

Economics of Social Issues – Spring 2015 - Econ 2337-001 (AAS 2337)**(1/14/15)**

MWF 9:00 – 9:50am

Room 348 Business Building

Instructor: Ronnie Liggett, MBA, CPA

Office: 318 Business Bldg.

Office Hrs: MWF 11-12, and by appointment

Phone: Office (817) 272-2635

Mailing Address: Economics Dept., Box 19479, UTA, Arlington, TX 76019

E-mail: liggett@uta.edu**Material Required:**The Economics of Public Issues, 17th Ed., Miller, Benjamin, NorthThe Economics of Social Issues, A Survey of Selected Topics, 1st Ed., 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:

Grading:	Tentative Dates	Chapter/Info Scheduled To Be Covered (See Course Schedule Below)
Test 1 - 100 pts	2/16	M-Miller Textbook, L-Liggett Textbook
Test 2 - 100	3/18	M(1-5) L(1,2) Supply/Demand
Test 3 - 100	4/10	M(6-10, 12) L(7)
Test 4 - 100 - FINAL EXAM	5/13 (9am)	M(11,13,14,18,19,21) L(3,4,5)
		M(22-28) L(6,8) Econ of Crime
Total Possible Points = 400		The above is in addition to other lecture notes and handouts.
		A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 59% and below

General Course Outline of Topics and Material:

The Foundations of Economic Analysis / Basic Principles & Laws

1. Capitalism Defined
2. Bureaucratic Decisions – FDA, Regulations, and their Impact on Market Behavior.
3. The Economics of Oil Spills
4. Supply & Demand
5. Wealthy Nations
6. Other Topics

The Business Cycle / More Supply & Demand and Labor Markets

1. Sex, Booze, and Drugs (Voluntary Exchange & Consequences)
2. Understanding Employment & Recessions – Economic History, What is a Recession?
3. Scarcity – Water Use
4. Price Controls – Rent Control & Minimum Wage
5. Women in the Workforce
6. Other Topics

Macro & Social Issues / Fiscal Policy

1. Illegal Immigration / Families and Poverty
2. Government Spending
3. Tax Issues – Exa. The Myths of Social Security, Tax Structure in America
4. National Debt Issues
5. Health Care Reform
6. Mortgage Crisis & The Great Recession
7. Oil / OPEC/ Cartels
8. Graying of America

Crime / The Environment / Budgets / International Issues

1. Economics of Crime & Punishment
2. The Equimarginal Principle
3. International – Exa. The Opposition to Free Trade, Understanding Free Trade
4. The Environment – Exa. The Trashman Cometh, Greenhouse Economics and Smog
5. Other Topics

(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.

JAN 19	MLK HOLIDAY – NO CLASSES
JAN 21	Introduction, syllabus, class ground rules, etc.
JAN 23	Defining Economics, Capitalism, etc. (Read 1, 2)
JAN 26	Chap 1M & Other Econ Principles --- Chap 1L
JAN 28	Lecture on Supply/Demand – (See Appendix in Liggett)
JAN 30	Supply / Demand
FEB 2	Chap 2M
FEB 4	Chap 3M
FEB 6	Chap 4M – Marginal Benefits / Marginal Costs --- Chap 2L
FEB 9	Marginal Benefits / Marginal Costs – Practice Work
FEB 11	Chap 5M
FEB 13	Review for Test #1
FEB 16	Test #1
FEB 18	Return Test, Discuss Results, Introduce Chap 6M
FEB 20	Chap 6M – Alcohol, Prostitution
FEB 23	Chap 6M – Drugs ---- Chap 7L
FEB 25	Chap 7M – Chap 8 Intro
FEB 27	Chap 8M – Chap 9 Intro
MAR 2	Chap 9M – Chap 10 Intro
MAR 4	Chap 10M – Chap 12 Intro
MAR 6	Chap 12M conclude

Key For Chap Info...

1M = Miller Textbook Chap 1

1L = Liggett Textbook Chap 1

MAR 9-13	Spring Break
MAR 16	Review / Prepare for Test #2
MAR 18	Test #2
MAR 20	Return exam, discuss results, introduce Chap 11
MAR 23	Chap 11M – Chap 13 Intro --- Chap 3L
MAR 25	Illegal Immigration – Economic Consequences --- Chap 4L
MAR 27	Illegal Immigration, Continued
MAR 30	Chap 5L
APR 1	Chap 14/18M
APR 3	The Macroeconomy
APR 6	Chap 19M
APR 8	Chap 21M
APR 10	Review / Prepare for Test #3
APR 13	Test #3
APR 15	Return Test, Discuss results, introduce Econ of Crime
APR 17	Economics of Crime --- Chap 5L
APR 20	Economics of Crime --- Chap 7L
APR 22	Chap 22M
APR 24	Chap 23M / Social Security Issues
APR 27	Chap 23 – conclude
APR 29	Chap 25M
MAY 1	Chap 26M
MAY 4	Chap 27M
MAY 6	Chap 28M
MAY 8	REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM
MAY 13	Final Exam (Test #4)

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:

Jan 19 – MLK Holiday

Jan 21 – First Class Day for MWF Class

Mar 9-13 – Spring Break Holiday

Mar 16-20 – Business Week

Apr 3 – Last Day to Drop

May 8 – 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.

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.