California State University, Bakersfield
Economy and Society (Economics 309)

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Course Description:
Application of economic theory to area studies, topics from United States, and world history, and enduring social problems. Recommended: American Institutions and Western Civilization General Education course work.

To reinforce the learning and application of economic theory, the course plan is divided into three interdependent parts. They are (1) contemporary economic issues, (2) economic forces in American & World history, and (3) teaching methods of elementary school economics.

Course Objectives:
To learn the basic economic concepts and analyze economic theories.

To apply the economic way of thinking and methodology in the analysis of historical and contemporary issues.

To equip prospective K-8 teachers with the needed intellectual tools and methodologies that can allow successful implementation of all of the economic content contained in History/Social Science Framework for the state of California.

Course Materials:

Abbas P. Grammy, Summary Lecture Notes for Economics of Social Issues

Course Policy:
Grading System: Grades will be determined by total percentage points earned in the course, with the points corresponding to each letter grade to be determined at the end of the term. I do not tend to grade on the curve. Rather, I use the usual standard that corresponds to each letter grade:

95-100 A    84-87  B    74-77  C    60-65  D
90-95 A- 80-84 B- 70-74 C- 50-60 D-
87-90 B+ 77-80 C+ 65-70 D+ 0-50 F

Class Attendance: Students are required to attend class sessions and participate in class discussions and activities. There will be no make-up exams or activities for missed course requirements. Only compelling medical reasons with supporting certification from a medical doctor will be considered. Exams and class presentations cannot be made up for other reasons. If you miss a class activity, your grade will be assigned according to your completed requirements. Incomplete grades will not be assigned. Class attendance and participation will make a difference in the assignment of grades in borderline cases.

Course Requirements: Course requirements and grade distribution are as follows:

Examinations:
- Mid-term in-class Test 15%
- Final in-class Test 15%
- Take-home Examination 35%

In-class Activities:
- Economics USA 10%
- Foundations of Wealth 5%

Writing Projects:
- Family Economic History 12%

Group Activities:
- Teaching Lesson Plans 8%

Cheating & Plagiarism: I follow the university’s policy on Academic Honesty enumerated in the CSUB Catalog. In particular, seemingly identical take-home exams will be subject to the cheating and plagiarism policy.

Explanation of Course Requirements:

Examination: There is a comprehensive take-home examination in this course. The exam will consist of short essay questions, definitions, historical case studies, and story writing.

Take-home exam questions will be evaluated as Excellent, Above Average, Average, Below Average, and Poor.

Tests: There are three in-class tests, which include multiple choice and true or false questions taken from Study Guide for Use With Economics of Social Issues.
Economics USA: You will view 10 videotaped presentations from the Economics USA series and take a quiz immediately after viewing a film. Each presentation is a study of economic theory and policy with three historical applications from the United States economy.

Foundations of Wealth: You will view 10 cartoon films from the Foundations of Wealth series on the economic history of mankind. You will take a quiz on each cartoon immediately after viewing the film.

Family Economic History: You will trace the economic history of your family going back two or three generations. Your investigation must include

- A family tree and a time line
- Description of economic conditions of the times (e.g., war, depression, prosperity)
- Choices and decisions your predecessors made to improve these conditions (e.g., migration, immigration, marriage)
- Description of how these choices and decisions affected them
- Description of how these choices and decisions affected their children including you

Your paper must be typed, double-spaced and 4-5 pages in length. Your work will be evaluated based on your demonstrated understanding of relevant economic concepts and of how socio-economic factors influence decision-making.

Your paper will be evaluated for organization, writing mechanics, and content.

Teaching Lesson Plans: Depending on the class size, you will form a group of 4-5 students to take the responsibility of teaching economics to kids. Your team will receive a copy of an economic lesson drawn from Economics for Kids and Children in the Marketplace. To teach economics to kids, you must role-play elementary school teachers and the rest of the class role-play elementary school students. Your grade is based on lesson delivery (teaching and reinforcement activity), class-room management, and division and coordination of the tasks.

Team members delivering a lesson plan will be evaluated for organization, presentation, and class management.

Schedule of Class Activities

Week 1
Introductions and Course Review
Chapter 1: Alleviating Human Misery
Economics USA: What Economic is All About
Foundations of Wealth: Subsistence Level

Week 2
Chapter 2: Economic Systems
Week 3
Chapter 3: Government Control of Markets
Chapter 4: Economics of Pollution
Economics USA: Supply & Demand
Foundations of Wealth: Price & The Consumer

Week 4
Chapter 5: Economics of Crime
Chapter 6: Economics of Poverty and Discrimination
Economics USA: Pollution
Foundations of Wealth: Price & The Producer

Week 5
Chapter 14: Social Security and Medicare
Chapter 7: Economics of Big Business
Economics USA: Public Goods & Responsibilities
Foundations of Wealth: Division of Labor by Product

Week 6
In-class Test: Chapters 1-7
Chapter 8: Economics of Professional Sports
Economics USA: Reducing Poverty
Foundations of Wealth: Division of Labor by Process

Week 7
Chapter 9: International Trade
Chapter 10: Unemployment Issues
Economics USA: Perfect Competition
Foundations of Wealth: Mechanization

Week 8
Chapter 11: Inflation
Chapter 13: Government Expenditure and Tax Issues
Economics USA: Monopoly
Foundations of Wealth: The Nature of Money

Week 9
Chapter 12: Economic Growth
Economics USA: Fiscal Policy
Foundations of Wealth: The Path to Prosperity
Teaching Lesson Plans

Week 10
Economics USA: Monetary Policy
Foundations of Wealth: Allocating a Surplus
In-class Test: Chapters 8-14