DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Economics 620: The Senior Project

The Senior Project is a significant piece of analysis that provides students with the experience of doing independent research under the guidance of a faculty advisor. The primary goal of Economics 620 is to provide an opportunity for the intensive analysis of an economic issue. Elements of a successful Senior Project are a clear research question, demonstrated knowledge of the historical and institutional setting, an appropriate theory, and the application of that theory through careful use of evidence.

The Economics Seminar (Economics 570-589) should be taken in the fall semester of the senior year followed by Economics 620 in the spring. One goal of the Economics Seminar is to allow the student to do background research, develop a research question, and find evidence. The student should also write a preliminary chapter of the Senior Project during the Economics Seminar. The expectation is that the instructor of the Economics Seminar will be the first reader on the Senior Project. Towards the end of the fall semester, students fill out a short proposal form, providing a preliminary title, a brief description (100 words maximum), and requests for first and second readers. If the requested first reader is not the instructor of the student’s Economics Seminar, the student must provide justification for switching advisors. The department assigns readers before the beginning of the second semester, and the student must schedule a proposal meeting with both readers during the first two weeks of the second semester. Students should consult their first readers concerning the agenda for the proposal meeting and distribute any documents to be discussed at that meeting at least one week prior to the meeting. The proposal defense lasts approximately twenty minutes.

Economics 620 is devoted to the full development of the research question, the analysis and application of economic theory, writing, revision, and the oral defense. These tasks should be done under the close supervision of the first reader. A schedule for the second semester will be provided on the Department of Economics website: http://sites.allegheny.edu/econ/senior-projects/ The final oral examination occurs towards the end of the second semester and lasts approximately one hour. If the project advisors believe that the project has no chance of receiving a passing grade, the final oral will be cancelled. During the first five minutes of the final oral, the student delivers a prepared overview of the research question and the major findings of the Senior Project. At the conclusion of the final oral, the student is informed whether a passing grade will be received. The final grade is based on the grading criteria provided in Appendix A.

Students completing one Senior Project for a double major must register with an add card that lists both majors. Double majors are bound by the requirements of the department listed first on their Senior Project registration.

Help in formulating a research agenda and doing economic research can be found in Steve Greenlaw’s Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research. Other guides for doing research in Economics can be found in a variety places online, such as:
GENERAL STYLE GUIDELINES

Guidelines for the presentation of the Senior Project can be found in the latest edition of Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* or in Diane Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference*. These guidelines are not a complete directory of what writers should do but answer some frequently asked questions. Failure to meet the formatting guidelines may result in a failing grade or a required rewrite before the final defense. Frequent grammatical and spelling mistakes may result in the final grade being reduced by up to two full letter grades.

A. COVER PAGE AND TITLE PAGE

Students are encouraged to add photographs, illustrations, or other appropriate images to their Senior Project cover in order to enhance its visual appeal. The format that the title page must follow is provided on the Department of Economics website: [http://sites.allegheny.edu/econ/senior-projects/](http://sites.allegheny.edu/econ/senior-projects/).

B. THE ORDER

Arrange the various parts of your paper in the following sequence:

- Cover Page
- Frontispiece, such as an epigraph (if any)
- Title Page
- Acknowledgements or dedication (if any)
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Main Body
- Appendixes* (if any)
- Bibliography
- About the Author

*Appendixes may be placed immediately after the chapter for which they specifically provide additional information. If the material in the appendix is of a more general nature, the preferred placement is at the end of the Project, before the Bibliography.

C. ABSTRACT

The abstract is roughly 200 words long and summarizes the thesis and contents of the Project. It should contain a statement of the thesis, procedures and methods, results, and the conclusions. For examples of abstracts, see any article in the *American Economic Review*.

D. NUMBERING OF PAGES

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1 A subset of the rules is given at: [http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c09_o.html](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c09_o.html).
Each page is numbered. However, the number is not shown on the Title Page. All pages prior to the introduction are numbered using small Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, v, etc.). The Title Page counts as page i, unless there is a frontispiece. Number the pages of the body of the work with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) starting with the Introduction and continuing consecutively to the end of the About the Author page. Page numbers are placed on the upper right hand corner of the page.

E. CHAPTER SECTIONING AND SPACING OF MATERIAL

Each chapter should begin with the chapter number and the title of the chapter. Further subdivide the chapter into Sections and Subsections according to the logic of the material presented. The introductory section of the chapter needs no heading or number; subsequent section headings should be given Roman numerals; subsections should be lettered A, B, etc.

F. TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables and figures must be numbered consecutively and the numbering must correspond to the numbering given in the Table of Contents. Each chapter should begin the numbering anew. For example, Table 2.1 would be the first table in Chapter 2, Table 3.1 would be the first table in Chapter 3, and so on. Tables and Figures must be titled clearly. The source and other general notes referring to the table are given directly below the table. On this and other matters consult Turabian or Hacker. A table or figure may be scanned from other sources and pasted in its proper place in the paper only with proper documentation. Such tables and figures must be renumbered to conform to your number sequence. Tables and figures should be incorporated into the main text unless they are more than a page long, in which case they should be given as an appendix.

G. FORMAT

Text should be typed on one side of the page only. Double-space all material including abstracts, text, references, footnotes, and table headings. One-inch margins on both sides are required.

H. FOOTNOTES

Footnotes should be at the bottom of the page, numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals, and double-spaced.

I. MATHEMATICAL EQUATIONS

Equations should be typed on separate lines and numbered consecutively at the left margin, using Arabic numerals in parentheses.

J. SYMBOLIC NOTATION

When used, notation should be listed, summarized, and briefly identified in a separate table.

K. USE OF MATHEMATICAL APPENDIX
Authors are encouraged to use an appendix for technical proofs and derivations that can be separated from the main text. The appendix should follow the text and precede the references.

L. QUOTATIONS

Quotations must correspond exactly with the original in wording, spelling, and punctuation. Page numbers must be given. Changes must be indicated: Use brackets [ ] to identify insertions; use ellipses (...) to show omissions. Indicate if emphasis (e.g. adding italics) has been added. Only quotations of over 50 words should be separated from the text. These quotations should also be double-spaced and indented at the beginning margin.

M. SPELLING

The authority for spelling, capitalization, and hyphenation of words is Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

N. REFERENCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN THE TEXT

The first reference to an individual should include the first name (or initials, if the first name is not used). Subsequent references should be by last name only. Do not refer to individuals as Mister, Doctor, Professor, etc.

O. REFERENCE TO ORGANIZATIONS OR GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

The first reference should give the name in full, followed by abbreviation in parentheses--subsequent references should give abbreviation only. For example: first usage, Social Science Research Council (SSRC); second usage, SSRC.

P. CITATIONS AND THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Department of Economics requires that students use the American Psychological Association (APA) system to cite sources. See Hacker for a description of this method.

Q. PLAGIARISM

See The Compass for a description of Allegheny’s Honor Code and a definition of plagiarism.

R. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Years from now, you and your family will enjoy seeing just who you are and where you planned to go at this stage of your life. Faculty will like it too, as we reflect back fondly on our years spent working together. Insert a picture of yourself along with a brief description of your career at Allegheny and your plans upon graduating.
1. Is the statement of the underlying question or issue to be addressed presented clearly in the Abstract, Introduction, Body, and Conclusion of the paper?

2. Does the paper’s Introduction provide a clear overview of the material covered and the approach taken in the work?

3. Is the economic theory and methodology presented in the paper appropriate given the underlying problem, and is it thoroughly explained?

4. Does the empirical evidence connect with and flow smoothly from the theoretical model? Does it make use of appropriate statistical or other techniques in evaluating the research questions under consideration?

5. Are the paper’s conclusions reasonably drawn and consistent with statements and findings in previous sections of the paper?

6. Is the overall quality of writing, including grammar, spelling, and word choice sound? Is the overall presentation of material clear and well organized?

7. Does the paper’s content and bibliography provide adequate citation and review of previously published materials relevant to the study, including the incorporation of important findings by economists who have examined issues pertaining to the underlying problem?

8. Is material that should be cited – paraphrase and quotation – properly cited? Is the citation technique used consistent with the APA citation method?

9. In the oral examination, was the opening statement clear? Was a solid understanding of the underlying problem, relevant theory, and empirical measurement apparent?

10. Were all submission deadlines followed?