



University of Manitoba
Faculty of Arts
Department of Economics

COURSE DETAILS

Course Title & Number:	ECON 2610 T04: Special Topics in Economics – Income Distribution
Number of Credit Hours:	Three (3) Credit hours
Term:	Winter 2019
Class Times & Days of Week:	Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:30am - 12:20pm
Location for classes:	308 Tier Bldg.
Instructor(s) Name:	Jesse Hajer
Office Location:	517 Fletcher Argue
Office Hours:	Fridays 1:00pm - 2:00pm (no appointment required), or by email request.
Office Phone No.	204.474.9057
Email:	jesse.hajer@umanitoba.ca Email is my preferred method of communication. I aim to return emails within one business day.

Course Description

This course introduces students to how income, and its accumulation as wealth, is distributed between individuals, as well as between classes of economic actors. We will review how income inequality, wealth and poverty are measured, and broad trends that have emerged. We will examine the impact of redistributive policies undertaken by governments, and how various approaches to economic analysis address the causes of income inequality and the implications of redistribution.

This course will draw selectively upon various approaches in economics including labour economics, economic history, behavioural economics, and political economy. We will review both empirical data and theories aimed at explaining the distribution of income. We will also review normative conceptions regarding the ideal or optimal distribution of income and wealth based on the impact of income and wealth inequality on economic efficiency and human wellbeing.

Textbook, Readings, Materials

Required course texts:

Cowell, F. (2011). *Measuring inequality* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[[E-book access](#) through the University of Manitoba Libraries website]

Osberg, L. (2018). *The age of increasing inequality: The astonishing rise of Canada's*. Toronto, Canada: Lorimer.

[Hardcopy available in University of Manitoba Book Store]

Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the 21st century* (A. Goldhammer Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

[[E-book access](#) through the University of Manitoba Libraries website; Hardcopy available on reserve at Elizabeth Dafoe Library]

Additional required readings will be available in electronic format via UM Learn or accessible through the University of Manitoba Libraries website. For an introduction to UM Learn, log-in and select: Support > Help > Campus > Learners-Campus > Getting started

Using Copyrighted Material

Please respect copyright. We will use copyrighted content in this course. I have ensured that the content I use is appropriately acknowledged and is copied in accordance with copyright laws and university guidelines. Copyrighted works, including those created by me, are made available for private study and research and must not be distributed in any format without permission. Do not upload copyrighted works to a learning management system (such as UM Learn), or any website, unless an exception to the *Copyright Act* applies or written permission has been confirmed. For more information, see the University's Copyright Office website at <http://umanitoba.ca/copyright/> or contact um_copyright@umanitoba.ca.

Course Technology

It is the general University of Manitoba policy that all technology resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. The student can use all technology in a classroom setting only for educational purposes approved by the instructor and/or the University of Manitoba Disability Services. Students should not participate in personal direct electronic messaging / posting activities (e-mail, texting, video or voice chat, wikis, blogs, social networking (e.g. Facebook) online and offline "gaming" during scheduled class time. If a student is on call (emergency) the student should switch his/her cell phone on vibrate mode and leave the classroom before using it.

Expectations: I Expect You To

Students are expected to come to class, take notes, ask questions and participate in class the discussion. You will learn and retain more if you participate in the class discussion and activities. Please ask questions during class and feel free to ask during the lecture. Tests and exams will be based on the material covered in class. Some of this material may not be covered in the assigned readings.

You are responsible for the lecture material. If you do not come to class, it is your responsibility to find someone in the class (not the instructor) to fill you in on what you missed. Because I strive to conduct lectures in a question and answer format when possible, slides may not be posted until after the lecture.

The format of our classes will vary depending on the number of students and the questions we are dealing with, but your class participation will always be important. In order to get the most out of time in class, I recommend that you: a) read the required readings before class, b) think about how ideas in the readings are connected to the key question for each topic, c) make note of any questions you have, and d) bring your questions up in class.

Class Communication:

All classroom participants are expected to treat all others with respect. See the University's [Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy](#).

You are required to obtain and use your University of Manitoba email account for all communication between yourself and the university. All communication must comply with the Electronic Communication with Students Policy:

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/electronic_communication_with_students_policy.html.

Academic Integrity:

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Manitoba [Academic Integrity principles](#). Always remember to reference the work of others that you have used. You must do your own work during tests and exams. Inappropriate collaborative behavior and violation of other Academic Integrity principles, will lead to the serious [disciplinary action](#). Visit the [Academic Calendar](#), [Student Advocacy](#), and [Academic Integrity](#) web pages for more information and support.

Recording Class Lectures:

The University of Manitoba and I hold copyright over the course materials, presentations and lectures, which form part of this course. No audio or video recording of lectures or presentations is allowed in any format, openly or surreptitiously, in whole or in part without permission of the instructor. Course materials (both paper and digital) are for the participant's private study and research.

Student Accessibility Services:

The University of Manitoba is committed to providing an accessible academic community. [Students Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) offers academic accommodation supports and services such as note-taking, interpreting, assistive technology and exam accommodations. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental illness, learning, medical, hearing, injury-related, visual) are invited to contact SAS to arrange a confidential consultation.

Student Accessibility Services

520 University Centre

Phone: (204) 474-7423

Email: Student_accessibility@umanitoba.ca

Class Schedule

Below is a planned schedule of topics and readings. Some topics will take longer to cover than others. The order of the topics may be rearranged, some topics may be dropped based on time constraints, and required readings may also be adjusted. Such changes are subject to [Section 2.8 of ROASS](#). Please check the course UMan Learn website and your University of Manitoba e-mail account regularly.

1. Introduction

[Conference Board of Canada \(2019a\)](#)

[Conference Board of Canada \(2019b\)](#)

Piketty (Introduction)

Osberg (Introduction)

2. The History of Growth and Distribution

Piketty (Ch.1)

Piketty (Ch.2)

3. Wealth Accumulation: Measurement, Composition and Trends

Piketty (Ch.3)

Piketty (Ch. 4)

Piketty (Ch. 5)

4. The Functional Distribution: Capital and Labour Shares of National Income

Piketty (Ch.6)

5. Measuring Inequality

Osberg (Ch. 5)

Osberg (Ch. 8)

Cowell (Ch. 1, pp.1-2, 4-16)

Cowell (Ch. 2)

Piketty (Ch.7)

6. Case Studies: France, United States and Canada

Piketty (Ch. 8)
 Piketty (Ch. 9, pp. 315-330)
 Piketty (Ch. 10, pp. 336-350)
 Osberg (Ch.1)

7. Labour Income Inequality

Piketty (Ch. 9; pp. 304-315)
 Osberg (Ch. 2)

8. Inequality of Capital Ownership

Piketty (Ch.10, pp.350-376)
 Piketty (Ch. 11)
 Osberg (Ch. 6)

9. Measuring Poverty

Osberg (Ch.4)

10. The Role of Public Policy

Piketty (Chs. 13-15)
 Piketty (Conclusion, pp.571-577)
 Osberg (Ch. 9)

11. Critiquing Piketty (Time Permitting)

Delong, Boushey & Steinbaum (2017)
 Chernomas and Hudson (2014)
 Steinbaum (2017)

Please note: If you are experiencing challenges grasping the main arguments made in Piketty (2014), two accessible review articles that may be helpful are Krugman (2014) and Solow (2014).

Course Evaluation Methods

Due Date:	Assessment Tool	Value of Final Grade
Feb 25 th in class	Midterm Test	35%
March 22 nd via UM Learn	Assignment: Country Profile	25%
To be scheduled during exam period	Final Exam	40%

Evaluation and Grading

Grades:	A+	90-100%	C+	65-69%
	A	80-89%	C	60-64%
	B+	75-79%	D	50-59%
	B	70-74%	F	0-49%

Please note:

1. Students will not be permitted to write make-up tests or make-up missed assignments without documented medical or compassionate reasons.
2. Students appealing any term work (formally or informally) must do so within 10 working days of receiving their mark.
3. All final grades are subject to departmental review.
4. Any term work will be held for 4 months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. After this time, all unclaimed term work will be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines.
5. For more information regarding your rights, responsibilities and resources, see the Schedule A document posted on the course UM Learn site.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:

The minimum penalty for academic dishonesty in a test or final examination is F for the test/examination, and an F-DISC (discipline) in the course plus a suspension from the Faculty of Arts for a period of one year. The F grade and disciplinary notation appears on the student's transcript. For repeat violations, the penalty may include suspension from the Faculty of Arts for a period of up to 5 years. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Voluntary Withdrawal

January 18th, 2019 is the last date to drop a Winter Term course with a refund.

March 20th, 2019 is the last day to drop this class. Students who do not drop the course by the deadline will be assigned a final grade. Withdrawal courses will be recorded on your official transcript. Refer to the [Registrar's Office](#) web page for more information. Please meet with the instructor if you wish to discuss your progress and strategies for improvement prior the withdrawal date. Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the voluntary withdrawal date.

Assignment: Country Profile

The goal of this assignment is to help you learn how to find and compare data on income inequality and wealth, and communicate that information efficiently in a written format.

Students will be required to select a country from a sign-up list that will be set up by the instructor. Do not begin your project until you have confirmed your country with the instructor.

Useful Databases for this project may include: Alvaredo, Atkinson, Piketty & Saez (2017), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018) and World Bank (2019).

1. Search for and download data for your selected country, and Canada OR the United States, for 1970-2015, for the following measures:
 - a. Capital-income ratio, using the “net private wealth % of national income” measure.
 - b. Income inequality, using one of the “Top 1% income share” measures.
 - c. Gini Coefficient.

*Note that data may not be available for every year for each variable.
*Be sure you reference your data sources and include them in your reference list.
2. Using Microsoft Excel, generate a separate line graph for each variable (3 separate line graphs, 2 countries each). Be sure to label all the variables and axes, and to add titles to your tables.
3. Write a short paper that compares your country with either the United States or Canada (whichever you chose). Your paper should have the following sections:

Section 1: Introduction

The paper should begin with an introduction that briefly explains what the paper is about and summarizes your findings.

Section 2: Main Body

This is where you, discuss your findings for each variable, and

In this section you need to:

- Define each variable and explain the advantages and disadvantages of as a measure of inequality.
- Present your data in line graph format.
- Describe how would you classify your country with respect to its level of inequality relative to other countries? Explain your answer, and use course readings to answer this question, referencing them appropriately.

Section 3: Conclusion

The final section of paper should end with a conclusion that briefly summarizes the main arguments you have made in the paper.

Section 4: References

Include a reference list according to APA format. The only sources you need to complete this assignment are the data sources and course readings referenced, **but** if you consult and use information from other sources, you must cite them correctly.

The paper will also be graded partially based on correct APA formatting (cover page, in-text citations, etc.) and how clearly you communicate your ideas (this includes writing quality, spelling, grammar, sentence structure, etc.).

Assignment Referencing Style

My preference is that assignments use the American Psychological Association (APA) reference style. See <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for a useful style guide. If you prefer to use a different established academic referencing system, please contact me to discuss.

Do not plagiarize: be sure to cite the sources of ideas that are not your own as well as direct quotations of words that are not your own. There is helpful information about plagiarism on this page on the library website: www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/dafoe/media/plagiarism.pdf

Assignment Extension and Late Submission Policy

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 2% per day. The penalty will be waived in the case of documented serious illness or personal emergency (such as the death or serious illness of a close family member). To request the extension of a due date, contact me.

Writing and Learning Support

The Academic Learning Centre (ALC) offers services that may be helpful to you throughout your academic program, including support with time management, learning strategies, and test-taking strategies. You can also meet one-to-one with a writing tutor who can give you feedback at any stage of the writing process. These Academic Learning Centre services are free for U of M students. For more information, please visit the Academic Learning Centre website at: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>

References

- Alvaredo, F., Atkinson, A. B., Piketty, T. & Saez, E. (2017). World wealth and income database. Retrieved from <http://wid.world/data/>
- Chernomas, R., & Hudson, I. (2014). On Thomas Piketty's Capital in the Twenty-First Century. *Canadian Journal of History*, 49(2), 247-253.
- Conference Board of Canada. (2019a). How Canada performs: Inequality. Retrieved from <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/society/income-inequality.aspx>
- Conference Board of Canada. (2019b). How Canada performs: Working-age poverty. Retrieved from <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/society/working-age-poverty.aspx>
- Cowell, F. (2011). *Measuring inequality* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Delong, B., Boushey, H. & Steinbaum, M. (2017). Capital in the twenty-first century, three years later. In B., Delong, H. Boushey & Steinbaum, M. (Eds.), *After Piketty: The agenda for economics and inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard.
- Krugman, P. (2014, May). Why we're in a new gilded age. *New York Review of Books*, May 4. <https://www-nybooks-com.uml.idm.oclc.org/articles/2014/05/08/thomas-piketty-new-gilded-age/>
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018). OECD Stat. Retrieved from <https://stats.oecd.org/>
- Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the 21st century* (A. Goldhammer Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Solow, R. (2014, May). Thomas Piketty is right: Everything you need to know about 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century'. *The New Republic*. April 22. Retrieved from <https://newrepublic.com/article/117429/capital-twenty-first-century-thomas-piketty-reviewed>
- Steinbaum (2017). Why are economists giving Piketty the cold shoulder?. Retrieved from <http://bostonreview.net/class-inequality/marshall-steinbaum-why-are-economists-giving-piketty-cold-shoulder>
- World Bank (2019). World Bank Open Data. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/>

Schedule “A”: UNIVERSITY SUPPORT OFFICES & POLICIES

Academic supports available to Students

Writing and Learning Support

The Academic Learning Centre (ALC) offers services that may be helpful to you throughout your academic program. Through the ALC, you can meet with a learning specialist to discuss concerns such as time management, learning strategies, and test-taking strategies. The ALC also offers peer supported study groups called Supplemental Instruction (SI) for certain courses that students have typically found difficult. In these study groups, students have opportunities to ask questions, compare notes, discuss content, solve practice problems, and develop new study strategies in a group-learning format.

You can also meet one-to-one with a writing tutor who can give you feedback at any stage of the writing process, whether you are just beginning to work on a written assignment or already have a draft. If you are interested in meeting with a writing tutor, reserve your appointment two to three days in advance of the time you would like to meet. Also, plan to meet with a writing tutor a few days before your paper is due so that you have time to work with the tutor’s feedback.

These Academic Learning Centre services are free for U of M students. For more information, please visit the Academic Learning Centre website at: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>. You can also contact the Academic Learning Centre by calling 204-480-1481 or by visiting 205 Tier Building.

University of Manitoba Libraries (UML)

As the primary contact for all research needs, your liaison librarian can play a vital role when completing academic papers and assignments. Liaisons can answer questions about managing citations, or locating appropriate resources, and will address any other concerns you may have, regarding the research process. Liaisons can be contacted by email or phone, and are also available to meet with you in-person. A complete list of liaison librarians can be found by subject: <http://bit.ly/WcEbA1> or name: <http://bit.ly/1tJ0bB4>. In addition, general library assistance is provided in person at 19 University Libraries, located on both the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses, as well as in many Winnipeg hospitals. For a listing of all libraries, please consult the following: <http://bit.ly/1sXe6RA>. When working remotely, students can also receive help online, via the Ask-a-Librarian chat found on the Libraries’ homepage: www.umanitoba.ca/libraries.

Mental health and referral information

For 24/7 mental health support, contact the Mobile Crisis Service at 204-940-1781.

Student Counselling Centre

Contact SCC if you are concerned about any aspect of your mental health, including anxiety, stress, or depression, or for help with relationships or other life concerns. SCC offers crisis services as well as individual, couple, and group counselling. *Student Counselling Centre:*

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/index.html>

474 University Centre or S207 Medical Services
(204) 474-8592

Student Support Case Management

Contact the Student Support Case Management team if you are concerned about yourself or another student and don't know where to turn. SSCM helps connect students with on and off campus resources, provides safety planning, and offers other supports, including consultation, educational workshops, and referral to the STATIS threat assessment team.

Student Support Intake Assistant <http://umanitoba.ca/student/case-manager/index.html>

520 University Centre
(204) 474-7423

University Health Service

Contact UHS for any medical concerns, including mental health problems. UHS offers a full range of medical services to students, including psychiatric consultation.

University Health Service <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health/>

104 University Centre, Fort Garry Campus
(204) 474-8411 (Business hours or after hours/urgent calls)

Health and Wellness

Contact our Health and Wellness Educator if you are interested in information on a broad range of health topics, including physical and mental health concerns, alcohol and substance use harms, and sexual assault.

Health and Wellness Educator <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health-wellness/welcome.html>

Katie.Kutryk@umanitoba.ca

469 University Centre
(204) 295-9032

Live Well @ UofM

For comprehensive information about the full range of health and wellness resources available on campus, visit the Live Well @ UofM site:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/livewell/index.html>

Notice with respect to copyright:

All students are required to respect copyright as per Canada's *Copyright Act*. Staff and students play a key role in the University's copyright compliance as we balance user rights for educational purposes with the rights of content creators from around the world. The Copyright Office provides copyright resources and support for all members of the University of Manitoba community. Visit <http://umanitoba.ca/copyright> for more information.

Your rights and responsibilities

As a student of the University of Manitoba you have rights and responsibilities. It is important for you to know what you can expect from the University as a student and to understand what the University expects from you. Become familiar with the policies and procedures of the University and the regulations that are specific to your faculty, college or school.

The [Academic Calendar](http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/academiccalendar.html) <http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/academiccalendar.html> is one important source of information. View the sections *University Policies and Procedures* and *General Academic Regulations*. While all of the information contained in these two sections is important, the following information is highlighted.

- If you have questions about your grades, talk to your instructor. There is a process for term work and final **grade appeals**. Note that you have the right to access your final examination scripts. See the Registrar's Office website for more information including appeal deadline dates and the appeal form <http://umanitoba.ca/registrar/>
- You are expected to view the General Academic Regulation section within the Academic Calendar and specifically read the **Academic Integrity** regulation. Consult the course syllabus or ask your instructor for additional information about demonstrating academic integrity in your academic work. Visit the Academic Integrity Site for tools and support <http://umanitoba.ca/academicintegrity/> View the **Student Academic Misconduct** procedure for more information.
- The University is committed to a respectful work and learning environment. You have the right to be treated with respect and you are expected to conduct yourself in an appropriate respectful manner. Policies governing behavior include the:

Respectful Work and Learning Environment

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html

Student Discipline

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/student_discipline.html and,

Violent or Threatening Behaviour

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/669.html

- If you experience **Sexual Assault** or know a member of the University community who has, it is important to know there is a policy that provides information about the supports available to those who disclose and outlines a process for reporting. The **Sexual Assault** policy may be found at:
http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html
More information and resources can be found by reviewing the Sexual Assault site
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/sexual-assault/>
- For information about rights and responsibilities regarding **Intellectual Property** view the policy http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Intellectual_Property_Policy_-_2013_10_01.pdf

For information on regulations that are specific to your academic program, read the section in the Academic Calendar and on the respective faculty/college/school web site

<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/>

Contact an **Academic Advisor** within our faculty/college or school for questions about your academic program and regulations <http://umanitoba.ca/academic-advisors/>

Student Advocacy

Contact Student Advocacy if you want to know more about your rights and responsibilities as a student, have questions about policies and procedures, and/or want support in dealing with academic or discipline concerns.

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/>

520 University Centre

204 474 7423

student_advocacy@umanitoba.ca