Econ 1000: Economics of Public Issues

Criteria (lower division social science): Courses fulfilling the Basic Social Science requirements present the fundamental principles and methods of inquiry that are grounded in social science disciplines.

1. Demonstrate, orally and in writing, recognition of the application of disciplinary concepts derived from at least three social or behavioral sciences in the study of human behavior, individually and in society.
   a. State at least two standard or basic theories and models
   b. Define key disciplinary terms
   c. Identify professional applications of disciplinary concepts
The course introduces students to the “economic way of thinking”. Students see the behavioral implications that develop in a free market economy and apply the principles to current public issues such as shortages of food and fuel, pollution, slums, airline fares, stagflation, income distribution, and the function of property rights. Students learn how the economic approach to such problems differs from approaches in other social sciences.

2. Demonstrate, orally and in writing, recognition of the inquiry methods used by at least one of the social or behavioral science disciplines.
   a. Identify key research issues
   b. Describe how hypotheses or research questions are formed
   c. List examples of data that are examined
   d. Describe how data are analyzed
Economics is grounded in using data to verify its theories. Because Econ 1000 is an introductory course, students learn how economic data (e.g., income, prices, quantity of goods and services produced/sold) are used to support economic principles. Students also learn to critically assess the data presented in support or opposition of policies by presenting data in the context of economic principles, research and policy analysis.

3. Demonstrate, orally and in writing, the ability to describe how human diversity and the diversity of human societies influence our understanding of human behavior, individually and in societies, both local and global
Economics is the study of human behavior in light of scarce resources. Because it shows students the behavioral incentives provided by free market societies, it enhances their understanding of individual and collective behavior in capitalistic societies.

4. Demonstrate, orally and in writing, some knowledge of the political, social, and/or economic institutions of a country other than the United States.
Because Econ 1000 emphasizes applications of economics to current issues, students see how political and social issues interact with economic approaches to public policy. While the majority of the policy applications in the course are U.S. focused, the course draws analogies from countries around the world to show students how other societies approach the allocation of scarce resources among its citizens.

5. Demonstrate, orally and in writing, the ability to describe major positions and contrasting arguments made on one or more significant contemporary issue area confronting US society as applied to human behavior.
Econ 1000 introduces students to a wide variety of economic principles. Its emphasis is on applying these principles to a wide range of socioeconomic issues so students that will not take another course in economics have the ability to assess the economic implications of current policy issues.
Econ 1000: Economics of Public Issues
4 Units

Catalog Description: Examination of selected current public issues; e.g., shortages of food and fuel, pollution, slums, airline fares, stagflation, income distribution, and the function of property rights. Designed for non-economics majors and not open to students who have taken ECON 2301.

Prerequisites: None

Times Offered: Fall and Spring, day

Course Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course a student will be able to:

- Understand how households (demand) and businesses (supply) interact in various market structures to determine price and quantity of a good produced.
- Determine the price and quantity households will purchase and businesses will produce.
- Link household behavior and the economic model of individual demand.
- Represent individual and market demand curves as graphs, including the downward slope of the demand curve and what shifts the demand curve.
- Link production costs and the economic models of supply for individual firms and markets.
- Represent individual and market supply curves as graphs, including the upward slope of the supply curve and what shifts the supply curve.
- Analyze the efficiency and equity implications of government interference in markets.
- Develop policies that contribute to long-term economic growth, while avoiding policies that cause growth to slow.
- Apply economic reasoning to individual and firm behavior and their interaction in markets.
- Analyze the basic workings of an entire economy.
- Develop fiscal and monetary policies to correct macroeconomic problems.

Assessment Methods:

A variety of methods might be used to assess student learning, including:

- Examinations: Concepts and problems solving exercises
- Exercises: Problem sets and essay questions probing students to apply principles
- Quantity and quality of class participation
Physics 1410
Physics for Future Presidents

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jennie.guzman@csueastbay.edu

Office Hours: Tu,Th 3-4 pm (N Sci 246), F 3-5 pm (N Sci 236), or by appointment

Text: Physics and Technology for Future Presidents: An introduction to the essential physics every world leader needs to know, Richard A. Muller

Class Overview

This course is designed to give you the need-to-know physics to be president, politician, lawyer, football coach, or any other profession. It aims to give you the information required to make an informed decision regarding issues that may have technical components. No scientific or mathematical background is assumed. You will be expected to analyze current events using order-of-magnitude estimates and calculations. The purpose of this course is to make you ask yourself and neighbor "how can that be" and "does this seem reasonable?" Topics include energy, radioactivity, fission, fusion, spy satellites, and medical imaging.

Homework and Discussions

There will be homework assigned nearly every class period and due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise stated. Work that is turned in late will be docked one letter grade for each class period it is late. If order-of-magnitude calculations or estimates are required, make sure to show all of your steps.

Once a week, a group of students will lead an in-class discussion on the homework or a current event. You will be graded on how well you present your perspective, whether you researched your topic, and if you support your argument using data and evidence. Those who are not presenting will be graded on their participation (ask questions) and on a short written summary of the discussion.

Grading Breakdown

The final course grade will be broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Discussion 20%
Final 30%

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will:

(1) Develop an appreciation of core principles in physics and how these relate to current world events.

(2) Be able to make order-of-magnitude estimates to make quantitative predictions and calculations in relation to current events.

(3) Demonstrate an understanding of essential ideas in physics and use these to make informed decisions regarding issues that have technical components.

(4) Develop an appreciation and understanding of current events and their relation to physics

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1  Energy and Power
Week 2  Atoms, Heat, and Temperature
Week 3  Gravity, Force, and Space
Week 4  Radioactivity
Week 5  Nuclear Reactors and Atomic Bombs
Week 6  Electricity and Magnetism
Week 7  Light and Color
Week 8  Invisible Light
Week 9  Climate Change
Week 10  Climate Change
Cluster: World Problems: Economics, and Ethics

Economics 1000 (Economics of Public issues) Cluster Course Outline:

Contact Info
Dr. Jane Lopus
Office: VBT 357
Email: jane.lopus@csueastbay.edu

Description
This course will provide students with an introduction to economics with a primary focus on using economic analysis to examine current social, political, and global issues. Such topics may include environmental pollution, climate change, income inequality, poverty, unemployment, and inflation.

Grades
The final course grade will be broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Midterm Exams</td>
<td>25% each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will:

(1) Develop an understanding of the core disciplinary concepts from economics, history, and political science in the study of human behavior

(2) Be able to make order-of-magnitude estimates to make quantitative predictions and calculations in relation to current events.

(3) Develop an appreciation and understanding of current events and their relation to economic data and principles

(4) Develop and understanding of economic analysis and reasoning with a primary focus on human behavior in response to incentives.
Tentative Course Outline:

**Week 1: Choices involve costs.**
Scarcity, opportunity costs, economic systems, economic decision-making, marginal analysis, incentives
World problem: Applying benefit cost analysis to current issues

**Week 2: Markets set prices efficiently.**
Supply and demand, price determination
World problem: agricultural price supports in developed countries hurt developing countries

**Week 3: When markets fail, government intervention may be necessary.**
Role of government in a market economy, externalities, public goods
World problem: government intervention is necessary to address environmental pollution and climate change.

**Week 4: Competition is important for efficient markets.**
Market structure, competition, and monopoly
World problem: international monopolies in resource markets have widespread affects.

**Week 5: The economy has its ups and downs.**
Business cycles, inflation, unemployment
World problem: financial crises with origins in one country can have international implications.

**Week 6: Income inequality, poverty, and discrimination affect economic outcomes.**
Economic effects of income inequality, poverty, and discrimination
World problem: rising income inequality affects economic growth and development.

**Week 7: Fiscal policy can benefit the economy.**
Taxes, government spending, the national debt, fiscal policy
World problem: Some problems in the European Union stem from independent fiscal policies.

**Week 8: Monetary policy can benefit the economy.**
The Federal Reserve, money supply, interest rates, monetary policy
World problem: independent central banks are necessary for control of inflation.

**Week 9: Free trade is a win-win: both sides benefit.**
Benefits of trade, comparative advantage, exchange rates
World problem: Chinese manipulation of the yuan adversely affects her trading partners.
Week 10: The US operates in a global economy.
Globalization, economic development, the role of the US
World problem: as the world becomes increasingly globalized, economic interdependence needs to be addressed.

California State University, East Bay
Department of Philosophy
Science, Technology and Ethics

Contact Info
Dr. Sara Rettus
Office: MI 4007
Email: sara.rettus@csueastbay.edu

Description
This course will deal with the ethical implications of various technologies, such as biotechnology, medical technologies, environmental technologies, and informational technologies. These issues include privacy, freedom, censorship, social understanding, human perfectionism, and environmental issues.

Text
Society, Ethics and Technology by Morton Winston & Ralph Edelbach.

Requirements/ Evaluation
2 Take Home Exams (20% each) These exams (one mid-term and one final) will test your broad knowledge of the material.

2 Papers (25% each) These papers will test your ability to discuss one topic in depth. They can be a discussion of one of the issues we cover or a discussion of a particular work and how the work and its treatment relate to an issue.

Class discussion questions (10%) At least once a week we will focus on an important question in relationship to the topic of the week. You will be required to work in groups and present your analysis to the class.
Policies
Blackboard
Course Materials, Assignments, and Announcements will be posted on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check for updates regularly.

Attendance
While attendance is not mandatory, you cannot receive points for the group discussions if you are not attending class.

Academic Dishonesty
Familiarize yourself with the University’s policies on academic dishonesty. No, really do it. Ignorance is not a viable excuse and mistakes like that travel with you forever.

Disabilities
Students with disabilities should make arrangements with University’s Disability Support Service and discuss arrangements with me well before testing times.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students completing this course will:

(1) Develop an understanding of the of core principles in philosophy
(2) Develop an understanding of the analytic tools used in making decisions
(3) Develop an appreciation regarding the ethical implications of various technologies
(4) Develop an appreciation and understanding of current events and their relation to ethics

Tentative Course Outline:

Week One:

- Industrial society and technology
- Technology and the impact on globalization

Week Two:

- Freedom
• Democracy
• Citizen participation

**Week Three:**
• Traditional ethical theories
  o Utilitarianism
  o Deontology
  o Virtue ethics

**Week Four:**
• Professional responsibility
• Responsibility in research
• Concerns for future research

**Week Five:**
• Consequences of the information revolution
• Military drones
• Government surveillance

**Week Six:**
• Ethics and Robotics

**Week Seven:**
• Neuroscience and ethics
• Nanotechnology and ethics

**Week Eight:**
• Corporate censorship
• The social impact of the internet

**Week Nine:**
• Biotechnology and ethics
• Human perfectionism

**Week Ten:**
• Global warming
• Challenges of alternative energy