Contemporary US Economics - Discrimination

Spring Quarter 2020

Online

CRN 43161

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Office Hours: M – Th (noon – 1:00 P.M.) on Zoom.

**Text & Required Resources:**

Taking Sides: Clashing Views of Economic Issues, 17th edition McGraw-Hill Publishers.

Materials handed out during class and on Moodle

**Course description:**

We are often confronted in the media, in our community, and in our personal life with problems that deal with economic issues. The purpose of this course is to introduce you to a number of social issues in order to illustrate how economists might address such controversies. As is always the case in complex human affairs, there are no easy answers to many of the dilemmas we will investigate. Often, reality is not simply black and white, but is colored by an infinite number of subtle shades of gray. Therefore, when confronted by differing opinions and points of view, it is necessary to develop the ability to comprehend, evaluate, and make decisions in the face of uncertainty. The use of such ‘critical thinking skills’ can have a profound impact upon one’s life in terms of academic, professional, and personal success.

**Method of Instruction:**

Typically this class is taught in the classroom and is very interactive in nature. We will try to achieve the same interactive nature by using discussion boards. Most of the topics that will be discussed carry individual value judgments. It is important that all students feel comfortable in being able to express their opinions. Due respect will be given to all opinions. That does not mean that you cannot disagree with each other, in fact, I expect that you will, but please do it in a non-confrontational manner. It is part of my job to get you to thinking about different aspects of the topics. I encourage you to voice your thoughts on these subjects. Only by doing will this class prove to be dynamic and informational!

As this is an interactive course it is required that all students be prepared and take part in the discussions. All discussions will be respectful and non-personal. Everyone’s viewpoint will be respected and learned from. Personal judgments will not be tolerated.

**Office Hours:**

I have scheduled four hours of office hours per week on Zoom. If you wish to join me at those scheduled office hours use this link: [Zoom Paul Hibbard](https://linnbenton.zoom.us/j/5419174262) or just use the following zoom ID: 541-917-4262. Email works great for simple questions. I will respond typically within 24 hours. If you cannot attend the scheduled office hours then email me when you have time to meet and I will do my best to be available.

**Debates:**

Each week you will read two issues in the Taking Sides text. I will provide a brief summary of each topic in a video presentation in Moodle. Feel free to watch the video for more information about the weekly issues. After you read both issues and watch the videos, you will participate in the weekly debate in Moodle. The directions to each debate will be clearly stated in Moodle (e.g. go to the first week and you will find Week 1 Debate).

The class is organized in a way that any student (regardless or their work schedule or time zone) can participate in the weekly discussion. Just note that all due dates and times are on the Pacific Time Zone.

Final Exam – Your final exam will be a paper due the last week of the term. I will be providing you more information about this assignment sometime in May.

Grades – I will post grades on Moodle. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Weekly Wednesday Posts (10 pts each) 90

Weekly Sunday Response Posts (10 pts each) 90

Final Paper 120

**Total 300 Points**

Tentative Outline by Date – EC220 for Spring Quarter 2020

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| **Date** | **Lecture Topic** |
| Week 1  4/6 – 4/12 | ***Issue 1.1:*** Are Profits the Only Business of Business?  ***Issue 1.2:***. Should the Compensation of Executives Be  Subject to Government Regulation? |
| Week 2  4/13-4/19 | ***Issue 1.3:*** Has the Supreme Court Made It Possible for  Corporations to Buy Elections?  ***Issue 1.4:*** Should the United States Stop All New Offshore Drilling for Oil? |
| Week 3  4/20 – 4/26 | ***Issue 1.5:*** Are Taxes on Soda Effective in Reducing Obesity?  ***Issue 1.6:*** Should Uber be Heavily Regulated? |
| Week 4  4/27 – 5/3 | ***Issue 2.1:*** Is Obamacare a Disaster for the Economy?  ***Issue 2.2:*** Is Declining Productivity a Concern? |
| Week 5  5/4 – 5/10 | ***Issue 2.3:*** Did the American Recover and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Create Jobs?  ***Issue 2.4:*** Do American Consumers Need a Financial Protection Agency? |
| Week 6  5/11 – 5/17 | ***Issue 2.5 :***  Does Immigration Benefit the Economy?  ***Issue 3.1:*** Is a Fair Trade Policy Superior to a Free Trade  Policy? |
| Week 7  5/18 – 5/24 | ***Issue 3.2:*** Is Climate Change a Threat that Requires Urgent Action?  ***Issue 3.3:*** Can U.S. Deficit and Debt Problems be Solved Without Increases in Taxes? |
| Week 8  5/25 – 5/31 | ***Issue 3.4:*** Is China’s Currency Undervalued, and Should the United States Take Action to Correct This Undervaluation?  ***Issue 3.5:*** Should Marijuana be Legalized? |
| Week 9  6/1 – 6/7 | ***Issue 3.6:*** Is the Inequality in U.S. Income Distribution Surging?  ***Issue 3.7***: Will the current global health crisis affect U.S. wealth inequality? (This issue is not in your text. I thought it would be interesting to debate nonetheless). |
| Week 10  6/8 – 6/12 | **Final Paper** |

**Request for Special Needs or Accommodations**

Direct questions about or requests for special needs or accommodations to the LBCC Disability Coordinator, RCH-105, 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, Phone 541-917-4789 or via Oregon Telecommunications Relay TTD at 1-800-735-2900 or 1-800-735-1232. Make sign language interpreting or real-time transcribing requests 2-4 weeks in advance. Make all other requests at least 72 hours prior to the event. LBCC will make every effort to honor requests. LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

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**Discrimination/Harassment Complaints**

If you feel you have been discriminated against in any interaction at Linn-Benton Community College, or have been harassed by another person while at LBCC, or wish to report any concern or complaint, please use this form: [Report Concerns / Complaints Form](http://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report)

**Syllabus:**

This syllabus and outline are a guide, not a contract. They will change during the term as I attempt to provide the most compelling and useful learning experience possible. If things do not make sense, please talk with me. As changes are made, I will announce them in class. You should check the syllabus at least once a week for course updates. Not reading the syllabus does not constitute a valid excuse for missing a milestone.