

Economics 291
Undergraduate Learning Assistant (ULA) Seminar
Fall 2022

Instructors:	Michelle Sheran-Andrews (sheran@unc.edu) Megan McCoy (memccoy@live.unc.edu)
Credits:	<i>1st semester in the program (with ULA Seminar):</i> 3 credits, not to fulfill ECON degree requirements <i>Subsequent semester(s) 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 <i>ULA Seminar</i> 4:40-5:40pm on Wednesdays in Gardner 308 according to the schedule on page 4 of this syllabus.
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.

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. The objectives 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.

Course Structure

1. **ULA Practicum** – With faculty guidance, students will serve as Undergraduate Learning Assistants. Responsibilities will focus 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 and videos, class discussions, and homework assignments.

ULA Seminar Required Resources

1. **Textbook:** Ambrose, Susan, et. al. *How Learning Works, 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*, Jossey-Bass. This is available in electronic form from the UNC Library.
2. **Gradescope:** You will submit your graded work to Gradescope (<https://www.gradescope.com/>). We will register you for Gradescope using your official UNC email address listed on Connect Carolina.

Grading

For returning ULAs who have already completed the seminar, 100% of your grade comes from the ULA Practicum as determined by your supervising professor. For ULAs in their first semester of the program, 50% + ϵ of your grade will be determined by your supervising professor based on your performance in the ULA Practicum, and 50% - ϵ of your grade will be determined by the seminar instructors based on your 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. You will be assessed by your supervising instructor according to this rubric. You should expect a midsemester progress report from your supervising instructor by October 3rd.

ULA Seminar:

Students will be assessed based on seminar participation, a supplemental resource portfolio, and a reflective journal. More information about each component and the grading scheme is provided below.

1. **Seminar Participation:** The 291 seminar is based on collaborative discourse. As such, being prepared to participate in class 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. Moreover, seminar attendance is mandatory! You may only miss a class if you have a university approved absence communicated to me in advance by email at sheran@unc.edu. In such an occurrence, we will work out a plan for you to make up the missed class. Because it negatively affects participation and class climate, **all laptop, tablet, and cell phone usage is prohibited during class** unless you are using your device to support class activities or discussions.

Seminar participation will be graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass, you must

- Attend the 60-minute seminar.
- Actively engage in class discussions and participate actively in small groups.
- Show interest in and respect for others' views.

- 2. Supplemental Resource Portfolio:** The objective of this assignment is to create a portfolio of supplemental resources designed to improve student learning and facilitate undergraduate education in economics. Each week you will be asked to create a supplemental resource for students in your practicum course related to that week's seminar topic. At the end of the semester, you will compile all these resources into a portfolio that you will then share with your practicum supervising instructor.

Each assignment will be graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass, you must

- submit your assignment on time.
- follow the assignment's instructions.
- demonstrate a high level of attainment for a student at this stage of development.

- 3. Seminar Reflective Journal:** The objective of this assignment is to promote metacognition and encourage reflection on seminar readings, videos, and class discussions as well as your practicum work as a ULA. Your journal should be a space where you summarize what you have read/seen/heard, record noteworthy discoveries, make connections, write down thoughtful questions and observations, and reflect on class discussions. Journal entries may vary in length but regularly go on for enough time to adequately accommodate extended thought and respond to the following prompts. Each week you will submit one pre-reflection journal entry and one post-reflection journal entry.

Pre-reflection Journal Entry Prompts

1. What stands out to me from this reading/video?
2. How does this connect with what I already know?
3. Why is this idea important to me as a ULA?
4. Why is this idea important to me as a student?
5. What follow-up questions do I have?

Post-reflection Journal Entry Prompts

1. What insights did I gain from the class discussion?
2. What answers did I get to my follow-up questions?
3. Did the class discussion change my thinking at all?
4. Has what you learned about this topic affected your ULA practicum work?
5. Has what you learned about this topic changed your perspective as a student?

Each journal entry will be graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass, you must

- submit your entry on time.
- provide clear evidence that you have read/watched all assigned readings/videos.
- respond to at least 4/5 prompts.
- demonstrate deep reflection and extended thought.

Seminar Grading Scheme

You will start the semester with three tokens. A token may be cashed in to redo any portfolio assignment or journal entry.

Seminar Grade	Requirements
A	Seminar Participation: Pass 10/10 Pass all portfolio assignments and all journal entries.
A-	Seminar Participation: Pass 9/10 Fail to pass 1 portfolio assignment or journal entry.
B+	Seminar Participation: Pass 9/10 Fail to pass 2 portfolio assignments or journal entries.
B	Seminar Participation: Pass 8/10 Fail to pass 3 portfolio assignments or journal entries.
B-	Seminar Participation: Pass 8/10 Fail to pass 4 portfolio assignment or journal entries.
C	Seminar Participation: Pass 7/10 Fail to pass 5 portfolio assignments or journal entries.
D	Seminar Participation: Pass 6/10 Fail to pass 6 portfolio assignments or journal entries.
F	Seminar Participation: Pass 5/10 Fail to pass more than 6 portfolio assignments or journal entries.

Seminar Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment Due Dates
August 17	Introduction to the ULA Program	All assignments are due by 4:30pm via Gradescope.
August 24	Questioning for Learning	Pre-reflection journal entry due
August 31	Heterogenous Learners	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #1 due
September 7	BREAK	
September 14	Prior Knowledge and Learning	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #2 due
September 21	Motivation to Learn	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #3 due
September 28	BREAK	
October 5	Organizing to Learn	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #4 due
October 12	Learning Mastery	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #5 due
October 19	BREAK	
October 26	Deliberate Practice	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #6 due
November 2	Self-directed Learning	Post-reflection journal entry due Pre-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #7 due
November 9	Wrap-up and Reflections	Post-reflection journal entry due Portfolio Assignment #8 due

Honor Code

All students are expected to follow the guidelines of the UNC honor code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. In addition, it is an honor code violation to answer Polls outside of class. If you are unsure about which actions violate that honor code, please ask me or consult honor.unc.edu.

Changes to syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, including assignment and exam dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Accessibility Resources & Service (ARS)

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Title IX Resources

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne Allison – Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvs@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.