

Course Proposal Summary

Ongoing proposal information

10/14/24: Course approved by CCC. JKG
5/22/24 - New course proposal. Approved by APEC undergrad committee on 4/23 and full faculty on 5/10. Comments from the undergraduate committee were incorporated before the APEC faculty vote. Proposed to be writing intensive.

Curriculum contact name	Curriculum contact email address
Frances Homans	fhomans@umn.edu

Basic Course Information

Effective term	PeopleSoft course ID	Effective date
Fall 2025	-	Sep 2, 2025

Active/inactive status	Appear in course catalog?
Active	Yes

Institution	Campus
UMNTC	Twin Cities

College	Career
TCOA - College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences	Undergraduate

Department
Applied Economics (11033)

Course subject code	Course number
APEC	4221W

Course name
Applied Economics Capstone

Course name for transcript
Applied Economics Capstone

Course description

This course is a capstone course for the Applied Economics major, where students will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of economics in an independent economic research project. Students will demonstrate the skills they have acquired through an analysis of a topic of their own choosing. Students will be encouraged to select a topic within the Applied Economics track they have chosen.

This structured course is designed to support students in the completion of an independent research project. Students will identify topics of personal interest, narrow these topics to identify and ask worthwhile questions, connect these to the literature, formulate hypotheses around their research questions, gather and process data accordingly, effectively employ analytical tools, interpret findings, and present their work both in writing and orally.

Course Enrollment and Student Planning

Grading basis

A-F - A-F Grade Basis

Typically offered term(s)

Every Fall

Typical meeting pattern

150 min per week (likely two 75-minute meetings per week)

Require consent to enroll

No Special Consent Required

Require consent to drop

No Special Consent Required

Assign existing prerequisite or corequisite

undefined - undefined

Do you need to define a new prerequisite or corequisite?

Yes

Define new prerequisite or corequisite

APEC 3002 or APEC 3003 or concurrent enrollment in APEC 3002 or APEC 3003 or instructor consent

Can students enroll in more than one section of this course in the same term?

No

Prerequisites and Corequisites (Crookston only)

Equivalencies and Cross-listings

Is this course equivalent to any other courses?

No

Is this course cross-listed with any other courses?

No

Credits, Instructional Time, and Repeats

Credits

Minimum credits

3

Maximum credits

3

Instructional time (hours)

Minimum

instructional time

3

Academic progress units

Academic progress units

3

Financial aid units

Financial aid units

3

Is this course repeatable?

No

What is the maximum number of times a student could earn credit for taking this course?

1

What is the maximum number of credits a student can earn from this course?

3

Course Characteristics

Course attributes

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Is this a topics course? No	Will this course ever be offered online or primarily online? No
Is any portion of this course taught outside of the United States? No	Is this an honors course? No
Is this a freshman seminar? No	If this course uses community-engaged learning (CEL) instructional strategies, indicate up to 5 CEL values. -

CIP code
45.0602

HEGIS code
45.0602

Components

Code DIS	Name Discussion
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Primary and Graded Component Details

Primary component Discussion	Graded component Discussion
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Student Learning Outcomes (Undergraduate Crookston, Duluth, and Twin Cities only)

How will this outcome be addressed in the course? In this course, students will apply their knowledge of economics in an independent economic research project. An important first step is to identify a research question amenable to economic analysis
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Learning outcome

Problem Solving: Can identify, define, and solve problems

with data. We will spend the first several weeks generating and refining ideas, culminating in a research proposal due in the fourth week.

How will the instructor assess the students' learning related to this outcome?

Students will lay out their research question in a research proposal. As described in the syllabus the proposal should describe the issue students will tackle. The proposal should include: (1) the specific research question; (2) an outline; (3) a preliminary list of references along with reasons for including each reference; and (4) the source of data for analyzing the question. The instructor will assess the proposal relative to these elements. The “solve” element will be assessed by evaluating the final research paper relative to the components of the project: literature review, contribution, introduction, methods, analysis, conclusion, and abstract.

How will this outcome be addressed in the course?

Two components of the project are particularly relevant here. First, students will select papers to be included in a literature review. These will be in the scholarly literature, and students will be asked to synthesize these papers for the purpose of identifying where their research fits. Second, students will need to find data for their project and will need to understand how the data were collected.

Learning outcome

Critical Thinking: Can locate and critically evaluate information

How will the instructor assess the students' learning related to this outcome?

Critical thinking will be assessed by evaluating the literature review section and data appendix.

How will this outcome be addressed in the course?

This course is proposed as a writing-intensive course. Students will communicate in writing, and their writing will be assessed for clarity and persuasiveness. It is also a discussion course, and class participation is expected to be constructive.

Learning outcome

Communication: Can communicate effectively

How will the instructor assess the students' learning related to this outcome?

Students will be expected to be prepared for class discussion and will be assessed accordingly.

Course Dependencies and Curricular Impacts

Course Proposal Details

Consultation with other units

CBS has no concerns.

-Laurie Parker, Ph.D. (she/her)

Professor, Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biophysics

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, College of Biological Sciences

CSOM has no concerns.

-Mary Benner

John and Nancy Lindahl Professor for Excellence in Business Education

Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship Department

Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program | Carlson School of Management

The College of Science and Engineering has no concerns.

-David A. Blank

Distinguished Taylor Professor

Department of Chemistry

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs

CDes has no concerns.

-Juanjuan Wu

CCAPS has no concerns.

-Michael E. Anderson, Ph.D.

Interim Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs | College of Continuing and Professional Studies | University of Minnesota |

The School of Public Health does not have any concerns about this course.

-Elizabeth V. Wattenberg, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Education and Student Engagement, School of Public Health

CLA has no concerns.

-Lee-Ann Kastman Breuch, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Writing Studies, University of Minnesota

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, College of Liberal Arts

Liberal and General Education

Are you proposing this course to meet a general or liberal education requirement?

Yes

Proposed Twin Cities Liberal Education Core	Proposed Twin Cities Liberal Education Designated Theme
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This course is approved as a Core, effective	This course is approved as a Designated Theme, effective
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Approved Twin Cities Liberal Education Requirement(s)

Are you proposing this course to meet the Writing Intensive requirement?

Yes

This course is approved as Writing Intensive	This course is approved as Writing Intensive, effective
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No

Criteria 1: Writing is comprehensively integrated into the course

This structured course is designed to support students in the completion of an independent research project. Besides the writing that culminates in their research project, students will write about writing, students will write about empirical research in the literature, and students will write about the research of other students in the class. There will also be informal “writing to learn” in-class assignments. See syllabus for more detail.

Minimum length requirements for selected assignments:

Research Proposal: 2 pages

Progress Report: 3-5 pages

First Draft: 10 pages (not including title page, figures, references)

Final Draft: 10 pages (not including title page, figures, references)

Students will be required to revise and resubmit the first draft after feedback from the instructor. Along with the final draft, students will submit an accompanying explanation of how they responded to the suggestions of the instructor and their peers. Other writing assignments will not have explicit length requirements; students will be asked to adequately address the assignments in writing.

Criteria 2: Writing is a significant part of the course work

The goal is for students to complete a research paper. The deadline for the first draft is in Week 10, and remaining weeks will be used for revision. The syllabus explicitly states that the minimum word count for the paper is 2,500 words: "The paper should be long enough to contain all the components of a research paper, but no fewer than 2,500 words."

See the syllabus for information about other writing assignments. These include a reflective paper on writing in economics, a detailed outline of an existing empirical research paper, peer response papers, and informal writing-to-learn assignments.

Criteria 3: Writing is a significant part of the course grade

None of the course grade depends on mastering content delivered in the class because this is a course on the writing process with no new content delivered. The course grade will depend on formal writing and on class participation, with some of the class participation grade coming from informal writing. Writing represents a significant percentage of the course grade. The graded writing components of the research paper total 55% of the grade, with additional writing constituting an additional 25%. This information is in the syllabus.

Criteria 4: Writing is learned through revision

Students will receive feedback from the instructor along the way, including on their initial proposal and on their progress report. Peer response will supplement instructor feedback. This feedback will be incorporated into the first draft. At this stage, the instructor will provide a substantial review. Students will be expected to revise their papers in accordance with this review and also provide a "response paper" detailing what they did to revise the paper. The syllabus reflects these steps.

Formally, students will revise their first draft. From the syllabus:

Sections include the literature review, contribution, introduction, methods and data, analysis, discussion, conclusion, and abstract. You should treat this as your final work and should have to make only minor changes to this to submit your final version of the paper. This draft will be returned to you with comments, questions, and suggestions for improvement.

Criteria 5: Writing within the discipline is explained and practiced in the course

The syllabus describes a variety of writing assignments along with writing instruction:

1. An assignment that asks students to reflect on their own writing after reading *Economical Writing: Thirty Five Rules for Clear and Persuasive Prose* by Dierdre McCloskey.
2. A detailed outline of an existing empirical research paper. The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize students with a standard type of writing in applied economics.
3. The class participation component includes short in-class low stakes informal writing. One of these assignments will involve idea generation and refinement activities in the first weeks of class using prompt chaining in AI. Refined ideas will contribute to the 2-page research proposal due in the fourth week.
4. Students will write frequent papers responding to their peers' work. In order to do this effectively, students will need to read closely and articulate what they've learned, both in content and in the way their peers have expressed their ideas.
5. The text *Doing Economics: A Guide to Understanding and Carrying Out Economic Research* will be used throughout the course. This book also emphasizes the importance of writing to learn: "when you write, you don't merely put down what you already know; rather, you end up knowing more." Chapter 5 focuses on writing as a product, naming the steps necessary to complete a finished paper: pre-writing, the first draft, revising, editing. With this book as a guide, students will be working through these steps in the class.

Criteria 6: Instructors should understand the practice of writing instruction

This course is the sole responsibility of a single regular faculty member.

Syllabus (All Rochester and Twin Cities Careers, Duluth 8xxx-Level)

Upload a syllabus from within the past 2 years

[APEC 4221 - 2025.docx](#)