

Jacob Jennings OSH
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Classroom
OSH 113
T,H, 9:00AM-12PM

Office Hours:
Before and after class and by
Appointment: Email or talk to me
after class to set up a time
convenient for you.

"Only a capitalism that is critical of capitalism can be a guide to successful policy for capitalism."

Hyman Minsky

"The purpose of studying economics is not to acquire a set of ready-made answers to economic questions, but to learn how to avoid being deceived by economist."

Joan Robinson & Jeannette Mitchell

Course Outline

The purpose of this course is to discuss current economic events that characterize the world economy with a particular emphasis on US issues. Topics will attempt to encompass differing economic views of lingering theoretical questions as well as new and future economic problems. Knowledge of principles courses will be useful but is not required. A basic outline and reading list will be presented within the first week but in order to keep "current" with economic events, some readings for the course will be added throughout the semester.

Solutions for many of these economic issues will shape the worlds future, but they are also politically polarizing. The economic performance over the last few years of the American economy resulted in a great deal of "new" legislation. Yet most of economic backing for these policies has had a long theoretical and practical history. This course will focus on polices recently passed and those being discussed as solutions or betterments to many economic topics facing Americans and the world community today.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- Critically compare claims and evidence put forward from various schools of thought
- Analyze and understand the reason behind varying policy solutions to key economic issues. (Even if students do not agree with those policy issues or economic thinking)
- Develop and analyze views of the current world and US economy from a Macro perspective.
- Understand and recognize the role of institutions and culture in shaping the economy.

Textbook:

The required readings will be posted on the course page in Canvas. A basic reading list will be posted, but in an attempt to keep the class current, periodic updates will be made throughout the course. However if you are new to economics or seeking additional insight I strongly recommend:

□ *From Financial Crisis to Stagnation* Thomas Palley, ISBN: 9781107016620 This will give an overview of course topics and will be referred to often in class.

Prerequisites:

There are no specific requirements for this class; however, students should be familiar with basic algebra, graphs, and college-level writing.

Assessment:

Final Grades are based on the following criteria

-Exams

Midterm	(30%)	90 Points
Final	(30%)	90 Points
-Term Policy Paper and Presentation	(20%)	60 Points
-Current Event/Blog/Debate papers (3)	(10%)	30 Points
-Reading, Attendance and Class Participation	(10%)	30 Points

Exams:

Exams will be closed book, and will be held during our scheduled class periods, May 30, and June 18. The exam will be made up from essay questions primarily from our class readings and discussions of Current Economic Problems. The exam will be closed book/notes but studying group questions provide a good idea of exam questions.

Term Policy Paper and Presentation:

Groups of three will present on the following days: 5/21, 5/23, 5/28, 6/4, 6/6, 6/11, 6/13. These groups can be self-created or you can simply sign up for a topic and join a group of three. Your presentation should start with the additional papers from each subject but can and should branch into your own research.

At the end of the semester groups will be expected to provide a short term paper (8-9 pages, double spaced) on your subject. The purpose of the presentation and paper will be to explore a policy issue from an economic framework and to analyze the effects of the proposed solutions. After your research has begun, pick a solution based upon the best available evidence and propose. This will be due on the final day of class Tuesday June 18 at 5PM. This will likely be turned in via turnitin.com.

Policy Paper presentations will be given each week of class. This assignment will demonstrate effective presentation, time management, and analytical skills, and will allow students feedback from their classmates. Presentations should achieve the following:

- Present the background and history of the issue
- Explain the economic effects associated with the issue (emphasis on evidence)
- Present the proposed solutions from both sides of the issue, including which arguments are the most persuasive (in your opinion)
 - Organization will also be graded, as will visual aids to clarify your position.
 - Open up the topic for questions and facilitate ensuing discussion

Unfortunately presentation length will be dictated by time available but these should be professional in nature. After the class size has stabilized following the first 2-3 weeks into the course, time length and whether presentations can be in groups will be evaluated. I estimate these being 4-5 minutes per student.

Current Events Articles (3)

For the first 2 of these papers you are required to find an economic blog or National Newspaper, Journal which concerns an issue we have or will discuss in class. Outline the economist's perspective, (if it is a blog, explain the authors earlier ideas) or main points of the article. Often with blog articles you will need to follow the author for multiple weeks to fully understand their full viewpoint. If using a blog, cite 4-5 entries. If using a journals or newspapers find 2 articles on the same subject to get various perspectives. I anticipate these to be 3-4 pages in length.

One of these individual two papers can serve as background for your group policy paper, however this should only act as a starting point. Your policy paper should focus on more academic and empirical sources.

Examples of Blogs I follow:

<http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/>

<http://economistsview.typepad.com/economistsview/> <http://nakedkeynesianism.blogspot.com/>

Issues to consider when writing these papers:

How credible are the authors/evidence? What is the policy implication? What are the strengths/weaknesses to the argument? How does this fit into the economic framework we've discussed in class or what you've learned from other theoretical or principles courses? What evidence is brought up to strengthen the authors point? Finally do you agree with this article? If you agree with the author, then outline what someone who disagrees with the article may believe, or vice versa.

The third of these papers will be a reaction to four presentations given by your class mates and it will be where you grade your own group. The reaction to other presentations will be for four of the possible 14 presentations. Therefore if you are not in attendance you will not be able to react to the papers. For each presentation outline strengths and weaknesses of the policy. Self grading needs to respond to the following. My personal grade should be _____ and explain why. My teammates 1 and 2 should receive grades _____ and explain why. These will be due 2 days after the final and will roughly be 2 pages in length and will be emailed directly to me.

Reading, Attendance and Class Participation

As a major purpose of the class is to discuss Current Problems, it is very important that you are present for these discussions. This is an easy 10% of your grade for the course and will be important for whether or not you get anything from it. The readings are to be read before class. Reading the material before class allows you to think, digest, and analyze the material; this prepares you for class and allows a discussion and examination of the concepts instead of a

lecture where the author's facts and figures are just restated. This class is about thinking and analyzing issues, not just describing them. As such, our discussions are going to analyze and build on the ideas of the authors, not just restate them. Also groups of 3-4 will be organized with the purpose being to have groups present the main points of some papers. These papers will be assigned a week before presented. Periodically role will also be taken.

Class Policies: Students should speak with instructor in advance to request special consideration in the case of some extenuating circumstance that prevents their taking an exam or submitting an assignment at the scheduled time. Exams may only be taken the day indicated in the course schedule. Extra credit may be a possibility, and its availability will be announced in the middle of the semester. As a courtesy to everyone present, please arrive on time to class. Consistent attendance is recommended, but attendance is not taken. This syllabus is not a binding legal contract, and the instructor may modify it when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.

Disabilities: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 5815020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services." (www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/)

Faculty and Student Responsibilities: All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. Faculty...must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 6-316. Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 6-400.

The instructor will convene class at the scheduled time, ensure that the environment is conducive to learning, enforce the student code, grade and return assignments and exams in a timely manner, and inform students at the beginning of class of course content, requirements, evaluation methods, grading scale, schedule, and due dates. Please contact the instructor soon with any concerns regarding the way he facilitates learning this term. Should the instructor be late for class or unable to arrive due to weather, sickness, or other reasons, the department will be notified and its representative will inform students of the situation. Students may inquire by calling the economics department at 581-7481. In the event of an absence by the instructor or any

other circumstance that prevents class meetings, messages via Canvas and email will inform students of out-of-class online readings, discussions, and writing assignments that will substitute for in-class learning.

Readings

Posted on Canvas

Section I: Background

1. The U S since 1980

Palley 2012 Ch. 1 and 3 Baker 2007 Ch. 1 and appendix,
Discussion- 5/14

2. Inequality, debt and the current crisis

Palley 2012 Ch. 4 Piketty & Saez 2003,
Estimated Discussion- 5/16

Additional: Barba and Pivetti 2009, Stiglitz 2011 and 2012

3. Environment

Herring 2006, Hardin 1968. Ros 2012

Estimated Discussion- 5/21

Additional: Boulding 1968, Rezai et al 2009, Solow 1972

4. The Unemployment crisis

Mishel 2011, Schmidt and Jones 2012

Estimated Discussion- 5/23

Additional: Jones 2013, Bernstein & Romer 2009, Schmitt & Conroy 2010, Hansgen, Papadimitriou & Zezza 2011.

5. Fiscal policy and Recovery Length

Romer 2011, Papadimitriou et al 2012

Estimated Discussion- 5/28

Additional: Reinhart and Rogoff 2012, Seidman & Lewis 2009, Perez 2010

Midterm I - 5/30 and first 2 CE papers due.

6. Debt, Growth, and Sequesters

Herndon et al 2013, Keen 2013, Baker 2012,

Estimated Discussion- 6/04

Additional: Reinhart and Rogoff 2009, Nerisyan & Wray 2010 Vernengo 2011,
Davidson 2010,

7. Monetary policy, the zero bound problem, and asset bubbles

Bernanke & Reinhart 2004, Posen 2010,
Estimated Discussion- 6/6
Additional: Hannsgen & Papadimitriou 2010, Eichengreen 2010. Palley 2012 Ch. 8

8. Eurocrisis

Vernengo 2012, Wolfe 2011, Hannsgen and Papadimitriou 2012
Estimated Discussion-6/11
Additional- Holland 2011, Stuart 2011

9. Financialization, Financial Regulation, and Global Imbalances

Palley 2012 Ch. 5, Shin 2008,
Estimated Discussion: 6/13
Additional: Palley 2007, Kregel 2009, Baker 2010, Krippner 2005, Crotty & Epstein
2008, Borio and Disyatat 2011, Baldwin 2012, Eichengreen 2007, Marchetti et al
2012

Additional topics to present on:

The Crisis Now and Then

Papadimitriou 2009, Eichengreen and O'Rourke 2010, 2012, Reinhart and Rogoff
2012

Role of Finance, Regulation, and International Trade

Final 6/18

Movies

Movies will be available to stream via Canvas. These are additional resources to grasping
the current economic issues.

- a) Inside Job 2010 - Charles Ferguson
- b) Money, Power, and Wallstreet-2012- PBS Frontline
- c) The Warning-2010- PBS Frontline