Office Hours: Mondays after class  
Email:  jhgonzal@ucsc.edu  
Office Location: E2 409  
Dr. Julie Gonzalez  
Website: Piazza.com/Canvas  
Phone: 459-4436

Course Description

Economics students are expected to learn to effectively communicate economic theory and evidence relating to economic policy to audiences that do not have economics degrees. The skills to be learned are both written and oral communication. Students learn to present convincing policy arguments in position papers, executive summaries, and in oral presentation that may include charts and other means of communication. Students must have satisfied the Entry-Level Writing and Composition requirement, as well as either 100A, 100M, 100B, 100N, or 113, before enrolling.

Students of economics must satisfy the major’s upper-division Disciplinary Communication (DC) requirement. Economics 197 satisfies this requirement for Economics majors. It is intended to familiarize you with the demand and rewards of working and writing within the economic academic community.

Course Objectives

- Read, think, speak, and write with care and clarity
- Write a clear, concise, finished piece of work
- Prepare and deliver oral presentations effectively
- Support opinions with compelling data and visual aids

Course Texts and Reading

- Elements of Style by Strunk and White. If you type this title and author into google the first link will be to a pdf of the book. We will read and may take a brief quiz on this book exactly one week from the first day of class. I would recommend reading it within a few days of the quiz. The quiz is designed to simply make sure that the book has been read and does not involve very specific details. In other words, you do not need to take notes while you read.
• How to Win Every Argument: The Use and Abuse of Logic, Madsen Pirie. We may read this book after the above book and similarly take a quiz on its contents.

• Assigned Readings on Piazza.com. I have linked many articles found in The Guardian, The New York Times, The Atlantic Magazine, The Economist, The Financial Times, Business Insider, etc. These articles are meant to inform you on topics such as income inequality, the minimum wage, wealth inequality, trade agreements, budget deficits, taxes, etc. These are the topics you will be writing about. Many of these articles are examples of what you should be able to write as a graduate of Economics. We will use them as initial sources of more significant research that will form the basis of the largest writing and speaking assignment. I will specify a topical schedule and will let you know which articles are relevant. Most of them are titled in the link itself.

Course Requirements

• You will write 2 short papers that are 2-3 pages in length. These will be focused on the topics covered in lecture and in the articles posted to Piazza. You will bring rough drafts of these papers to read aloud to your groups at the end of each class. One of your group members will read you some of your own work as well.

• You will write one long paper that is between 12-15 pages in length. This paper will be an in-depth presentation and argument on one of the topics covered in class and in the linked articles. If you have a topic that you would like to write about that is not mentioned, please ask because as long as it relates to your work as a student of Economics, I will approve the topic. This research will be presented to the class during the last 2-3 weeks of the quarter in a 10-15-minute presentation with questions. I would recommend practicing with your group beforehand.

• We will take two “midterms” during the quarter. The purpose of these tests is to evaluate your ability to write, rewrite, and edit your own work over the course of 90+ minutes. We will take the exams in a computer lab without a network connection. You will be given a few questions to choose from. You will select one question, write a 2-page essay, and spend the time perfecting the essay. At the end of the exam period you will submit the essay to me.

Topical Schedule

The topics you should be able to write about as a graduate of Economics are vast. I will discuss and lecture on relevant theory pertaining to several topics that you have covered in some of your other courses. Subjects of public policy are an application of many of the things you should have already learned. We will spend this quarter writing about those topics. Effectively writing about such things as the minimum wage requires a basic review and understanding of the relevant theories you have already learned. Many of the linked articles on Piazza could have been written by someone with a degree in Economics. We are going to learn how to
perfect our writing on these subjects. As I mentioned previously, while the short papers will be somewhat specific, the long paper can be on a topic not covered as long as you provide a detailed description of how it relates specifically to the subject of economics. There are public policy areas not covered here. A few of the Piazza links cover subjects I will not address. These are included for your use if desired. Additionally, a few are about media bias, which I will briefly address in lecture. It is important for the sources of our information to be impeccable.

1. Proof of Markets and Market Failure
2. Optimization in Multiple Contexts
5. The Minimum wage/Income and wealth inequality/Labor theory of wages

Grade Calculations

• 15% of your grade will come from attendance and participation. You will be assigned to a small group and in this group, you will help each other perfect your writing. You will read your papers aloud to each other and write comments about your group member’s writing that they can use as feedback. For this reason, attendance is mandatory. I will allow you to make up for missing lecture by attending sessions at learning support services (see below). If you do not think you will be able to attend all lectures, please find another course. We will also be doing grammar exercises in groups during class time.

• 25% of your grade will come from the two combined midterms. Each of the two midterm essays will be worth 12.5% of your grade. Content as well as quality of the writing will be considered. The dates of these exams are to be determined pending lab reservation requests. The exam will give you a choice between several questions. The questions will be general policy questions concerning material covered in lecture.

• 25% of your grade will come from the sum of the two short essays. Each will be worth 12.5% of your grade. These may have specific topics or directions that will be given out in class and posted to piazza. I will give you more than four subject options as we move through the course. For example, if I give seven of these “assignments,” you need to choose two of them to write your short papers about. If you choose a topic for this short paper, you may use the same topic for the longer research paper discussed below. This will allow you to invest in a minimal amount of research before deciding if you want to commit to the topic further.

• 35% of your grade will come from the final paper (20%) and presentation of that paper (15%). The final 5-6 class sessions will be designated for the individual presentations.
• Learning Support Services offers pre-scheduled, one-hour, one-on-one writing tutoring during the summer. You MUST schedule AT LEAST ONE of these sessions with a writing tutor. They can email me confirmation that this has been completed. This will count toward your participation grade. If you miss a lecture, you can recover the points by attending three of these sessions. Follow this link to schedule: https://lss.ucsc.edu/programs/writing-support/sign-up-for-writingtutoring.html

General Paper and Formatting Guidelines

• Please use 12-point font, double-space, and one-inch margins. Do not get fancy with the font you use. Your work should look professional.
• Documents must be printed and turned in. The quality of the paper or print does not matter. If I would like an electronic copy of your paper, I will let you know. If you turn in an electronic version, please use Microsoft Word, as it has features that allows me to comment within the document. If you do not have Microsoft Word, the computer labs on campus do, or you can try OPEN OFFICE, an open source business/productivity program that allows you to read and create WORD-compatible documents.

• When an assignment asks for a certain number of pages, this does not include the reference pages or endnote pages. If the assignment requires these, as the final paper will, these pages are in addition to the page number requested. Also, do not try to format your paper in strange ways in order to accomplish the required length. In other words, do not choose a large font, right justify, etc.

• You will lose points if your assignments are late. Generally, I will accept papers on the day that they are due, before 5 p.m.

• You will submit your papers and assignments online using Canvas.

Research/Policy Paper and Presentation Instructions

• There is a rubric posted on Piazza for both the long paper as well as for your presentation.

• Please use either PowerPoint or Prezi during your presentation. You are welcome to paste in media clips but please verify that they work before your presentation. The presentation with questions should be between 10 and 15 minutes.

• Plan for questions as well. You can even suggest questions that people often have on the topic you have chosen and cover those first in order to get the room warmed up.

• The paper is the basis for your presentation. The paper represents 20% of your course grade, while the presentation is 15%. As we move through the course and we discuss the topics listed here, you will also be reading supplemental articles on the topics covered. Generally, the
lecture will be theoretical, with reference to the relevant articles and blog posts. As you read these articles, choose a topic that interests you. You will have the opportunity to write several other small papers on these topics, and if a particular topic stands out to you, consider using it for your longer research paper.

- While the shorter papers require reading the Piazza links and writing opinion pieces, the longer paper requires that you do your own research beyond the links already available. Many of these posts actually reference or are summaries of economic research. You are required to find empirical papers on your subject and use them to write your policy paper.

- You need at least 4 sources for this paper. At least three of them need to be empirical papers on the subject. The other sources can be from places like the New York Times, etc., or wherever you got your idea in the first place. A good source for these papers would be to look at the Journal of Economic Perspectives as it tends to cover many different subjects.

- You are required to write a 12-15-page research/position paper in which you must take and defend an economic policy position. You may make an economic argument in favor or opposed to one or another policy. You may also opt to illuminate an area of study relevant to the field of economics. In either case, you must take and defend a position with clear evidence and sound argument. Use some of the tips presented in the two books we will be reading.

- As with all of your writing, it is fine to ask others to think with you, or to read and comment on your work. In fact, this is highly recommended. However, when it comes time to put your thoughts on paper, your work must be your own, with appropriate citation of source materials. This is an opportunity to practice using the skills you will need later in employment, graduate school, and life in general.

- On recommendation from the McCloskey book we will employ is reading your writing aloud. We will do this for our smaller papers and hopefully learn what to look for so that when you write your longer paper, you apply what you have learned about yourself and your writing to your longer paper.

Other Information

Please see the Navigator for information concerning academic integrity. Do not copy someone else’s writing unless it is a direct quote, in which case it should be quoted and given proper citation. Do not copy other students writing either, for obvious reasons. Academic integrity will be taken very seriously in this course.

We have a Teaching Assistant assigned to this course. His name is Harrison Shieh and he will be available to help with your writing. I would recommend meeting with him at least once as he is helping with the grading of the papers. His email is hashieh@ucsc.edu.
Please take an online personality test at the following link:

Please email me the results ASAP. The results need only be an email with the four-letter personality type derived from the test. The purpose of this exercise is to form balanced groups of individuals. Wherever you are employed, as well as most other life contexts, you will find many different types of people. Input from individuals with different personalities from your own will help broaden your experience and allow you to evaluate your own work more effectively, taking others perceptions into account.

**Dates**
Rough Draft paper #1 due Wednesday, July 31\textsuperscript{st}
Final paper #1 dues Monday, August 5\textsuperscript{th}
Rough Draft paper #2 due Wednesday, August 7\textsuperscript{th}
Final paper #2 due Monday, July 12\textsuperscript{th}
Midterm #1 Monday, August 19\textsuperscript{th}
Midterm (Final) #2 Wednesday, August 28\textsuperscript{th}
Presentation Dates: July 12\textsuperscript{th}, July 14\textsuperscript{th}, August 21\textsuperscript{st} and August 26\textsuperscript{th}. 