

2026 Jim and Matthew Scarpato Honorary Applied Economics Conference Rules and Timeline

Rules:

Open topic:

Students may choose the topic of the paper and presentation, subject to the approval of the conference committee. We encourage students to seek feedback from committee members prior to choosing the topic and intended method of analysis of their paper.

Although this is not required, students are free to submit a paper that they are preparing for credit in an Undergraduate or MA/MS Research course (ECO 498 or ECO 598) under the supervision of a member of the economics department faculty. This allows students to participate in the conference while their paper earns a grade in an ECO 498 or ECO 598 course. Grades earned in such cases are assigned by the supervising faculty and are independent from performance in the conference.

Proposals and proposal prizes:

Students may submit a proposal of their paper topic and intended method of analysis by **11:59pm on November 23, 2025**, for review by the committee. A proposal is a 400–600-word document (approximately 2 pages double-spaced, not including tables, graphs, or figures) which explains the research topic and the type of analysis planned to address it. The committee will review proposals and will accept no more than 12 for presentation at the conference.

To be acceptable to the committee, proposals must meaningfully address the following questions:

- What economic issue or policy will be the topic of the paper/presentation?
- Why and how is this issue or policy relevant?
- Why is the issue or policy important?
- What type of economic method do you plan to use to analyze this issue or policy?
 - The analysis must involve an approach that is consistent with economic methodology, i.e., theoretical or empirical economic models and analyses, qualitative analysis, or review.

If a proposal addresses these questions but is deemed by the committee not sufficiently likely to lead to a paper that meets the quality expectations of the conference itself, the committee may request a revision before granting acceptance into the conference.

The committee will also choose no more than 8 of the accepted proposal submissions to receive a **\$250 proposal prize** to be awarded upon completion of all subsequent requirements of the conference (paper submission, conference presentation, quality of work etc.). After presenting their completed papers at the conference, the up to 12 chosen papers will also be eligible for the additional main conference prizes.

Students who do not submit a proposal in November will not be eligible for one of the \$250 proposal prizes but may still participate in the conference and will be eligible to win one of the main conference prizes by submitting a first draft of the paper at least one month before the conference date. Such submissions will be reviewed by the committee before being accepted into the conference.

Conference and main prizes:

Prior to the conference, all participating students are required to submit a complete or substantial draft of their paper to the committee for review and for final acceptance to the conference itself. At the conference, participants will present their research to the Scarpato Conference Committee and other attendees. Presentations will be 20 minutes with 5 minutes for questions and a 5-minute break between each participant.

Upon completion of the conference, the Scarpati Conference Committee will review each participant's paper and presentation and choose a first- and second-place prize winner. The first-place prize comes with an award of at least \$1500, the second-place prize comes with an award of at least \$1000. Additionally, participants who were previously chosen for a proposal prize and successfully present in the conference will be awarded \$250 each, and the committee reserves the right to award additional prizes to conference participants, including but not limited to the first- and second-place prize winners.

Timeline (all dates are for the 2025-2026 academic year):

- **October 15, 5pm:** general interest meeting, location to be determined.
 - Additional interest meetings may be held in October depending on student availability.
- **November 23, 11:59pm:** deadline for proposals to be eligible for proposal prizes.
- **November 30, 11:59pm:** committee decision and announcement on proposal prizes.
- **February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, 5pm-7pm:** conference committee help sessions.
 - Members of the Scarpati Conference Committee will attend to provide support to participants or prospective participants of the conference.
- **Thursday, May 14, 9am-4pm:** Scarpati Conference presentations and reception. Location to be determined.