

Economics of Social Issues – Fall 2014 - Econ 2337-001 (AAST 2337)**(8/17/14)**

MWF 11:00 – 11:50am

Room 243 Business Building

Instructor: Ronnie Liggett, MBA, CPA

Office: 318 Business Bldg.

Office Hrs: MWF 8:30-9, 11:50-12:20W, and by appointment

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E-mail: liggett@uta.edu**Material Required:**The Economics of Public Issues, 17th Ed., Miller, Benjamin, NorthThe Economics of Social Issues, Prelim Ed., Edited by Liggett (May also be purchased directly from publisher – see Blackboard)
(Handouts / Blogs / Misc Web Readings and Blackboard Postings may also be assigned)

Course Description: The Economics of Social Issues uses economics as a window to observe social behavior and analyze pertinent public policies. A broad range of issues will be addressed to facilitate an understanding of the role of economics and its relationship to cultural development, social policies, and other problems facing society as a whole. In addition, class time will be spent discussing relevant current issues which arise during the semester.

Course Prerequisites: None

Course Purpose: This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington core curriculum requirement in social and behavioral studies.

Course Objectives: This course satisfies the following four objectives.

- **Critical thinking skills** include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information. Students will demonstrate evidence of critical thinking skills by learning and using economic principles and analysis in examining and critiquing various social policies and issues such as government regulations for drug approval and pollution, the economic consequences of criminal behavior, the market effects of drug prohibition, the issues of an aging society, tax policies and their myriad of impacts, and the consequences of unemployment and the minimum wage, to name a few.
- **Communication skills** include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication. Students will demonstrate communication skills throughout the course through classroom participation, frequent class discussions and course exercises including examinations and in-class assignments.
- **Empirical and quantitative skills** include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions. For example, students will be able to work with quantitative measures such as the social security and income tax rate policy, changes in crime rates as they relate to our overall economy, and the impact of government policies on drug prices – both legal and illegal. Based on these and other measures, students will be able to judge the impact of various social policies on our economy and overall social welfare.
- **Social responsibility** includes intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities. In this area for example, students will be able to articulate the impact that government regulation and taxes have on improving access to healthcare, making our neighborhoods safer, reducing pollution, and attending to the issues of immigration flows.

Student Learning Outcomes: The student will demonstrate their knowledge of course material through examinations, quizzes, and class discussions as they build a knowledge base in the area of study, and further their development of problem solving skills. More specifically, the student will be able to employ the methods and principles used by economists to explain and discuss the course content as noted in the course and subject outline as it relates to public policy and contemporary social issues of concern. The student will further be able to assess, differentiate, and analyze historical evidence and differing points of view, as a means of developing creative solutions to public policy problems.

Attendance: Roll may be taken at each class. Students are expected to attend and participate in discussions. A seating chart will be used. If you regularly miss class, I will assume that the class is not very important to you. In addition, there will be a significant amount of material provided through **lecture notes** during class. You are responsible for these lecture notes. **A note on class discussions** – be aware that certain topics and issues may be controversial and stir the emotions of some students. Accordingly, please show respect for your fellow students and instructor, and refrain from soapbox displays. (See additional attendance comment on next page).

Testing: Test format will generally be a combination of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer. Students will be expected to show some competency in organizing and presenting short answer material. In addition, some graphing will be required. Scantrons will be required – Form 882E. At various times a calculator may be needed. A tentative schedule of exam dates follows:

<u>Grading:</u>	<u>Tentative Dates</u>	<u>Chapters Scheduled To Be Covered</u>
Test 1 - 100 pts	9/17	1-5, Supply / Demand
Test 2 - 100	10/10	6-10, 12
Test 3 - 100	11/5	11,13,14,18,19,21
Test 4 - 100 - FINAL EXAM	12/10 (11am)	22-28, Econ of Crime
		The above is in addition to lecture notes and handouts.
Total Possible Points = 400		A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 59% and below

Course Outline and General Content:

- Chapter 1 - Death by Bureaucrat (FDA & other choices)
 - Chapter 2 - The Economics of Oil Spills (Why they happen – Who should pay)
 - Chapter 3 - Supersize It (The economics of cheap food)
 - Chapter 4 - Flying the Friendly Skies (How safe should air travel be?)
 - Chapter 5 - They Mystery of Wealth (Why some nations are rich and some poor)
 - Chapter 6 - Sex, Booze, and Drugs (The consequences of prohibiting voluntary exchange)
 - Chapter 7 - Kidneys for Sale (Does a market for organs make sense?)
 - Chapter 8 - Are We Running Out of Water?
 - Chapter 9 - The (Dis)incentive of Higher Taxes
 - Chapter 10 - Bankrupt Landlords, from Sea to Shining Sea
 - Chapter 11 - (Why) Are Women Paid Less?
 - Chapter 12 - The Effects of Minimum Wage
 - Chapter 13 - Immigration, Superstars, and Poverty (Are the rich richer and the poor poorer?)
 - Chapter 14 - The Underground World (How informal labor markets are raising wealth)
 - Chapter 18 - Keeping the Competition Out
 - Chapter 19 - Health Care Reform
 - Chapter 21 - Mortgage Meltdown (The great recession via a mortgage meltdown)
 - Chapter 22 - Raising Less Corn and More Hell (Farm policy and tax dollars)
 - Chapter 23 - The Graying of America
 - Chapter 25 - Greenhouse Economics
 - Chapter 26 - Ethanol Madness (Environmental policy gone bad...)
 - Chapter 27 - The Trashman Cometh (The costs / benefits of recycling)
 - Chapter 28 - Globalization and the Wealth of America (Is all globalization bad?)
- (This schedule may be adjusted because of time constraints.)*

Course Schedule: Please note - this schedule is TENTATIVE and may be adjusted because of time constraints and/or current events which are relevant to course topics and require class discussion or lecture. Accordingly, the schedule will be adjusted as needed.

- Aug 22 – Introduction, syllabus, class ground rules, defining economics
- Aug 25 – Understanding economics, Macro v. Micro and other terms (Read 1, 2)
- Aug 27 – Chapter 1 & Other Economic Principles
- Aug 29 – Lecture on Supply/Demand – (Graphing – outside problems assigned)
- Sept 1 – Labor Day Holiday – No Class
- Sept 3 – In-Class Problems on Supply/Demand
- Sept 5 – Chapter 2
- Sept 8 – Chapter 3
- Sept 10 – Chapter 4 and Marginal Benefits / Marginal Costs
- Sept 12 – Chapter 5
- Sept 15 – Review / Prepare for Exam 1 over Chap 1-5, Lecture Notes
- Sept 17 – Exam 1
- Sept 19 – Return exam, discuss results, introduce Chapter 6
- Sept 22 – Chapter 6 – Alcohol, Prostitution
- Sept 24 – Chapter 6 – Drugs
- Sept 26 – Chapter 7, Chapter 8 Intro
- Sept 29 – Chapter 8, Chapter 9 Intro
- Oct 1 – Chapter 9, Chapter 10 Intro
- Oct 3 – Chapter 10, Chapter 12 Intro
- Oct 6 – Chapter 12 conclude
- Oct 8 – Review / Prepare for Exam 2 over Chap 6-10, 12
- Oct 10 – Exam 2
- Oct 13 – Return exam, discuss results, introduce Chapter 11
- Oct 15 – Chapter 11, Chapter 13 Intro
- Oct 17 – Illegal Immigration – Economic Consequences
- Oct 20 – Chapter 14

Oct 22 – Chapter 18
Oct 24 – The Macroeconomy – Lecture / Power Point
Oct 27 – The Macroeconomy - Conclude
Oct 29 – Chapter 19
Oct 31 – Chapter 21
Nov 3 – Review / Prepare for Exam 3 over Chap 11,13,14,18,19,21
Nov 5 – Exam 3
Nov 7 – Return exam, discuss results, introduce Econ of Crime
Nov 10 – Economics of Crime – Lecture #1 / Power Point
Nov 12 – Economics of Crime – Lecture #2 / Power Point
Nov 14 – Chapter 22
Nov 17 – Chapter 23 / Social Security Issues
Nov 19 – Chapter 23 conclude
Nov 21 – Chapter 25
Nov 24 – Chapter 26
Nov 26 – Chapter 27
Nov 28 – Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class
Dec 1 – Chapter 28
Dec 3 – Review for Final Exam over Chap 22-28, Econ of Crime
Dec 10 – Final Exam

Other Course Content and Objectives: In various ways, the course will incorporate use of the basic intellectual competencies, i.e. – reading, writing and expression, speaking, listening and absorption of ideas, and critical thinking. Additionally, on a smaller scale, some computer literacy may be beneficial in the research and acquisition of additional information for topic areas appealing to the student or assigned by the instructor. The course will also examine and critique economic systems as they pertain to public policy and the current social and political environment as well as the historical development of some of these policies with a focus on possible solutions to issues of concern.

Important Dates:

Aug 22 – First Class Day for MWF Class
Sept 1 – Labor Day Holiday
Oct 29 - Last Day to Drop
Nov 27-28 – Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec 3 – Last Class Day Before Final Exams

Attendance: At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, my attendance policy is as follows: Attendance will be taken for this course. Students are expected to attend and participate in discussions. A seating chart will be used. If you regularly miss class, I will assume that the class is not very important to you. There will be a significant amount of material provided through **lecture notes** during class; on occasion your textbook will also be used in class.

Extra Credit: Generally there is no formal extra credit. On occasion I might give a pop quiz with greater value, a pure extra credit quiz, or some other assignment. These are unannounced and might occur at anytime. **There is NO MAKE-UP should you miss these.**

Disclaimer Regarding Syllabus: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as the semester progresses. Students are responsible for being aware of these changes.

Attendance Policy: Roll may be taken at each class. Students are expected to attend class. A seating chart will be used. If you regularly miss class, then my assumption is that the class is not very important to you.

Laptop Computer: Any laptops brought to class are to be used strictly for this class. I reserve the right to ask that laptops be turned off if there is any abuse in this area, i.e., surfing the web during class, shopping, e-mailing, etc.

E-Mail: E-Mail is to be used for academic purposes. Do not use e-mail to forward jokes or political views. Any harassing or profane e-mail will be reported to campus authorities and is subject to disciplinary action.

Grade Grievances: You have one calendar year from the date the grade is assigned to initiate any grievance. The normal academic channels are department chair, academic dean, and the Provost.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. **NO DROPS AFTER DROP DATE!**

College Policy: Students who have not paid by the census date and are dropped for non-payment cannot receive a grade for the course in any circumstances. Therefore, a student dropped for non-payment who continues to attend the course will not receive a grade for the course. Emergency loans are available to help students pay tuition and fees. Students can apply for emergency loans by going to the Emergency Tuition Loan Distribution Center at E.H. Hereford University Center (near the southwest entrance).

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Academic Integrity, continued...

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Food and Drink in Classrooms: College policy prohibits food and/or drinks in classrooms and labs. Anyone bringing food and/or drinks into a classroom or lab will be required to remove such items, as directed by the class instructor or lab supervisor.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication Policy: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Bomb Threats: If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. Note there are multiple exits from the first floor in close proximity to our room on the south, east, and west sides of the building. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

EVACUATION FOR DISABLED PERSONS: For 2nd floor and above, please go to the Northeast fire stairs. An evacu track chair is located on the 6th floor stairwell. Employees trained in the use of this chair will go to the 6th floor and bring the chair to any lower floor stairwell to assist disabled persons.

PLEASE RE-READ LAPTOP POLICY – STUDENTS NOT ADHERING TO THIS POLICY MAY BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE CLASS.