

HONOURS THESIS GUIDELINES

EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE SCOPE

- A critical review and synthesis of a narrowly defined literature;
- An economic critique of a recent government authored or commissioned report (published within the past three years);
- An economic critique of a narrowly-defined government policy (with no requirement for novel empirical or theoretical modeling);
- A modest but novel variation on an existing empirical or simulation study using the original data (such as application of a new method or a variation on the underlying model);
- An application of an existing empirical study to a new data set;
- A modest but novel variation on an existing theoretical study.

GENERAL ADVICE

Students are strongly encouraged to obtain a style guide to assist with the writing of essays. The library and the bookstore have a number of such guides.

You may also wish to visit the Learning Skills Program provided by UVic Counseling Services: <http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learning/essays/index.html>. UVic also has a writing center at UVic that may offer useful help.

Seek *balanced* sources (facts, statistics, references to other works such as journal articles, newspaper articles, quotes, etc.). In practice this means among other things that you draw on more than just a few sources. And in case you study a contentious issue, you consult sources that cover "all sides of the story".

Plagiarism and cheating are obviously disallowed (see also the course outline). To avoid accidental cases, check out what exactly plagiarism means in the UVic calendar.

SOME MORE HINTS

The report must have a section structure that reflects the logic of your argument. Each section serves a particular purpose.

The introduction is an incredibly important section of the thesis. Generally speaking the reader knows "everything but the details" after reading an introduction. The paper should also draw a conclusion reflecting on the findings of the paper.

Do not list references other than the ones you cite in your paper (and make sure all cited sources are in the reference list).

Avoid long sentences. Make your points carefully, but brief and to the point.

Make one point per paragraph. Generally, in English, the first sentence is the most important one of the paragraph.

Only introduce technical terms that you actually use in the thesis. After you have introduced a technical term or other core concept, generally repeat the same term throughout (i.e. avoid using synonyms when it comes to core terminology). This is the standard practice in economics papers.

Before you submit your thesis, seek feedback from others (let your classmates, friends, family, etc. read it and comment on it).

FORMAT

Theses must be submitted in a format similar to that of extended master's essays in the department. An example can be found on the Economics Graduate Program webpage:

http://web.uvic.ca/econ/grad/essay_example.pdf

Length will be determined by the amount of work needed to make all of the necessary points. However, making the necessary points generally takes at least 20 pages (double-spaced, 12 point font, excluding title page, diagrams and tables, etc.)