

**Econ 2500W**  
**Writing in Economics**  
**Spring 2020**

**Instructor:** Shiyi Chen, 307 Oak Building, [shiyi.chen@uconn.edu](mailto:shiyi.chen@uconn.edu).

**Office Hours:** Tu 2:00-3:00pm/by appointment

**Course Description:** ECON 2500 is a one-credit “W” course. It fulfills the university’s “W” requirement for undergraduate general education and, for economics majors, the writing-in-the-major “W” requirement. To qualify as a “W” course, students are required to complete a minimum of 15 pages of writing, including writing instruction, editing, feedback and revision. *In this class, student will write two papers, one 5-page paper and one 10-page paper.* For the first paper, everyone will be writing on the same topic. For the second paper, everyone will work on a topic of their own choosing. As part of the revision process, students will first be required to turn in a draft on which they will receive feedback, and then a final draft that incorporates suggested changes. The paper should display a clear and engaging writing style, demonstrate a command of standard written American English, and reflect the standards of research, citation, argument, and data presentation appropriate to an academic audience.

**Suggested Reading:** There is no required reading for this class, but there are some very good books on how to become a better writer. I list three here. I especially recommend the McCloskey book, which is about writing for economics.

Strunk, W. and E.B. White. 2000. *The Elements of Style*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Allyn and Bacon.

O’Connor, P. 2009. *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe’s Guide to Better English in Plain English*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: Riverhead Books.

McCloskey, D. 2000. *Economical Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, IL: Waveland Press.

**Grading:** Students will be formally graded on the final submission of both papers, as well as course participation. The weighting is as follows:

Paper #1 Submission	40%
Paper #2 Submission	40%
Participation	20%

**Paper:** I reserve the right to lower your grade in any assignment that you submit after the deadline – the later the submission, the lower the grade. The rubric below highlights how you will be assessed on your essay submissions:

Researching the topic: Did you find and master relevant scholarly reference materials? Scholarly means professional books and journal articles. I recommend *Google Scholar* as a good starting point. I will discuss other sources in class.

Documentation and Citation: You are responsible for providing proper citation for all direct quotations, paraphrased ideas, and statistical and other information coming from other sources. You must format properly both in-text citations and list of works cited. A good resource to start is the *UConn Library's guide on citing sources*.

Argument: An argument starts with a thesis. This thesis is a claim put forward to be proven (by you). You then need evidence to support your thesis. This support should be from your research and include primary source, statistical, and anecdotal evidence. Any issue requiring a thesis must have two side. Consequently, it is important to anticipate the most prominent counter argument(s) you will face and refute those in your paper.

Organization/Grammar/Syntax: You will be assessed on your organization, grammar, punctuation, jargon, and syntax. Writing requires careful thought. Do not simply write one draft of the paper and not edit it. You should think about how to organize your paper (a simple outline can help with this). Your sentence structure and your rhetoric/jargon will face both the reader's ability to understand your writing and your credibility as an author.

Data (optional): This could include a table, a graph, etc. You much present those data in a way that is professional and understandable to the reader.

Grading scale:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>GPA</b>
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
73-76	C	2.0
70-72	C-	1.7

**Course Outline:** This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>
Week 1	Introduction	
Week 2	How to construct a Thesis?	
Week 3	Writing like an Economists	
Week 4	Citations and plagiarism	
Week 5	Class discussion about first paper topic.	
Week 6	Meeting with Group A	First draft of 2 pages due on 02/26
Week 7	Meeting with Group B	
Week 8	Meeting with Group C	Final submission of first paper due on 03/13
Week 9	Spring break	
Week 10	Class discussion about second paper topic	
Week 11	In-class peer review of first paper	
Week 12	Meeting with Group A	First draft of 2 pages due on 04/15
Week 13	Meeting with Group B	
Week 14	Meeting with Group C	
Week 15	Writing tips	Final submission of second paper due on 04/29

**The Writing Center:** The UConn Writing Center is available as a resource for all UConn students. For information on the resources and services they provide, visit <http://writingcenter.uconn.edu/>

**Academic Code: DON'T CHEAT.** I have a zero-tolerance policy for cheating in class. Assignments may be discussed among classmates, but most ultimately be done by individually. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, I will refer you to the University of Connecticut Student Code, which can be found online at <https://guide.uconn.edu/student-interactions/student-code/>.

Academic Integrity Statement: All students to act in accordance with the Guidelines for Academic Integrity at the University of Connecticut. If you have questions about academic integrity or intellectual property, you may consult with me or consult UConn's <https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/>.

**Plagiarism:** All students are expected to turn in their own work, with proper citations for information and ideas taken from other sources. I will devote time to this issue in the lecture on proper citations. In the meantime, it is the student's responsibility to know the university's policy on plagiarism, which can be found at: <https://lib.uconn.edu/services/ask/get-help/writing/plagiarism-resources/>.

**Student with Disabilities:** The Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD) at UConn provides accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing [csd@uconn.edu](mailto:csd@uconn.edu). If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Detailed information regarding the accommodation process is also available on their website at <https://csd.uconn.edu/>.