

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**

**PhD Course Syllabus
2026-2027, Spring and Fall**

Course Code/Title: [ECON6054] Graduate Seminar in Economics

Course Description: This course is open to all 2nd year RPG students, primarily in the area of economics. It aims to facilitate students' specialization in certain research fields and broaden their horizons across different areas of economics. Other than their own research projects, students are expected to present classic papers as well as recent superstar job market papers in their chosen fields. At times, FBE faculty members and senior doctoral students will be invited to present their work and join the discussion. Presentation schedule will be arranged in the first meeting in each semester.

Course Objectives:

1. Help students transform from taking taught courses to independent research.
2. Enhance students' ability of critical reading and thinking.
3. Improve students' skills of presentation and communication across areas in economics.
4. Facilitate collaboration among doctoral students

Pre-requisite: Doctoral students who have passed qualification exams

Assessment: Coursework (presentation and discussion of others' papers, 50%) and exam (presentation of own research project, 50%)

Remarks: All PhD courses are non-credit-bearing and will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) On completion of this course, students should be able to:	Aligned PLOs*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Familiar with the fundamental principles of economics research	✓	✓		✓	✓
2. Familiar with frontier knowledge in students' chosen fields	✓		✓		✓
3. Able to use analytical tools to formulate and solve economic problems both theoretically and empirically	✓	✓	✓		✓
4. Able to lucidly present own research and other people's work	✓			✓	✓
5. Prepared for a solid and successful proposal of PhD dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

***Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Research Postgraduate Programme:**

1. Demonstrate critical understanding, at an advanced level, of up-to-date knowledge and research methodology of a particular field
2. Implement effective academic and personal strategies for carrying out research projects independently and ethically
3. Contribute original knowledge in response to issues in their specialist area
4. Communicate research findings at a diverse range of levels and through a variety of media
5. Evaluate one's own research in relation to important and latest issues in the field

COURSE DETAILS *(subject to change at instructor's discretion)*

Year/Semester: 2026-2027, First/ Second Semester

Time/Venue: First Semester:
Thursday 12:00 - 13:50 (TBA)
Sep 3, 10, 17, 24:
Oct 8, 22, 29:
Nov 5, 12, 19, 26;
Dec 3

Second Semester:
Thursday 12:00 - 13:50 (TBA)
Jan 22, 29
Feb 5, 12, 26
Mar 5, 19, 26
Apr 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
May 7, 14, 21, 28
June 4, 11, 18

Instructor: **Prof. SCHOENBERG Uta**
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Office: KK937 (by appointment)

I. Teaching and Learning Activities

In-class and Out-of-class Activities (e.g. lectures, class discussion, papers reading, proposal writing)	Expected hour	% of student study effort
1. Class: during with students will present papers and participate in discussions	36	26%
2. At least two presentations each semester: students should prepare and deliver the presentations as if they are giving a seminar talk	40	28%
3. Read papers and prepare presentation thoroughly before class meetings	34	24%
4. Research proposal/paper	30	22%
Total	140	100%

II. Assessment

Assessment Components (e.g. assignments, proposal, presentation, examination)	Weight	CLOs to be assessed				
		1	2	3	4	5
1. Attendance	5%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Participation in class discussion	25%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Research proposal/paper	35%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4. Presentation of research	35%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total	100%					

Students will be assessed based on the following performance standards:

Course Grade	Performance Standard
Pass	Evidence of adequate ability to fulfil the intended learning outcomes of the course at low levels of learning
Fail	Little evidence of basic fulfilment of the intended learning outcomes of the course.

III. Course Content and Tentative Schedule

To be determined in the first week of each semester

IV. Required/Recommended Readings

McCloskey, Donald N. *The Writing of Economics*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1986.

Strunk, William Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. Boston, MA: Longman, 1999.

Thomson, William. *A Guide for the Young Economist*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001

A set of guide for conducting empirical research will be provided.

V. Course Policy

The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced! Academic dishonesty is behaviour in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types of cases:

- a. Plagiarism - The representation of someone else's ideas as if they are their own. Where the arguments, data, designs, etc., of someone else are being used in a paper, report, oral presentation, or similar academic project, this fact must be made explicitly clear by citing the appropriate references. The references must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the project are not one's own work. Paraphrasing of someone else's ideas is still using someone else's ideas, and must be acknowledged. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>
- b. Unauthorized Collaboration on Out-of-Class Projects - The representation of work as solely one's own when in fact it is the result of a joint effort.
- c. Cheating on In-Class Exams - The covert gathering of information from other students, the use of unauthorized notes, unauthorized aids, etc.
- d. Unauthorized Advance Access to an Exam - The representation of materials prepared at leisure, as a result of unauthorized advance access (however obtained), as if it were prepared under the rigors of the exam setting. This misrepresentation is dishonest in itself even if there are not compounding factors, such as unauthorized uses of books or notes.

You are expected to do your own work whenever you are supposed to. Incident(s) of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind would result in an automatic FAIL grade for the course plus strict enforcement of all Faculty and/or University regulations regarding such behaviour.