

Economics 291
Undergraduate Learning Assistant (ULA) Seminar
Spring 2024

Instructors:	Michelle Sheran-Andrews (sheran@unc.edu) Olivia Finley (ofinley@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 (only for first-time ULAs)</i> 3:35-4:35pm on Wednesdays in Gardner 106 according to the schedule on page 6 of this syllabus.
Website:	https://edtech.unc.edu/service/canvas/
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.
3. **Perusall:** We will use [Perusall](#), a FREE online annotation tool, to help you experience reading/watching/listening as an engaging, social, and collective experience rather than a traditionally solitary one.

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.

ULA Seminar:

Students will be assessed based on preparation, attendance, participation, and a supplemental resource portfolio. More information about each component and the grading scheme is provided on the following pages.

Seminar Graded Components

- 1. Seminar Preparation:** The objective of this assignment is to incentive the reading/watching of assigned materials and promote metacognition, reflection, and communication before we meet to discuss as a group. Due via Perusall by end of day on the Tuesday before class.
- 2. Seminar Attendance:** Seminar attendance is mandatory! You may only miss a class if you have a University Approved Absence (or similar reasonable and unavoidable circumstance) 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. Moreover, you are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class. If you are late more than once, I reserve the right to count you as absent.
- 3. Seminar Participation:** This seminar is based on collaborative discourse. As such, participating in class-wide and small group discussions is a course requirement. If you're reluctant to speak up, please meet with me and we'll figure out ways for you to participate. Your class participation will be assessed both by you and your instructors based on the rubric below.

Score	Description
5	Makes thoughtful contributions throughout class that advance conversation; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups; does not use electronic devices unless for class-related activities.
4	Occasionally makes thoughtful comments during class that advance conversation; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups; does not use electronic devices unless for class-related activities.
3	Does not voluntarily contribute to discussions and gives only minimal answers when called upon; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups; does not use electronic devices unless for class-related activities.
2	Participates in discussion but in a problematic way. For example, talks too much; makes rambling or tangential contributions; continually interrupts others; bluffs when unprepared; dominates discussions; uses electronic devices for activities unrelated to class.
1	Doesn't participate at all in discussions or small groups. May be disruptive, radiate negative energy via hostile or bored body language, or be overly rude.
0	Absent

- 4. 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. You will select and complete 5 out of a total of 8 portfolio assignments. Each assignment's due date is listed on the schedule on page 6 of this syllabus. Portfolio assignments will be graded based on the 5-point rubric below. In addition, **you are required to compile all your resources into a portfolio and share it with your practicum supervising instructor by the last day of class (April 30).**

Score	Description
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Work displays exceptional understanding and insight into the subject matter.-Is virtually error-free and meticulously organized.-Demonstrates a strong commitment to engagement and effort.-Goes significantly beyond basic requirements, offering innovative, thorough, and thought-provoking content.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Work shows a clear understanding of the topic.-Contains few errors, if any, and is well-organized.-Demonstrates a higher level of engagement and effort.-Goes beyond basic requirements to provide insightful or creative elements.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Work demonstrates a basic understanding of the subject matter.-Contains minor errors or omissions, but overall meets requirements.-Shows engagement and effort to an acceptable extent.-Adequately fulfills basic requirements and expectations.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Work displays some understanding of the topic but is incomplete or lacks depth.-Contains noticeable errors or inconsistencies.-Demonstrates limited effort or engagement.-Partially meets basic requirements but lacks thoroughness.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Work shows minimal understanding or effort.-Contains significant errors or lacks key components.-Demonstrates a lack of engagement with the subject matter.-Falls short of meeting basic requirements.
0	No submission by due date.

Seminar Grading Scheme

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

Grade	Requirements
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 10/10 seminars.• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 4.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
A-	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 9/10 seminars. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 3.5.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
B+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 8/10 seminars. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 3.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 8/10 seminars. AND <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 3.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
B-	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 7/10 seminars. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 2.5.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 6/10 seminars. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 2.5.• Submits supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 5/10 seminars. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of at least 2. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fails to submit supplemental research portfolio to supervising instructor by April 30.
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attends 5/10 seminars. AND <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishes course with average “assignment” score of less than 2.

Seminar Schedule

Date	Topic	Portfolio Assignment #; Due Date
January 10	Introduction to the ULA Program	
January 17	Questioning for Learning	1; January 31
January 24	Heterogenous Learners	2; February 7
January 31	Prior Knowledge and Learning	3; February 14
February 7	Motivation to Learn	4; February 21
February 14	Organizing to Learn	5; February 28
February 21	Learning Mastery	6; March 6
February 28	Deliberate Practice	7; March 13
March 6	Self-directed Learning	8; March 20
March 13	BREAK	
March 20	Wrap-up and Reflections	

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 class 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 (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Learning Center

Want to get the most out of this course or others this semester? Visit UNC's Learning Center at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu> to make an appointment or register for an event. Their free, popular programs will help you optimize your academic performance. Try academic coaching, peer tutoring, STEM support, ADHD/LD services, workshops and study camps, or review tips and tools available on the website.

Writing Center

For free feedback on any course writing projects, check out UNC's Writing Center. Writing Center coaches can assist with any writing project, including multimedia projects and application essays, at any stage of the writing process. You don't even need a draft to come visit. To schedule a 45-minute appointment, review quick tips, or request written feedback online, visit <http://writingcenter.unc.edu>.