentively, and takes notes. The instructor may choose to give such students a 4 if they participate fully in small group discussions, contribute in other ways, or make progress in overcoming shyness as the course progresses.
2	Participates in discussion but in a problematic way. Talks too much, makes rambling or tangential contributions, and/or continually interrupts the instructor with digressive questions; bluffs their way when unprepared or otherwise dominates discussions, does not acknowledge cues of annoyance from instructor or students.
1	Often seems on the margins of the class and may have a negative effect on the participation of others. Doesn't participate because they haven't read the material or done the homework. May be disruptive, radiate negative energy via hostile or bored body language, or be overly rude.
0	Absent

Additionally, each student will keep a participation log of their contributions to class discussions or small group work. The template for this participation log is posted on Sakai under *Resources*. Participation logs must be submitted via Sakai within 24 hours after each seminar. Participation scores may be modified based on the quality of self-reflection demonstrated in your log. Specifically, you can lose 0.5 point for a log that shows shallow reflection. Failure to submit a log within 24 hours will result in a 2-point penalty.

Assignments: There will be 8 homework assignments. Each assignment is due at the start of class on its due date. I will drop your lowest score before calculating your assignment average. Each assignment will be assessed based on the following rubric.

Score	Description
0	No assignment submitted.
1	Submission is extremely trivial
2	Performance represents an inadequate level of attainment for a student at this stage of development.
3	Performance represents an adequate level of attainment for a student at this stage of development.
4	Performance represents a high level of attainment for a student at this stage of development.
5	Performance represents the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at this stage of development.

Reflective Essay: You will write a 5-6 page paper in which you reflect on the experience of being a ULA. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage and foster deep reflection on your experiences as a ULA. To foster this reflection throughout the semester, each week I will provide a list of reflection questions. I strongly recommend taking time each week to write down your answers to these questions; think of it as journaling.

Reflective essays are due by 5:00pm on April 15. Please submit a hard copy of your essay to me (stapled) directly or slide your essay under my office door in Gardner 200d. Reflective essays will be graded according to the following rubric.

Score	Description
0	No assignment submitted.
2	Your submission demonstrates shallow self-reflection. Alternatively, your submission has a weak logical structure, or has numerous grammatical/spelling mistakes.
3	Your submission demonstrates some self-reflection, but could be deeper. Additionally, your submission does not follow a clear logical structure, or has grammatical/spelling mistakes.
4	Your submission demonstrates some self-reflection but could be deeper. Alternatively, your submission does not follow a clear logical structure, or has grammatical/spelling mistakes.
5	Your submission demonstrates deep self-reflection. Your submission is logically structured and has no grammatical/spelling mistakes.

Schedule

1. Introduction (January 15)	
Topics:	Introductions FERPA University/Administrative Policies Expectations Power Dynamics
Required Readings:	None
Assignment:	None
2. Questioning for Learning (January 22)	
Topics:	Bloom's Taxonomy Asking Effective Questions
Required Readings:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lasley, T. (2010). Bloom's taxonomy. In T. Hunt, J. Carper, T. Lasley, & C. Raisch (Eds.), <i>Encyclopedia of educational reform and dissent</i>. (pp. 107-110). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. 2. McComas, William F. and Abraham, Linda; <i>Asking More Effective Questions</i>, http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/Asking_Better_Questions.pdf
Assignment:	Assignment #1 (due January 29)
3. Heterogeneous Learners (January 29)	
Topics:	Learning Styles Emotions and the Learning Climate
Required Readings:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://1ww.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles.html 2. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/metalearning.html 3. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/vakt.html 4. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/vak.html 5. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/kolb.html 6. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/honey_mumford.html 7. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/learn_style_survey.html 8. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/jung.html 9. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/gardner.html 10. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/perspective.html 11. Chapter 6: Why do Student Development and Course Climate Matter for Student Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #2 (due February 5)

4. Student Centered Learning (February 5)

Topics:	Student Centered Learning
Required Readings:	1. <i>The Case and Context for Learner-Centered Pedagogy</i> by Joe Cuseo 2. <i>Cooperative Learning Group Activities for College Courses – A Guide for Instructors</i> by Alice Macpherson
Assignment:	Assignment #3 (due February 12)

5. Organizing to Learn (February 12)

Topics:	Knowledge Organization
Required Readings:	1. Chapter 2: How Does the Way Student Organize Knowledge Affect Their Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss 2. Appendix B: What Are Concept Maps and How Can We Use Them? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #4 (due February 19)

6. Motivation to Learn (February 19)

Topics:	Motivational Factors
Required Readings:	Chapter 3: What Factors Motivate Students To Learn? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #5 (due February 26)

7. Prior Knowledge and Learning (February 26)

Topics:	Prior Knowledge
Required Readings:	Chapter 1: How Does Students' Prior Knowledge Affect Their Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #6 (due March 4)

8. Learning Mastery (March 4)

Topics:	Learning Mastery
Required Readings:	Chapter 4: How Do Students Develop Mastery? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #7 (due March 18)

9. Self-Directed Learning (March 18)

Topics:	Knowledge Organization
Required Readings:	Chapter 7: How Do Students Become Self-Directed Learners? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	Assignment #8 (due March 25)

10. Practice and Feedback (March 25)

Topics:	Motivational Factors
Required Readings:	Chapter 5: What Kinds of Practice and Feedback Enhance Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Boss
Assignment:	None

Reflective Essay: Due by 5pm on Wednesday, April 15.