

Economics 291
Undergraduate Learning Assistant (ULA) Seminar
Fall 2021

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 Mondays in Gardner 308 for 10 sessions
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

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.

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.

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/>). I will register you for Gradescope using your official UNC email address listed on Connect Carolina.

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% + ϵ of their grade will be determined by their performance in the ULA Practicum and 50% - ϵ 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.

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%; and 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 attendance is mandatory! If you have a valid excuse for missing a class, please email me as soon as possible at sheran@unc.edu, and we'll work out a plan to make up the missed material.

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

Assignments: There will be 8 homework assignments. Each assignment will be submitted via Gradescope and is due by 4:30 pm. 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 via Gradescope by 4:30 pm on Monday, November 15. 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 (August 23)	
Topics:	Introductions FERPA University/Administrative Policies Expectations Power Dynamics
Required Readings:	None
Assignment:	None

2. Questioning for Learning (August 30)	
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 September 13)

3. Heterogeneous Learners (September 13)	
Topics:	Learning Styles Emotions and the Learning Climate
Required Readings:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles.html 2. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/vakt.html 3. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/vak.html 4. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/kolb.html 5. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/honey_mumford.html 6. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/learn_style_survey.html 7. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/jung.html 8. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/gardner.html 9. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/perspective.html 10. 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 September 20)

4. Student Centered Learning (September 20)

Topics:	Student Centered Learning
Required Readings:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>The Case and Context for Learner-Centered Pedagogy</i> by Joe Cuseo2. <i>Cooperative Learning Group Activities for College Courses – A Guide for Instructors</i> by Alice Macpherson (Read pages 1-17. Then skim through the rest of the document to gain a sense of the different types of cooperative learning exercises and find a few that pique your interest.)
Assignment:	Assignment #3 (due September 27)

5. Organizing to Learn (September 27)

Topics:	Knowledge Organization
Required Readings:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Chapter 2: How Does the Way Student Organize Knowledge Affect Their Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss2. 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 October 4)

6. Motivation to Learn (October 4)

Topics:	Motivational Factors
Required Readings:	<p>Chapter 3: What Factors Motivate Students To Learn? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss</p> <p>Very Well Minded (https://www.verywellmind.com/work-from-home-motivation-4802480)</p> <p>How to Actually Save Time When You're Working Remotely (https://hbr.org/2020/08/how-to-actually-save-time-when-youre-working-remotely)</p>
Assignment:	Assignment #5 (due October 11)

7. Prior Knowledge and Learning (October 11)

Topics:	Prior Knowledge
Required Readings:	<p>Chapter 1: How Does Students' Prior Knowledge Affect Their Learning? Ambrose, et. al. <i>How Learning Works</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss</p>
Assignment:	Assignment #6 (due October 18)

8. Learning Mastery (*October 18*)

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 October 25)

9. Self-Directed Learning (*October 25*)

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 November 1)

10. Practice and Feedback (*November 1*)

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 4:30pm on Monday, November 15

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